



Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate

SISTERS' JOURNEY

DECEMBER 2015

A Trip to the Ranch

The skies were dark and there was a promise of rain that had materialized only slightly but we were all bright and eager to go. It was Tuesday, November 17, 2015. We had an invitation to Mt. Echo Ranch. There were 14 of us Sisters and a friend who is an archivist, Cecilia. Why the excitement and why the archivist? The answer is simple - we were headed for "Mother Margaret's Ranch".

As many of you may know, Mother Margaret Mary Healy-Murphy is our

foundress. Mother Margaret had a very interesting history. Mt. Echo Ranch was an important part of that history, a history that spanned not only the Mexican-American War, but the Civil War as well. J.B. Murphy - lawyer, judge, Mayor of Corpus Christi and signer of the Texas Constitution - was the husband of Margaret Mary. Mt. Echo Ranch was their home during much of those troubled times. After J.B.'s death, Mrs. Murphy, who always had a passion for the poor and neglected, intensified her

search for ways to serve them. In that search she felt inspired by the Holy Spirit to reach out to the disenfranchised, newly-emancipated slaves. To assist her in this work, she founded our Congregation.

For us then, Mt. Echo Ranch is a treasure and a place to which we love to return. There we feel her spirit and her loving care as we remember all she did to care for others, especially the poor. What makes our visits there even more special is that the present owners, Andrea (whom we call Andi) Estes and her husband, Monte, are so enthusiastic about the history of the Ranch. They have invested much time, effort and finances in preserving it as an historical landmark. In fact, Andi, together with Cecilia, the archivist mentioned above, continue to do very valuable research. We have gained so much more information about our beloved foundress through them. Each time any of us goes to the Ranch we hear of new findings. No wonder we were all so bright and eager to go.

Sister Geraldine Klein



Celebrating Sister Gabriella at Project Quest Luncheon

On Wednesday, November 4, 2015, Project Quest held its annual Fundraising Luncheon. This year one of the honorees was our own Sister Gabriella Lohan.

It was a beautiful event and many of our sisters were present along with hundreds of other guests. Gabriella's family members, Carmel, Deirdre and John were also present.

To tell the Quest story, they showed a video of many of the successful students whose lives have been changed by Project Quest.

In her acceptance of the award, Gabriella named many of the people who

partnered with her and with Quest to bring about the success that it has achieved. Among other things, Gabriella said: "The mission of my Congregation, the Sisters of the Holy Spirit, is to be a prophetic voice for justice in a world of injustice and poverty. The purpose of Cops/Metro Alliance is to build sustainable political power through organized people. For me, both realities converged, enabling me to pursue my calling faithfully."

Over the last 25 years, I have organized alongside many COPS/Metro leaders, and have partnered with religious, political, business, educational

and other community leaders to make Project Quest an enduring and successful strategy that liberates thousands of our neighbors from poverty and gives them a chance to live a life of dignity and provide opportunity for their children."

We want to thank and congratulate Gabriella for all she has done to make Project Quest the effective organization that it is today.





“Whatever You Do for the Least...” (Mt. 25:40)



Thirty-seven years ago a foresighted Holy Spirit Sister, Sister Rosario, witnessed abuse and neglect of God’s precious little ones as she ministered to the poor in Houma, LA. Gifted with a great visionary spirit, like our founder, Mother Margaret, she responded to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and

children were saved, educated and, above all, loved through this program.

Today, Sister Rosario continues to minister and respond to the needs of neglected children with the help of another Holy Spirit Sister, Sister Carmelita, who joined her two years ago. Sis-

ter Carmelita believes that challenge is always exciting and when placed in our path is always guided by God’s Spirit. She states: “Children come to us broken, battered, abused and very fragile. They are looking for a safe haven and for love and, in this place, they receive these in full measure.” Sister Carmelita tutors, consoles and comforts as much as possible along with dedicated caregivers and volunteers. All believe it is their privilege and joy to be able to minister to God’s precious children and to fulfill Jesus’ request : “Suffer the little children to come to Me.” To see the children leave the program more self-assured and confident is reward beyond measure.

Sister Carmelita Mulry

Since I retired from a full-time occupation of being a Medical Social Worker with Hospice, my work has been, and continues to be, a compos-



ite of various types – namely:

- 1) Caring for 19-20 automobiles at the Motherhouse (maintenance/State inspection/tire replacement/and general upkeep).
- 2) Working as a part-time Receptionist at Oblate Renewal Center on week-ends/evenings.
- 3) Volunteering with the homeless at Haven for Hope.

Haven for Hope is a transitional facility providing a comprehensive system of care while addressing the root causes of homelessness – a place of hope and new beginnings. My small contribution of working with a team of retired professionals focuses on I.D. recovery i.e. the acquisition of a TX I.D. /TX driver’s license/

retrieval of birth certificates or school records, etc. for those individuals who need such. In addition, listening to individuals’ “stories” while providing hope and encouragement is a vital part of this work.

As a receptionist and provider of information at Oblate Renewal Center, I interact with the many groups/ individuals who attend conferences, retreats and meetings of various types. My work focuses on being a hospitable, supportive and reliable resource as I endeavor to meet the needs of the person(s) who are temporary guests.

I consider myself fortunate to be able to continue helping in these areas despite age and limited energy levels.

Sister Vera Ruane



“I Was in Prison and You Visited Me...” (Mt. 25:36)



On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 –11:30 a.m., I volunteer at Crosspoint at the Summit – our former Motherhouse building. This is a private, non-profit facility for men in the final step of transition from incarceration to life back in the community. The facility presently houses 23 veterans and 50 prisoner inmates.

Since the men are allowed in the library only if there is someone there to monitor, I provide that service. When the men come in, I greet them and have them sign in. By being present in the library, I get to know them, answer their questions, or get staff to help them.

The prison inmates, since they know they must find a job before they are allowed to leave Crosspoint, come to the library primarily to look up jobs via the internet. They are all also allowed to check out books.

The veterans who are housed at Crosspoint are, for the most part, homeless men waiting to qualify for government subsidized housing. I try to find opportunities to speak with all of them. I am delighted to be able to help them in any way I can in their efforts to integrate back into society as responsible citizens.

Sister Irene Arredondo

“I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food...” (Mt. 23:35a)

After retiring from teaching at St. Philip the Apostle school in Dallas, I became involved in a very important ministry known as C.A.M. (Christian Assistance Ministry). This program provides food and clothing to the homeless and poor.

We, the volunteers, try to the best of our ability to meet the needs of those in need regardless of their religious affiliation. Jesus challenges all of us to respond to the

immediate needs of those around us. This spirituality demands that we extend kindness into the ordinary situations of daily life.

I take great delight in working at C.A.M. However, it can also be a challenge due, in part, to a lack of sufficient suitable clothing, particularly jeans for men.

Our clients are extremely grateful for

what we can do for them and our service is without a doubt an important spiritual virtue that Jesus requires of us.



Sister Louise McLoughlin

“I Was Ill and You Cared for Me...” (Mt. 25:36b)



I, Sister Jane Frances Ambrose, am currently involved in pastoral ministry in two nursing homes, in Brownsville, Texas: Ebony Lake and Brownsville Rehabilitation Nursing Home. I offer emotional and spiritual support to residents and family members - to persons of all faith. I listen to their stories and give encouragement when it is needed. I also distribute Holy Communion to those who wish to receive. I pray at the bed-

sides of the residents and also at their funerals.

I enjoy working in this capacity as it enables me to assist those who are helpless in one way or another. And they are so very appreciative for any little thing I do for them! This keeps me humble! For me, Pastoral Care is a very rewarding ministry!

Sister Jane Frances Ambrose



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WE NEED EACH OTHER: A Letter from Sister Geraldine Klein

Dear Friends,

Since this is the first *Sisters' Journey* to come your way since I took office, I would like to introduce myself. I am Sister



Geraldine Klein, the new Congregational Leader for the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate. I am Texan born, raised in the Hill Country of Texas in the little town of Fredericksburg. I am quite sure that many of you know of Fredericksburg and have even been

there. When I go home to visit I see that many people have arrived before me! Before taking office I ministered in Zambia in southern Africa for 27 years. This was a wonderful, life-changing experience.

I am grateful that I now have the opportunity to serve my Sisters in the Congregation and all the many people with whom

we are in contact, including you. We continue to search for what

God is asking of us at this time. We are aware of so many challenges and needs around us and in the world in general. One thing is sure, we know we all have to work together. That is, after all, the Christian call: together in communion with Christ.

If there is something you see on which we might be able to partner, please let us know. We need you to help us spread the word to young women that God is calling some of them to serve Him and His people in Religious Life and, in particular, in our Congregation. We need your insights and experience to help us know how we might contribute to bettering family life as so many families struggle to be better families amidst the sea of challenges in today's world. WE NEED EACH OTHER.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will fill each of you with light and hope and peace. May you have a joyful Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Sister Geraldine Klein

