

MARIAN HIGH SCHOOL HONORS SR. MARY GEHRINGER, OSM WITH THE 2008 ALUMNA OF THE YEAR AWARD

April 22, 2008 – On Sunday, April 20, 2008 Marian High School recognized three individuals who have dedicated themselves to supporting Catholic education, are leaders within the Marian community and leaders in their respective communities. One such honoree, Sr. Mary Gehringer, OSM, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Detroit, was awarded the 2008 Marian High School Alumna of the Year. She was selected because she represents the values and mission of Marian High School. A recognition Mass was held in the Servants of Mary Chapel and was followed by brunch in Marian’s Student Center as part of an annual event recognizing all who support Marian High School.

Marian Alumna of the Year Award

Sr. Mary Gehringer, OSM, Marian’s 2008 Alumna of the Year, is a 1966 graduate of Marian High School, and a member of Marian’s sponsoring order, the Servants of Mary. Marian High School has been a part of Gehringer’s life since its inception. When Gehringer was in kindergarten, her family visited her servite aunts at the Servants of Mary motherhouse and witnessed the placing of Marian’s first cornerstone, and Gehringer’s father said to her, “That is where you will go to high school.” She and her four sisters attended Marian.

Gehringer said she was called to be a teacher and a Servant of Mary. In junior high, she sat in her classroom at St. Bernard’s grade school saying to herself, “When I grow up, I am going to join the Servants of Mary so I can be a teacher.” Gehringer joined the Order right after graduating from Marian. After receiving her degree in English and Elementary Education from Briar Cliff College, Gehringer began her teaching career in Detroit, Michigan. From her classroom experience, her calling evolved, and she returned to Omaha to pursue an advanced degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in Education Administration and Supervision. After teaching junior high and serving as Assistant Principal at St. James School grade school in Omaha, Gehringer went back to Detroit to be Assistant Principal, then Principal at St. John Berchmans, the same school where she first taught. In 1990, Gehringer was named Assistant Provincial to the Order and began a five-year term on Marian’s Board. While on the Board, Gehringer worked closely with the Head of School, Elizabeth Kish, as a liaison between the school and the Servants of Mary. When she completed her term, she became a member of Marian’s staff as the Director of Sponsorship. “Sister Mary laid the groundwork for creating and revitalizing ways to keep the connection between Servants of Mary and Marian alive and well in our school,” said Elizabeth Kish. “Even today, we have a sponsorship committee in place to continue growing this program.”



In addition, Gehringer also was Director of Institutional Advancement, helping Marian create the tremendous advancement efforts in place today.

In 2000, from her home of Detroit, Michigan, Gehringer again served as a member of Marian's Board of Directors until 2006.

Today, Gehringer is the Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Detroit, which has 22 high schools, 87 grade schools and 39,000 students. She has created a program that strengthens the professional development for principals and administrators in the school district, focusing on Catholic Identity and the Catholic School Culture. She has taught classes and facilitated retreats that address the role of the School Board, how Pastors and Principals should work together, and how the School Accreditation Process works. In addition to her role as superintendent, Gehringer continues her commitment to Catholic education through several volunteer board commitments. She is a member of the Michigan Association of Nonpublic Schools Board, the Michigan Nonpublic Schools Accrediting Association, where she is the chairperson for the Regional Coordinators Committee and serves on the Leadership Council, and the Archdiocesan Advisory Board of Catholic Education.

"Gehringer is a leader, a mentor, and a woman of faith," said Kish. "Her tenacity for Catholic education is unparalleled. Marian is blessed to continue to benefit from Gehringer's talents and wisdom."

Marian is Nebraska's only Class A, Catholic, college preparatory high school for young women and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School of Academic Excellence. Marian is sponsored by the Servants of Mary and welcomes students of all religious, cultural and economic backgrounds.