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Dear Marianne,

It was wonderful to get your Christmas card with its sweet message about all the good times we've had together. Sharon and I especially liked the way you underlined "laughter" when you wrote about some of the ways we spent that time. You sure got that right!

Too many people seem to have forgotten how to laugh (if they ever knew), so I treasure more than ever friends who laugh a lot, and you will always be among the folks at the top of my list!

Of course, my deeper memory of you is about the pivotal role you played in the launch of the Courage to Teach program, and in helping to grow the Center for Teacher Formation into the Center for Courage & Renewal.

Having now celebrated our 25th Anniversary, and seeing what good shape we're in all these years later, I'm more aware than ever of the solidity of the foundations we laid back in the day at the Fetzer Institute. And I'm keenly aware of how important you were to getting us off to a good start and keeping us on track during our formative years and beyond.

As you know, when I began facilitating that Pilot Group at Fetzer, I knew less than nothing about the life of a K-12 teacher. But as I learned more about your marvelous career as an award-winning teacher, and watched you find just the right thing to say to younger teachers in the group who were struggling, I felt like I was receiving a Master Class in what I did not know!

I was delighted when you decided to become a facilitator, and as the years went by I was delighted to see you become a kind of "Mother Superior" for the group. These days, when I find myself with other Courage & Renewal old-timers, your name always comes up, without exception, when we tell stories of the glory days of old.

Those jokes you love so much—the ones about the cross-eyed bull and the Pope's posthumous discovery that the word was "celebrate!"—are often retold with

great gusto! But people *always* talk about your deep instinct for the needs of K-12 teachers, and your persuasive way of keeping us focused on the kind of inner growth that flows into the outside world in service to the common good.

Yes, it has been some time since we were all in a room together—but some people whose strong and faithful spirits keep making a difference from afar. You, my dear friend, are among that blessed group!

I hope you know how much I value you and Jim and our friendship. I hope you know how much I value the great contributions you made and continue to make to Courage Work.

Take good care, and keep on keepin' on, and Sharon and I will do our best to keep up with you two!

of love and gratitude from both of us,

Lots

Parker