

Joan Frances Crowley, BVM, Papers 1967-1996, undated

Creator: Joan Frances Crowley, BVM (1919-2009)

Extent: 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

Language: English

Repository: Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None

Usage Restrictions: Copyright transferred from Joan Frances Crowley, BVM, to the Women and Leadership Archives for those items created by her.

Preferred Citation: Identification of item, date, box #, folder #, Joan Frances Crowley, BVM, Papers, Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago.

Provenance: Donated by Joan Frances Crowley, BVM, to the Women and Leadership Archives on December 15, 2008 (WLA 2009.3).

Processor: Ashley Eckhardt, January 5, 2010.

Processing Information: Finding aid updated January 2025.

Separations: Envelopes from correspondence were removed.

See Also: Mundelein College Records; BVM Archives in Dubuque, Iowa.

Biographical History

Joan Frances Crowley was born on April 4, 1919, in Chicago, Illinois, to Helen Newell Crowley and Sydney Crowley. Her parents named her Dorothy Helen Crowley. She had one older sister, Frances, and one younger sister, Joan; hence she chose the religious name Joan Frances when she entered the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) order on September 8, 1939. As a child, she attended St. Ignatius Grade School and Immaculata High School and earned her bachelor's degree from the College of Great Falls in Montana in 1946.

Upon graduation, Sr. Joan Frances began teaching history, English, and religion at St. Joseph Academy in Des Moines, Iowa, before moving to Our Lady of Peace High School in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1952. She earned her master's degree from Marquette University in 1954 and joined the history faculty of Mundelein College in Chicago in 1962. She taught classes on Russian and French history and took student groups on two trips to Russia. In 1989, she co-published *Lenin to Gorbachev: Three Generations of Communists* with Daniel Vaillancourt, a colleague at Mundelein. In 1990, Sr. Joan Frances was appointed chair of Mundelein's history department, and she continued to teach in the history department at Loyola University Chicago until 1998 after Mundelein's affiliation with the school in 1991.

Sr. Joan Frances received numerous awards for her teaching, including the first Sears Roebuck Foundation Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award granted to a Mundelein faculty member, which she earned in 1988. She also received a Fulbright grant in 1965 to study for the summer at the University of Paris. As a result of her co-teaching Mundelein's "Marxism and Communism" class with Daniel Vaillancourt, Sr. Joan Frances befriended Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters, Josef Stalin's daughter. Through Sr. Joan Frances' encouragement, Svetlana, who was living in Wisconsin at the time, visited Mundelein College and gave a guest lecture in 1987. Their friendship continued through correspondence until 1996.

Sr. Joan Frances died in Dubuque, Iowa, on October 6, 2009.

Scope and Content

The Joan Frances Crowley, BVM, Papers contain materials related to Sr. Joan Frances' friendship with Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters from 1987 until 1996. The bulk of the collection consists of the letters written by Svetlana (who used the name Lana Peters) to Sr. Joan Frances. The letters discuss Svetlana's visit to Mundelein College and her views on Catholicism, Marxism, and Russia/the Soviet Union. Svetlana was living in Spring Green, Wisconsin, in 1987 when Sr. Joan Frances encouraged one of her students, Julie Bleifuss, to interview her as part of a research paper on Svetlana's life. Sr. Joan Frances convinced Svetlana to visit Mundelein and continued corresponding with her until the friendship abruptly ended in 1996 due to an article published in the *Daily Mail*, a newspaper out of London.

Series 1: Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters, 1967-1996, undated, Box 1

This series contains the letters written to Sr. Joan Frances from Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters, correspondence between Sr. Joan Frances and her history faculty colleagues, a copy of the *Daily Mail* article that ended Sr. Joan Frances and Svetlana's friendship in 1996, photographs, a copy of Svetlana's book *Twenty Letters to a Friend*, and an audiocassette tape Svetlana sent to Sr. Joan Frances in 1987.

Subjects:

Joan Frances Crowley, BVM (1919-2009)
Marxism
Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters (1926-2011)
Roman Catholicism
Russia
Soviet Union
Josef Stalin (1878-1953)

Box	Folder	Title	Dates
		<i>Joan Frances Crowley, BVM, Papers 1967-1996, undated</i>	
		Series 1: Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters, 1967-1996, undated	

*Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago*

1	1	Correspondence with Svetlana (Alliluyeva) Peters	1987-1996
1	2	Correspondence with others	1996, undated
1	3	<i>Daily Mail</i> article	1996
1	4	Photographs	1987-1995
1	5	<i>Twenty Letters to a Friend</i> , by Svetlana Alliluyeva	1967
1	6	Audiocassette tape	1987