



Sharings

Franciscan Missionaries of Mary USA Province

Volume 40 No. 1 Spring 2010



Alleluia!

Alleluia!



Susan Daily, IBVM



Alleluia!

Editors' Notes

These past months we have witnessed by television and newspapers horrendous earthquakes in Haiti, Chile, Taiwan and Turkey. Thanks to rapid communication this news reaches us almost at the time of the event. Response to these events is global and for the most part, rapid. Prominent in those who have gone to offer service is the Catholic community.

There is evidence of courage, faith and hope both on the part of those who suffer and those who help. In fact in the United States there is evidence of generosity despite these hard, economic times. Nothing in the United States compares to the suffering in countries suffering from war or major disasters.

We also read of great scandal in our Catholic Church both in the United States, Ireland and elsewhere. Many have left the Church because of these scandals. Yet, there are many entering the Church this Easter. Fr. Ron Rolheiser recently wrote an article giving some reasons why persons leave the Church. With his permission, we printed his article in this issue.

There is evidence of hope in what is happening in the US province. Read more . . .

We wish all of our readers of Sharings, the blessings of Easter. Jesus is our reason for hope. He has risen, Alleluia!

Anne Turbini , Maryann Alukonis , Rosemarie Higgins, Annie Nebres, fmm



**Welcome to our province,
Andrina and Mary!**



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SUMMER**

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OUR DECEASED SISTERS & RELATIVES



Mary Ann Loughlin, fmm
(M. Clarus of the Sacred Heart)

Born to Eternal Life
March 7, 2010

Anne Richards, fmm
(M. Paul of the Passion)

Born to Eternal Life
March 16, 2010



Leonardo Coquia, brother of Herminia Coquia, fmm

Eulogies for ...

Mary Ann Loughlin, fmm

In the Introduction to her Meditations Mary of the Passion wrote: "After having prayed for light, I felt that God was asking more from me. Our holy Mother the Church has always taught that the divine liturgy, Holy Scripture and the examples of the saints are very pure sources from which those who give themselves to prayer find strength for their souls. If we apply this spiritual wealth to the needs of our vocation, I believe that we shall have—for the present and the future—sure guidance in our efforts to practice strong and solid virtue." (MD: 1 Introduction)

In Mary Ann's Profile written back in March 1976, she expressed her intense hopes concerning our life. Mary Ann said, "I hope that we will persevere in our efforts to listen to one another, to understand different points of view, to accept one another and yet remain united in the fundamentals. Ah, yes, there is the rub! We do not always agree on what is fundamental. I hope, too, that we may be able to understand that administration is service, that it can be mission. And that we will continue private and community prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide us, to grant us discernment, and to strengthen us in our efforts towards renewal."

It seems to me that Mary Ann was very close in thought to Mary of the Passion. Mary of the Passion was a

woman ahead of her time. Our Mary Ann had a foot in the present and an eye to the future. Now Mary Ann has completed her mission with us and has moved to join the God who has been her light and her guide during her sixty-three years as a Franciscan Missionary of Mary. May she now enjoy her eternal reward.

Anne Richards, fmm

Mary of the Passion wrote: "Those whom suffering marks with the Cross of our Lord are always great missionaries. Trials, bravely borne, always bear fruit. Seeing the constancy, fidelity and patience of souls united with the will of God, others who approach them are struck with admiration and are eager to follow the same path." She also wrote: "The great secret of the cross is that it destroys in us all that is not God. A faithful soul lets God lead her for she knows that His love is at work for her good One grace leads to another, great trials are permitted by God in order to lead faithful souls to sanctity."

We can confidently say that Sr. Anne bravely bore her illness while bearing much fruit. Her acceptance of what she was experiencing was witnessed by those who cared for and/or visited her. Anne's quiet manner and wonderful sense of humor was a source of encouragement for others. Her constancy, faithfulness and patience were filled with the love of and for her God. Anne always let God lead her, often never knowing where God's journey would bring her. God brought her to the people of Japan and to the people of the United States. The God of her life has again smiled upon Anne and has called her for her final journey to enter the Kingdom she had envisioned during her earthly life.

Dear Anne, may you rest in peace.



Dear Lois, Rosemarie, Anne, Maryann, and all who bring SHARINGS to us,

Greetings from Sudan. Thanks to our new VSat connection at the nursing training institute here in Wau, I was finally able to download the Winter SHARINGS without a problem and to read "from cover to cover". How inspiring! Jeanne Mera's reflection brought me to tears. The vibrant energy of the Province is so evident- new works, ministry growth, vocations, even the journeys through death to new life...and all with the truly upbeat spirit of Mary of the Passion. Thank you for all that you are.

Love always,
Mary Anne Williamson, fmm

HOMILY FOR MARYANN LOUGHLIN, FMM
Loving Friend and Faithful Companion

Going through the ritual of a funeral is important! not because we are remembering a life that has ended but because we are here to celebrate a life that was lived! For what speaks to us today is not death but Life - - - a life well lived. A life filled with challenges and demands; a life rich in ministry and service; a life centered in prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist; a life filled with love for family and friends; and a life of fidelity to the Institute and the Church. Maryann's strength of character - - - her depth of integrity - - - and her spirit of docility enabled her to know who she was and whose she was. Did I say Docility? I suspect many of you who knew Maryann would never say she was necessarily all that docile - - yet when it came to the Lord, like Mary, the Mother of God, she was attentive and docile to God's Word.

While most people recall 1929 as the year the Stock Market Crashed - - - I will always remember it as the year Maryann Loughlin was born. The oldest of 9 children Maryann would soon become a dutiful daughter and big sister, assuming responsibility in assisting her parents with the care of the younger members of the family. She was dependable and competent in all her undertakings and could always be relied upon. Those traits would follow her throughout life.

Also from an early age, Maryann had a longing for religious life. That desire was to be satisfied when she entered the Institute. Here she began an extraordinary adventure which fascinated and consumed her. Led by the Love of God which consecrated and called her to know, love and serve the Lord, Maryann embarked upon a life she could not have foreseen or predicted - - - a life in which, holding back nothing of herself for herself but giving totally of herself to the Lord who had completely given of Himself to her would lead her from camp counselor to the heart of the Institute in Rome to becoming the CEO of what was then Kennedy Memorial Hospital for Children and finally Director of Finances for the Province. And along the way there were many other positions and ministries Maryann would be called upon to perform or willingly volunteered to take upon herself in her desire to serve the Lord, the Institute and the Church.

In reflecting on Maryann's life I think there is a great lesson to be drawn. To use the words of St. Paul in his Second Letter to the Corinthians.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that

the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. (We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. (2 Corinthians 4:7-10)

In other words, in my encounters with Maryann, I got to know someone who at times experienced affliction, but was never crushed: who more than once was perplexed, but did not despair; who was struck down particularly by her failing health, but was not destroyed; who suffered, but did not lose faith, and indeed beyond that, who in her suffering lived in a spirit of faith and devotion, and showed love and consideration for others even as she struggled and suffered. When you see this in someone like Maryann, you encounter, in a way such as you can neither escape nor deny, the treasure within – the treasure of God's grace in one's soul, the treasure of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, the treasure of God's unfailing Love. In all our trials, as hard as they may be, the presence and power of this treasure, of God's grace, can prevail. That is the lesson and the gift Maryann has given to us.

Maryann knew that everything we have is an outright gift from God. We owe God everything, our vocation, our family and friends, including our very lives. It's possible to give God our money, but not ourselves, or to give God lip-service, but not our hearts. Maryann gladly gave all. She desired nothing less than to take up the cross and follow the Lord knowing that the cross of Christ leads to victory and freedom from sin and death.

As you know, Lumiere was Maryann's Guardian Angel. Maryann would tell me it was Lumiere's job to guide her through life - - - a task I suspect that was not always easy. On a few occasions she sent Lumiere to watch over me. I hope Lumiere gets a well deserved sabbatical before being sent on mission again. We all know the kind of woman Maryann was and what some of her idiosyncyses were; SO

IF there is a 5 year plan in heaven - - - Maryann is already at work on it.

IF there are meetings among the heavenly host - - - Maryann is taking the notes and transcribing them.

IF notes and cards are exchanged among the saints in glory then Maryann is busily at work responding to the many cards of welcome she has received.

IF someone needs help writing a paper, or is in need of a listening ear, or assistance in preparing a liturgy, Maryann is already responding.

IF there is a spiritual conference or workshop or a course on Franciscanism being offered, Maryann has already signed up.

IF one reads books in heaven, Maryann's night stand is no doubt stacked high with those books she never got around to reading.

Finally I personally need to say that:

Maryann's love for the Institute begot within me my love for the Institute.

Maryann's acceptance of her FMM sisters opened my eyes to the numerous women I now call sister and who have become part of my family.

Maryann's enthusiasm for the missions engendered within me a greater interest in the missions.

Maryann's deep and abiding faith and unswerving love for the Lord challenged and continues to challenge my own inadequate and weak faith and miserly love.

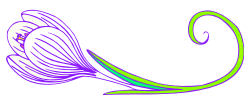
Like St Francis Maryann drove her body beyond what it could humanly endure and only late in life would admit to me that she needed to apologize to Brother Ass.

It is said that St. Francis once remarked: *"Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take nothing with you that you have received - - - only what you have given: a full heart enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage."* This our dear Maryann has done.

Lord, you done good when you created Maryann; You really done good when you called her to be an FMM; But you really truly outdid Yourself when You brought her into my life.

Maryann, I will be eternally grateful for our friendship and for your love for me. Rest in peace, my friend.

Tom Hartle. ofm



Provincial Updates

Our two pre novices, **Kyong-Ha Yim** and **Thuy Nguyen** have been accepted to continue their formation in the novitiate in Canada. Because of the necessity to learn French the General Council has granted an extension of six months to give Kyong and Thuy time for French studies. On April 7, Feast of Blessed Assunta, Kyong and Thuy will complete two years. Pat Barrett and Pauline Gilmore will drive Kyong and Thuy to Quebec on May 8th. While in Quebec Kyong-Ha Yim and Thuy Nguyen will relate to Rita Kim who is the pre novice directress for Canada. On the return trip from Canada, Pat and Pauline will bring **Sr. Isabelle Ravaoarisoa** to Fruit Hill for some tutoring in English with Ruth Tamulis.

From March 22-27, **Sr. Mary Motte** will be in Athens, Greece at the invitation of **Sr. Nzenzili Mboma**. There is a program that has been organized by the World Council of Churches to bring together Christians of different denominations who are committed in a reflection on Ecosystems, Mission and Spirituality. Mary will give her presentation plus she is committed to write an article to be published in July 2010 in the International Bulletin for Mission.

Sisters **My Hoa Nguyen** and **To Anh Bui** have received the official acceptance from Sr. Suzanne and her Council to make their final profession. This will take place on September 4 at Fruit Hill. Both Hoa and To Anh have begun their preparation with Srs. Alma Dufault and Mary Motte.

Sr. Kochuthressia Malpan from Chennai Province is presently at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN as a visiting scholar. She was sponsored by the United Board for Christian Education based here in the US. Her first semester was spent at De La Salle University in Manila. Kochu has been at Stella Maris College Chennai from 1992 and will return there after her stay in Minnesota.



Sr. Helen Klumpp's 100th Birthday Celebration at St. Antoine Residence

The day finally arrived, January 30th. Sr. Helen had been anticipating it a long time often saying, "I'm almost 100 and I have all my marbles!" This time it really was here!



Everyone said she looked beautiful in her new blue top with embroidered flowers and matching afghan with a corsage of blue and pink flowers. She had a happy smile on her face when she came to chapel

that morning for Mass. Srs. Lois, Loan, Pat, and Pauline joined Helen and other residents in chapel and then Helen's family arrived, still shivering from the cold and deciding to leave their coats on. Fran Gereppy and four of her sons (the whole family sings) accompanied the beautiful text of the Mass for Our Lady of Peace (chosen because Sr. Helen went to Medjugorje and this was one of her favorite ways to address Mary) with some traditional songs like "Jesus, My Lord, My God My All", the Ave Maria in Latin, "Amazing Grace" and "O Sanctissima." Bishop Gelineau always celebrates liturgy in a beautiful way, and after Mass a number of sisters from Fruit Hill came including Sr. Claire McQuilkan, Sr. Helen's friend for many years. Together with Helen's nephew, niece and grand and great-grand nieces and nephews, we enjoyed coffee and pastry in the vestibule. Some sisters from the units and other residents joined as well.

At noon we had a nicely prepared hot lunch of chicken, potatoes, salad, green beans and, of course, onion rings for Helen. We discovered that Helen's nephew Bill also loves onion rings. The lunch was topped off by coffee ice cream. When Helen opened some gifts, her niece asked if she could read her the cards and Helen replied, "Of course not, I read all my own mail and books and without eyeglasses."

Since her family had to travel back to Connecticut, they left around 1:30 PM and Lois, Loan, and Pat around the same time. Claire and Pauline joined us for a violin concert at the end of the corridor on Helen's unit. Some residents also came as well as Bishop Gelineau, Archbishop Pierce, Frs. Blain, Heney and a few visitors. The violinist was an Armenian man who

earlier escaped from Turkish rule and settled in Bulgaria only to find obstacles to his teaching and faith and finally found work playing in the Berlin Symphony. His playing is as marvelous as his story is interesting. Helen sat listening with a smile on her face for the whole hour.

Afterwards, I asked Helen if she would like to rest for a while since she must be tired but she responded, "No, now I want to go down the hall for a cup of coffee."

The next day, Helen was still smiling. She said she was amazed at so much happening for her birthday and so many attending it. She is so very grateful!

Joyce Gardella, fmm



HOPE

What is Hope?

Hope is an important virtue of life because without hope one cannot continue on the Journey to fulfillment in God.

What is Hope?

Hope is a virtue which helps human beings to trust in the Loving Creator.

What is Hope?

As our beloved foundress Mary of the Passion said "souls that are simple and upright do not stop in the way traced by their faith, hope and love" (MD 528)"

What is Hope?

Hope is connected to community and is impossible without it.

Our brothers and sisters in Haiti needed fellow human beings as companions in hope.

What is Hope for you?

Cathy Tshitenge, fmm



Inter Province Formation Team Meeting



L-R Back: Marianna Jung, Simone Bastien, Rita Kim, Lois Pereira, Pauline Gilmore. Front: Alicia Alambra, Isabelle Ravaoarisoa, Kim Loan Nguyen, Patricia Barrett

The weekend of February 12 – 14, 2010 was “History in the Making” for the provinces of Canada and the United States. The members of the formation teams and councils from both provinces met at the Mission Resource Center to continue working out how both provinces could collaborate in the area of formation and in other ways. Just as the meeting was beginning Sr. Alma Dufault came to greet the group and it is she who said that we were making history!!!! However this was not the first time the provinces spoke about ways to collaborate but the first discussions some years ago proved that we were not ready for this step between the provinces. This is not to say that there was nothing happening between the two provinces. For some years now our sisters in initial formation were participating in sessions given in the two provinces. The weekend in February was not only to see how to collaborate in the area of formation but to explore other avenues where our “paths could meet”.

The meeting began with a presentation by Veronica DeRoza, FMM, who has been in the US since last June. As a continuation of her Sabbatical and with the suggestion of Nzenzili Mboma, FMM, Veronica compared an article written by Fr. Joxe Man'Arrego, ofm entitled “Joy and Responsibility of Accompanying in the Franciscan Way of Life” and our “Green Book” on Initial formation in the Institute today. It was a good way to begin our days of conversation.

The sisters responsible for the various stages of formation also shared what they were doing. It was interesting to see that at almost every stage our own sisters have given input to our younger sisters, sharing with them their lived experiences.

As was previously mentioned the pre novices from the US province will follow the novitiate program in Canada. To make this a richer and fuller experience our pre novices will be given time to learn French in order to follow the inter novitiate program in Canada which is given in French. It will also help our sisters to converse with our senior sisters and come to appreciate their missionary stories. This is certainly in line with our charism with the emphasis on knowing one or more of the official languages of the Institute.

Our sisters of Temporary Profession will meet twice a year, in June and December, with specific topics for their sessions. In 2010 the sessions will be held in the United States and in 2011 the sessions will take place in Canada. In response to a request from our sisters in Canada the June session will also include the annual retreat. This year Mary Petrosky, FMM has accepted to give the retreat in June.

For On-going Formation Sessions we are working to see what we can share between the provinces. Since traveling is not so easy for some of us plus a passport is now needed to cross the border we are looking into ways of sharing personnel who can travel to give sessions and/or workshops. We have such richness among our own sisters that we hope to tap these great resources.

On Saturday, February 13, our sisters from the Brighton community came down to help us to celebrate the Lunar New Year. The kitchen and dining room at Bethany were filled with the delicious aroma of many Asian dishes. A grand celebration was enjoyed by all beginning with Evening Prayer prepared by our sisters from Brighton. In true Asian tradition we received the “Red Envelopes” through the kindness of our sisters in Brighton. Not to be outdone the empty Red Envelopes were collected and returned with a monetary gift from our sisters from Canada. That was a gentle reminder that we must now go to Canada to use this gift!!!!

Before the Opening Ceremony of the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, Canada there was a special report on the collaboration that has taken place down though the years between Canada and the United States. Many examples were given how each country has helped the other in times of crisis and rejoiced with them in times of celebration. It brought home to us that we in our own FMM way have made a little bit of history in the Institute and we pray that as we move on we may continue to work together in unique and exciting ways for many years to come.

Lois Pereira, fmm

News from Roslyn

Roslyn has endured some kind of bug. ... not H1N1, not the Flu, but something else just as terrible. We hope



never to see it again! Six members of the community were sick at the same time and the others were filling in, helping out and trying to keep out of the path of this "bug". We are on the mend, I am glad to say and while we still have some snow storms to experience, spring must be just around the corner, no?

In January the Community had a lovely Mass and party for our friend for years, Dr. Francis Losito. Frank retired from General Practice in early December after over forty-two years in practice in Roslyn and at St. Francis Hospital. His wife, Rosalie, was very sick for several weeks through Christmas time and the New Year and was not able to join us for the Mass and party. Pictures galore helped her to recapture the experience later. (She has improved a lot, God bless her!) Dr. Losito's wife and family donated a prayer bench in gratitude for his hard work here at St. Francis. It is placed before our Lady's Shrine in the Chapel.

We had visits from many of our friends during the holidays and later too. Fr. John, a priest from Ghana, who had been our chaplain some years ago came for lunch and a visit to the hospital. Father has kept in touch with Sr. Claire.

Sr. Claire McQuilkin and Sr. Pauline Gilmore attended the 100th birthday of Sr. Helen Anna and had a wonderful time. They gave the rest of the community all the details. We had Mass and special prayers for Sr. Helen Anna asking God's blessings on the next 100!

To celebrate the month of February, Heart Month, all of us wore something on the designated day, February 5, to commemorate Women's Heart Research. The whole hospital was aglow with many shades and shapes of red. The day and the month have special importance in this cardiac center, of course.

Frances Milano, Cathy Boudreau, Claire McQuilkin and Carol Flaherty helped "man" the Information Desk during the various storms and blizzards we have had this winter. It is a really a big help, as volunteers are unable to get to the hospital during terrible weather.

Thresi Chako spent a few days with us during the Feb. vacation. We were delighted to have her among us. Thresi works now at Calvary Hospice, a really

wonderful work which she is enjoying. Betty Keegan and Vita Riccardelli were her transporters to SFH. Thresi is one of the chaplains at Calvary.

Carol Ann is doing some training to visit Hospice patients in St. Francis Hospital and perhaps in their homes, as a volunteer visitor. These sessions of training are conducted in the new facility for Catholic Health Care Services of the Diocese of Rockville Center which is in Melville, Long Island.

Last week we had Mass and special breakfast for Mary Kay, a nurse who worked at St. Francis for some years. She celebrated the reception of her Ph.D. in nursing. Mary Kay has been a friend of Connie for many years. She came with her family and we all enjoyed remembering past years at St. Francis and hearing of the current things she is doing now.

Carol Ann Kane, fmm



Prayer said by Harry S. Truman

daily all his life

Oh! Almighty and Everlasting God,
creator of Heaven and Earth and the Universe:
Help me to be, to think, to act what is right, because it is right: Make me be truthful, honest and honorable in all things; make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor and without thought of reward to me. Give me the ability to be charitable, forgiving and patient with my fellow men and women - help me to understand their motives and their shortcomings - even as You understand mine!
Amen - Amen - Amen



An Open Letter to those who don't go to church Fr.. Ron Rolheiser



4 Feb 2010

Dear Fellow Pilgrim: I greet you as someone who is looking for meaning and

happiness, as we all are. I know you're sincere or you wouldn't be reading this letter. Know this first of all: We miss you at church. There's not a Sunday goes by when your absence isn't felt. You're missed. Join us.

Yes, I know this isn't a simple thing. The heart has its reasons, Pascal said. Well the Church too has its complexities. Perhaps it is precisely one of these complexities that make it difficult for you to walk regularly through a church door. So I won't try to sugarcoat the Church. It is a far-from-perfect expression of God's love and mercy and it is a far-from-perfect expression of God's universal salvific will for everyone. Sometimes the Church blocks God's love as much as it reveals it. It has been, and remains, a vehicle both of grace and sin. How do we get past its dark side?

Ode to the Church

Carlo Carretto, the renowned Italian spiritual writer, in his old age, wrote this Ode to the Church:

How much I must criticize you, my Church, and yet how much I love you!

You have made me suffer more than anyone and yet I owe more to you than to anyone.

I should like to see you destroyed and yet I need your presence.

You have given me much scandal and yet you alone have made me understand holiness.

Never in this world have I seen anything more compromised, more false, and yet I have never touched anything more pure, more generous or more beautiful.

Countless times I have felt like slamming the door of my soul in your face-and yet, every night, I have prayed that I might die in your sure arms!

No, I cannot be free of you, for I am one with you, even if not completely you.

Then too - where would I go?

To build another church?

But I could not build one without the same defects, for they are my defects. And again, if I were to build another church, it would be my church, not Christ's church.

No, I am old enough. I know better!

Honest

That's a mature description of the Church, expressing both love and realism. It's an honest description too. The Church has a long history, both of grace and of sin and we who make up the Church on earth don't do God very well. Nobody does. We need to admit that.

I can only guess at your reasons for not coming to church regularly or for not coming to Church at all: Perhaps you have been hurt by the Church, by the institution itself or by one of its priests or ministers. Perhaps you have been one of those who have experienced it as callous, as insensitive, as denigrating you in some way. Or perhaps you are intellectually disenchanted with the Church, unable to square its claims with your own sane grip on life and its mysteries. Or perhaps you have found what you are looking for elsewhere, outside the doors of the church you attended when you were little. Or perhaps you have just drifted away and don't think about Church very much at all.

Perhaps you don't feel a need for Church in your life. Or, perhaps you are convinced that Jesus and his teachings are in fact tainted by the Church, that Jesus never wanted to found a Church, but wanted only that people take his teachings to heart and live in love and graciousness. There are many reasons why people don't go to church. I can only guess at yours.

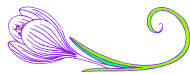
But your reason for not going is not important for this letter. I don't want to defend the Church here, make some kind of apologetics for it, or argue against any of the reasons that people give for not coming to church. And I don't want to try to show you reasons why, I think, it is important to go to church. This is not an apologetics, but a plea, an invitation: Come back! Try us again! Or, if you have never belonged to the Church, try us!

Faults

Maybe this time you will find life in the Church and be able to drink in some of its graces. Maybe this time you will find it in you to forgive the Church for its faults, see those faults are your own faults, and see why Jesus picked such an imperfect vehicle to carry on his presence. Maybe this time you will be able to see in the Church what Jesus saw in it - an imperfect body made up of men and women like you and me, full of sin, full of ourselves, petty, small-hearted, less-than-sincere, miserly, and tainted, but also full of grace, full of Christ, big-hearted, sincere, generous, and pure, a group of men and women worth dying for - and belonging to. Come be with us!

A fellow pilgrim and a flawed Church member.

Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Currently, Father Rolheiser is serving as President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio Texas. He can be contacted through his website, www.ronrolheiser.com



Disturbances announcing new moments in mission....

Even before we gathered in Santa Rosa Colombia for the fmm meeting on Migration, Human Trafficking, Reconciliation and Care of Creation, many of us were already experiencing the disturbance that announces new moments in mission. The vast number of migrants throughout the world have questioned many of us and that question soared to deeper consideration as we prepared for and held our General Chapter 2008. The reality of our world has not lessened the sad situation of human migration in search of food, shelter, and safety. *The phenomenon of migration presents us with the great affliction and insecurity of people in this circumstance. Being with the migrants, we can discover how God is present among them, and together with them, build a new culture. The presence and vibrant faith of many migrants are changing the face of our churches...* (GC Document 2008 - Priority C) Our Sisters in the US province intensify this profound call through various expressions of ministry.

Human trafficking is clearly a form of *forced* migration. And as *Caritas-Bolivia* emphasized, one of our best

contributions can be *raising awareness* about this crime present in just about every city. Many of the women religious in the US are committed to making this evil known and finding ways to reach out to young women who are caught in the web of trafficking and who have no voice. During our transmission workshop in Fruit Hill Gloria Carpinello, fmm spoke about the efforts of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Boston. In the Malaysia - Singapore Province, Mary Soh, fmm is deeply committed to the struggle against human trafficking and the rehabilitation ministry among women who have been trafficked. Our Mission Bureau in Rome is committed to nourishing our awareness toward deeper commitment. *Leaving our comfort zones we choose to go to frontier places to meet the people there. We are called to defend life, justice, and human dignity especially among persons and groups who are exploited, victims of human trafficking or other abuses. A contemplative way of seeing recognizes the poor are places of God's revelation. Do we let ourselves be touched, challenged and changed by our encounters?* (GC Document 2008 - Priority C)

Reconciliation and Care of Creation, concerns now rather widespread, are *disturbing* us into new moments of mission. An important heritage comes to us from the Greek Fathers, the Franciscan tradition, Teilhard de Chardin. This heritage is evident in the intuitive understanding of Francis of Assisi expressed in the *Canticle of Creation* - in which he expresses the intimate relationship between God and all creation, calling them *Sisters* and *Brothers*. (cf. Eloi Leclerc, ofm *The Canticle of the Creatures*). Denis Edwards reminded the participants in the 2009 Sedos Seminar in Assisi that *In the Word made flesh, God is revealed at the heart of the human, and precisely as such, is revealed at the heart of all life on Earth. ... The incarnation is God-with-us in the 'very tissue' of biological life.* Karl Rahner has reminded us God's purpose in creating a universe of creatures is to *give God's self to them in love. Self-bestowal is the meaning of the universe.* (cf. *SEDOS Bulletin*, vol. 41, no.7/8 165)

The challenges in our Chapter Document 2008 concerning reconciliation with ourselves, with God, with one another and with those to whom we are sent require us to deepen our contemplation of God's loving purpose in the creation of the universe. As Edwards notes, *the ecological conversion to which we are called involves a new way of seeing, thinking and acting.* (Sedos 41, 173) Our Franciscan invitation to *see from a lowly place*, offers another way of approaching our relationships with all. (cf. GC Document 2008: Introduction, A-4, B-3, C-1,2,3,4,5,6)

Mary Motte, fmm

United States & Canada Sisters in Temporary Vows

Sisters in temporary vows from the United States and Canada gathered for two weeks for their ongoing formation in Bethany Retreat House, North Providence, RI, USA. On the first day, Srs. Mary Motte and Nzenzili Mboma gave an overview of the whole Mission Handbook. Sisters in temporary vows with the guidance of Srs. Lois and Pauline Gilmore engaged in the discussion and clarification of chapters 13 and 14 which was dedicated to the guidelines for formation of universal mission. The chapters gave a real picture of what is expected when one goes to mission. Whether mission be within the province of origin or in another country, adapting to a new place, language and culture, is a reality.



Front L-R ToAhn Bui, My Hoa Nguyen, Annie Nebres
Back L-R Ludmilla Grabetz, Karen Correra, Cathy Tshitenge, Arlene van Zyl, Lois Pereira, Pauline Gilmore

The sisters in temporary vows visited our FMM sisters in the nursing homes at St. Antoine and Cherry Hill. They sang songs to cheer up the sisters, residents and staff as well. They also went to the La Salle Shrine to see the different nativity sets from different countries which are on display all year round.



On a final note, the sisters in temporary vows pulled all their hidden talents in singing and dancing to express their gratitude to Srs. Lois and Pauline for their time and efforts.



The two weeks were well spent having a better understanding of mission. Meetings such as these are a source of encouragement and strength for each temporary vowed sister and so the next meeting is always something to look forward to.

Annie Nebres, fmm



Sudan Nursing School-Wau

Dear Sisters and friends,

Much love from me here in Wau. I am writing to you as I sit in the classroom with our students, who are taking their first weekly test. This week it is concerning the English review we are doing. These have been busy weeks, as we have opened the nursing training with the first class of 18 from different parts of South Sudan, including two from Nuba Mountains. There are five young women, including two Sisters of different



congregations. The rest are young men, who have a better chance in the country for secondary education. They are a serious group with much to learn.

Construction workers are still busy all around us, continuing the renovations. Welding and hammering will go on for the next few months, but at least we have been able to begin.

Thank you for your interest and continued prayers for all these efforts to help in the capacity building for the young Sudanese. Attached may you find an account of the opening blessing and a few photos to give you an idea of our students and our facilities, as well as the joyous occasion of the first official opening Eucharist and blessing.

May your Lenten days be filled with blessings.

Lots of love and my assurance of being united with you always,

Mary Anne, fmm



Blessing of Catholic Health Training Institute Wau, Feb 4th, 2010

The first twenty students for the renovated Catholic Health Institute in Wau were present when Bishop Rudolph Deng cut the ribbon symbolically to open the building and blessed the facilities on Thursday, 4th February, 2010.



Phase one of the renovation is nearing completion. The students have expressed great delight at the quality of the facilities. There are two further

rebuilding phases which will be done this year to complete the Institute which will offer various training programmes in the Health sector. The initial students are all enrolled in a four-year programme at the Institute, the first in Southern Sudan, to train as registered nurses following GoSS guidelines and in accord with international standards.

The new students led the singing as all present then joined in a joyful celebration of the mass. In his homily,

the Bishop stressed the importance of the service those who train here should give back to their local communities. After the blessing and mass, Sr Sneha, Principal of the Institute's academic programme, introduced the various speakers.

Director of the Catholic Health Training Institute, Dr Maria Martinelli, a Comboni Sister, welcomed the guests and stressed the significance of the Institute motto: *Knowledge, Integrity and Loving Care*. The Institute has a clear mission statement and is setting very high expectations for its graduates. Sr Maria thanked the many people who had worked so hard to restore the Institute, especially the large team of workers who had transformed the old facilities so effectively in only a few months, under the leadership of Father Alberto Ruiz CMF and Robert, the Project Engineer.

His Excellency, the Minister for Health in Bahr El Ghazal State, was present and made clear his strong support for, and satisfaction in attending, the opening of the Health Training Institute. Dr James Ukelo, the Director General of the Wau Teaching Hospital also addressed the students and recalled the success of previous graduates trained in the Institute on this site, in the 1980's. He stressed the great need for nurses and encouraged the students to grasp the opportunity now open to them.

The final speaker was Sr Pat Murray, the Executive Director in Rome of *Solidarity with Southern Sudan*, the collaborative organization of more than one hundred religious congregations that has undertaken this redevelopment, for the Catholic Bishops of Southern Sudan. Sr Pat paid tribute to many people - the donors in distant lands who had contributed so generously to make the renovation possible, the religious in Wau, the Sudan Bishops' Conference and especially the Diocese of Wau, the Goss and State Government, and the workers who had achieved so much in such a short period of time.

After the planting, by the Bishop and His Excellency, of a mango tree, which Sr Sneha described as '*a strong symbol of life and shelter and a reminder of how we plan to grow as a Health Training Institute*', the first meal in the renovated Institute dining room was enjoyed by all. There is still a lot to be done but many expressed amazement on what had already been accomplished, the significance of this new beginning and the importance of this key step forward in the building of the new Sudan.

Dear Sr. Lois and Sisters of the province,



I have just finished reading the winter Sharings. Wow, it is full of so much information! I am struck by how much life and activity there is going on in the province. I also saw on the fmmusa website, the sending ceremony of Sr. Nzenzili. How wonderful to see all of your faces and get a sense of how you are.



Once again, I am writing this letter a bit after Christmas, but before the lunar New Year, when all our young sisters are preparing for their home visit. Thank you for your Christmas cards, well-wishes, prayers and even cd's! That was very thoughtful.



I am still living in the mountain resort town of Dalat. The town just celebrated its biannual Flower Festival - since this is the "flower city". It was a big event, bringing in people from all over and lasting for three days. Although the Flower Festival in early January and Feb. are the most popular times to visit, Dalat is a favorite vacationing spot year-round, because of its cool climate and picturesque location in the hills. The central point of the city is Ho Xuan Huong, or Scent of Spring Lake.

Vietnam is changing by the minute. Since its entry into the WTO, development has been nonstop. Downtown Ho Chi Minh City now looks like Rodeo Drive with all the high-class department stores and 5 star hotels. The traffic is also much worse because of the proliferation of SUVs and luxury sedans. New houses and high-rises are going up everywhere. Even Dalat just got its first supermarket/mall. It's all happening so fast, that there is not much time to think about the repercussions. In spite of this growth and development, there still remain some challenges to religious freedom that are also a source of tension for the Church. Please keep these in your prayers.



One thing is for sure, English teachers will be in demand for a long time to come. The last time I was in Ho Chi Minh City, I was surprised to see that every third building on any given street is now a language school - mostly for English. My students here in Dalat are mainly teenagers, although I do have a few adult and children's classes. In Saigon (HCMC) I mainly taught university students who had to pass a TOEIC exam in order to graduate. Almost every major of studies in Vietnam now requires a certain proficiency in English and computers to graduate. The school



where I teach in Dalat is planning to open a school of hospitality training for restaurant and hotel staff in order to meet the rising demands of tourism. In addition, we sometimes go to large hotels to help train their staffs in English. In an effort to keep myself in touch with reality, I go once a week with an elderly sister in community to bring Communion to the sick of our parish.

Our sisters in the community mainly support themselves by running a kindergarten of 4 grades, 8 classes and more than 200 students. Each morning after adoration I go by the youngest two classes to get a dose of Vitamin Vui/Happiness. The students in these classes are all around three years of age and are just a joy to be around. Our sisters elsewhere in the province do wonderful work bringing health care to remote areas and educating the ethnic minorities.

A few Vietnamese sisters living abroad have visited within the past year. I got to see Le Nga at her nephew's wedding. Sr. Bernadette Thanh Huong and Sr. Maria Gioretti Phuong Ly were here from their long-term missions in France. I am currently looking forward to the return of some young sisters who left during my time here, including Sr. Maria Truyen who has been giving service in Rome. I believe that you all will be seeing our beloved provincial bursar, Sr. Marie Tri Trien, this summer at the sabbatical program. I am sure you will enjoy any time you spend with her.

Since moving here almost two years ago, I haven't seen as much of my friends from Ho Chi Minh City. However, I have taken the 7 hour bus ride a few times and am always glad to meet up with them when I can. One of my joys of this past year has been finding some priestly students whose English is good enough that we can actually share about theology, philosophy, and politics. We often exchange books and articles on faith and reason. I am in complete sympathy with Sr. Sheila Patenaude's comments in regard to the ennui of teaching only English and have, therefore, found my time with these students a refreshing oasis.

Another blessing of last year was the presence of Srs. Sue and Andrina for the general visit to the province. It was like a ray of light, reminding us that we truly are FMM. Sr. Andrina stayed on after to lead a session on knowing oneself and living in an integrated, wholistic way for local superiors and those working in formation. I was grateful for the two days which I attended.

As I mentioned last year, our province continues to grow and develop in its missionary sendings as well. This past year we sent 2 sisters to Taiwan, 2 to Poland

– (they are doing well with their language studies even as they adjust to the cold weather!) - and one to Malaysia. We have also had many temporary sendings of young religious to help them with their integration into the Institute and more maturity in their vocational discernment. We have sisters, young and old, in Sri Lanka, India, and France doing studies. More and more sisters are now requesting mission sendings abroad in order to live more fully our missionary vocation. Finally, we have a gifted young sister awaiting departure for her mission in Italy, where she will partake in the ministry of repairing the tapestries in Vatican City. She is currently studying Italian at a local church.

Mission in Vietnam is changing as well and may involve more short-term stays. We currently have Sr. Pushpa from India on a one-year commitment to teach intensive English for the first-year prenovices in Saigon. With new and stricter visa regulations, however, even this will probably no longer be possible unless the one who comes is also studying or has a commitment to teach in a language center.

Finally, I wish to mention two young sisters who passed away last year. Both were named Hue, were around 40 years old, and suffered from cancer. One died at the beginning of last year and the other at the end - with the blessing of Sr. Sue and Andrina's presence at her passing. I ask you to remember them in your prayers.

That's all for now. May God bless you and keep you in all things and may the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace.

Your sister in Christ,
Sheila Lehmkuhle, fmm
Province of Vietnam



SR. PLANTE SPEAKS AT MINING PRESENTATION

Franciscans International at UN



A descendant of the Chippewa, a Native North American Indian people, Sister Mary Theresa Plante, FMM of the FI-New York advocacy team makes a point forcefully (Photo) during her presentation on the panel, "Social Inclusion in Mining Practices: Free, Prior and Informed Consent." Mary Theresa reminded the audience that, "For the indigenous, land is not a marketable commodity. The loss and destruction of land through mining may mean that the entire culture is threatened in the past, the present and the future." Stressing the wisdom of the Native American, Mary Theresa invoked this prophecy of the Cree Indigenous People: "When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover that you cannot eat money." The panel was a side event held on 08 February during the UN Commission for Social Development, whose theme this year is social integration. The event highlighted the negative impacts of mining companies on locally affected communities as well as the attempts by governments to implement extractive industry regulations.

The Mining Working Group of the NGO Committee on the UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples has developed this panel and three others on the mining topic to be held, appropriately nuanced to capture each Commission theme, in each of the four major UN Commissions this year: UN Commission for Social Development, UN Commission for the Advancement of Women, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and UN Commission for Sustainable Development. Sister Kathie Uhler, OSF of the FI-NY advocacy team, a member of the working group, reports that this is possibly the first time a side event will illustrate the cross-cutting character of UN Commission themes.

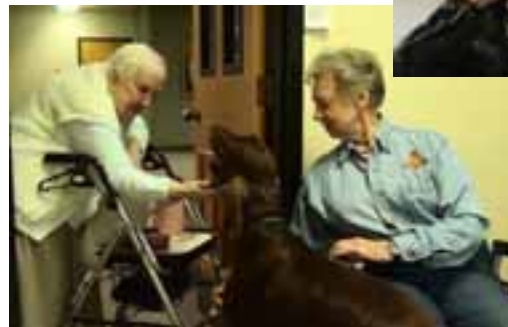
(Used with permission)

Sisters (at Fruit Hill) enjoyed the visit of these friendly dogs and were able to interact with them..

Dogs Gone to Sisters



Savina D'Agostino



Marie-Paule Gobeil



Caterina Isonni & Josie Pappadaniel



Amalia Dandarillas

My Name is 'Promise'

Naked and seeming dead,
Branches bathed in silhouette,
Stands tall,
Shrouded in silence.
Sentinel of the road
At a turn in the road
She stretches and
Poses on tip - toe
To see beyond the bend.

But all is darkness.

Settling down
Into her nakedness,
She peers within
And lo, embers glow,
Sap begins to rise.
She stretches tall
Shrouded in silence
Shimmering with expectation
Shivering with apprehension
Shouting with joy,
"And my name IS 'Promise'".

Mary Ann Loughlin, F.M.M.
December 1, 1983



Sr. Anne Dundin has been using her English as a Second Language education to instruct Sr. Nhung Pham, a young Sister belonging to a religious congregation founded by an MEP missionary in Hanoi



many years ago. Nhung translates from Vietnamese the name of her congregation as Beloved of the Cross.



This writing is from one of my students at the Detention Center. He is already an older man: It does not have any title nor ending, but I was so proud of him!

"Impossible? No!

Difficult? Yes!

Well, things are going a little slow; but, God, I'm making some progress. I'm sure glad I'm on the right path that will lead me to freedom. I had a rough day yesterday. I chose wrong thinking all day long. Father, forgive me, and help me to "keep on keeping on." I made a mistake but at least that is one mistake I won't have to make again This is a new day. You love me, Lord. Your mercy is new every morning. I refuse to be discouraged. I refuse to be condemned. Father, the bible says that you don't condemn me. You sent Jesus to die for me. I'll be fine. Today will be a great day, You help me choose right thoughts today.

Be patient with yourself!

I repeat: don't receive condemnation. Your total victory will come. But it will take time because it will come "little by little".

I hear the knock - That's knowledge
I go to the door - That's conviction
I open the door - That's communication

Marie-Paule Willem, fmm



From Blessed Mary of the Passion ...

Embrace your missionary life
with a generous heart.

JO 715