



SISTERS' JOURNEY

DECEMBER 2016

A Day to Remember

November 24th may not stand out in your memory. But for the SHSps in Zambia, it is a day that we will not forget easily. Our Sr. Maimbolwa Lutangu graduated on that day. The day was most significant, of course, for Sr. Maimbolwa herself. But it was also a special day for me. I had the privilege of representing our SHSps here in Zambia, and indeed all SHSps, at the wonderful event. Each graduate received tickets for two guests to enter the Graduation Arena; I had one.

There were over a thousand graduates that day, and I was happy for all of them, but my focus was on one person, our Sister. On 24th November Sr. Maimbolwa gradu-

ated from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University with a Master of Science Degree in Counseling. She graduated with Distinction. That is equivalent to Summa Cum Laude/Magna Cum Laude. She looked gorgeous and radiant in her magnificent gown, cowl and cap.

After the beautiful, colorful well organized ceremony, we gathered at a nearby Shopping Centre with some of Sr. Maimbolwa's family and friends for pizza, topped off with ice cream. Back here at home, a couple of days later, Sr. Peggy organized a lovely celebration in Limulunga. All of us helped with the festive meal to honor our Sister.

It was not only a lovely celebration of Maimbolwa, but a great community evening also.

We are delighted for you and are so proud of you, our Sister!

Sister Christina Mitchell



Volunteering After Retirement

For many years I had been the coordinator for the Sisters who lived on the First Floor of the Motherhouse Convent. Since I retired from this full time ministry, I continue to be involved with many of the Sisters in a special way. Each August I invite the retired Sisters to a meeting.



At that time we dialogue about their abilities and the possibility of continuing in a volun-

teer ministry. I present several options to them about continuing to reach and touch the lives of others. Each Sister chooses a place, one of the hospitals, a senior citizens residence, the day care or high school at Healy Murphy Center, etc. I coordinate with the directors at these places and arrange for transportation to and from the facility. The Sisters who volunteer look forward to their ministry. The joy they receive from the people exceeds what they bring to them.

This past year I coordinated a transportation team between the Sisters in the larger community and the Holy Rosary first floor community.

Each driver adopted a Sister in Holy Rosary community and takes the Sister on a monthly outing. Some of the outings have included a trip to the Hill Country, San Fernando Cathedral, the Missions, dining out and enjoying a hamburger away from home. The Sisters in Holy Rosary community are always ready to go and look forward to the next month's trip.

When there is a need and time is available, I also do medical driving. This is an outing for me, as well as volunteering my time and enjoying my retirement.

Sister Mona Gavin



Project Mercy 2016

Sister Mary Fagan

As I was leaving a presentation on the Year of Mercy at St. Mark's Parish in April, I was handed a note by one of the planners. I opened the envelope and saw that two crisp \$100 bills had been included. Instinctively, I thought the money was for "bus passes" that kind parishioners often provide for the Healy Murphy students and I smiled in gratitude. When I read the note later I discovered that the money was meant to be used as seed money for my students to design a "work of mercy" in honor of this Holy Year of Mercy. I must admit that I feared the timing for this project, being so close to the end of the school year, might doom it to a less than generous response.

I stand completely corrected and forever transformed by this magnanimous offer. Each of my English III (juniors) students designed a plan for how they could do the most loving deed with that \$200. For many of them, it was difficult, because their own needs and the needs of their families are so immediate, but each of them reached down to the true essence of mercy and created a plan of extravagant kindness for those who are on the edges of the grid of attention. Their targets included:

- the homeless who spend their days under the 1-37 bridge,
- the teachers, staff, and students of Healy Murphy,
- Children who are hospitalized,
- Residents at Haven for Hope,
- San Antonio Fire Department and Boys' and Girls' Clubs,
- Patients receiving dialysis,
- Mothers of newborns and toddlers,
- Shoes for those who walk long distances to work,
- Animal care and Environmental concerns,

- Textbooks for a student at St. Philip's College.

In order to stir up some enthusiasm for the project I designated a prize for the two best projects. The second prize was for a project that would give roses to

The quality of mercy is not strained.

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

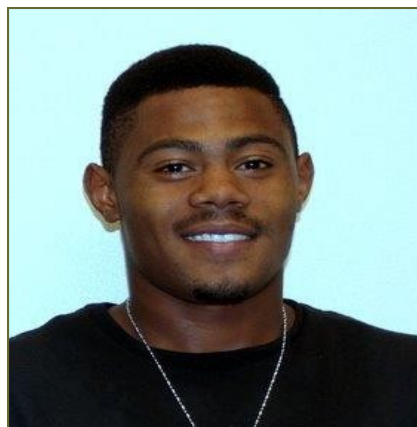
Upon the Place beneath.

It is twice blessed:

It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

-William Shakespeare

abused women. The first prize went to the most impractical and risky yet most merciful suggestion. I include Anthony Ross' plan in his own words: "I see her every day as I pull up to the Handy Stop on the Eastside. She just sits there in front of the abandoned house on the side of the store. She is in and out of cars of strange men she hardly knows. Different drugs are running through her veins. Things for her are out of control. I thought to myself, "What can I do to remind her that things get better?" I give her my last



HMC Graduate Anthony Ross

change every time I come out of the store. She tells me "Thank You" every time so I know she has some manners. I never see her in trouble with the police, just always on the streets. I hardly ever see people speak to her as they walked past. Some just throw crumbled dollars at her as she sits in the same spot awaiting another mission."

If I had \$200, I would buy her a "Crossed Paths Friendship Necklace" from James Avery for \$120 to remind her that even though she's in a tough situation, she still has a friend like me that cares for her. The rest I would give to her as spending money. I don't even know her name.

— Anthony Ross

The following week Anthony showed me a picture of himself and his beneficiary wearing her neck-lace and beaming with the kind of grace that no money could buy. **The story is not over yet.**

I sent all of the students' plans to the kind woman who untapped the flow of mercy in my students, yet wanted to remain anonymous. Within days, she hand delivered notes to some of the students and an outline for future projects and **20 more \$100 bills.** She trusts that the Healy Murphy students know the faces and stories of those who most need to taste God's mercy "like rain on their faces".

The word "mercy" has become one of the most popular words at Healy Murphy during these last weeks of the spring semester, thanks to this noble woman who trusted students she does not even know to be conduits of money and mercy. Mercy truly does "twice bless" as Shakespeare said.

The entire responses of the 32 students can be found at our website www.shsp.org. They are most inspiring.



Obituaries

Sister Rosario O'Connell, SHSp, MSW, was born in Ireland on March 12, 1929, where she was raised and educated in a loving family. After completion of high school, she became a member of the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate and came to Texas. After her religious and educational training she spent many years teaching. In the early 70's Sister Rosario decided to get a Master's Degree in Social Work and in 1972 she began ministering to families in the New Orleans area. During this time she witnessed many abused and broken young children who desperately needed healing and safety. So, she

set out to try to find a safe haven for them, with the blessing and encouragement of Archbishop Hannon. With \$37 in her pocket and the support of the Houma community she developed a first class program: The Louis Children's Crisis Center. To this day, the program has saved and benefited generations of troubled and abused youth. After 37 years of dedicated service to her beloved Louis Children's Crisis Center, Sister Rosario went to her eternal reward on January 26, 2016. "Sister Rosie's" story lives on and her commitment and care of God's children are an example to all Christians.



Sister Rosario O'Connell

Sister Laura Melody died peacefully on November 4, 2016 at her home, the Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate at 94 years of age. She was born in County Galway, Ireland on October 26 1922. She joined the Sisters of the Holy Spirit in Mountbellew, County Galway and came to Texas just prior to the outbreak of World War II in Europe.

For many years Sister Laura served as a teacher and/or principal in several of the schools staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Spirit in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. After completing her studies at Harvard University in 1976 she joined the faculty at St. Philip's College where she taught English for

approximately 25 years. Not only was Sister Laura a diligent teacher, striving for excellence in herself and her students, she was also an avid advocate with city agencies on behalf of the people who lived and worked with her for the development of the Eastside Community. Throughout the 1980's she was involved with Habitat for Humanity on the Westside and persistently urged for its expansion to San Antonio's Eastside. She served consecutive 3-year terms on its Board of Directors. Sister Laura is survived by her sister, Ita, and brother-in-law, nieces, nephew, other relatives, the members of her religious Congregation, many friends and former co-workers and students.



Sister Laura Melody



Sister Mary Patricia

Sister Mary Patricia Walsh died peacefully, as she always lived, on September 16, 2016 at the Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate. She was born in County Galway, Ireland on September 18, 1925 and joined the Sisters of the Holy Spirit in 1947. Sister Patricia was an elementary school teacher who delighted in the innocence and thirst for learning in her young students at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in San Antonio and in other schools in Texas and

Louisiana. She brought her artistic gifts to her many ministries. Most recently she served as the community sacristan and did so with grace and dignity. Sister Patricia is survived by her brother, Anthony, her nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, the members of her religious Congregation and many other friends and former students.



Healy-Murphy Center Dedicates Renovated Community Engagement Hall

By Camille Garcia, September 16, 2016 Rivard Report

The Healy-Murphy Center's former St. Peter Claver chapel on the Eastside was packed with a standing room only crowd Friday morning to celebrate the newly-renovated structure's dedication as the Holy Spirit Hall Center for Family and Community Engagement.

After six months of renovations, the community engagement center – which was named after the Sisters of the Holy Spirit, who dedicated their lives to the Healy-Murphy property since its beginning – features new audio/visual equipment and will act as a learning and gathering space for the youth Healy-Murphy serves with educational, social, and health resources.

“(The building) once served as a place of hope, of refuge, care and freedom, of closeness to the sacred,” said Sr. Geraldine Klein, Healy-Murphy Center board president, during a prayer she led. “... It is no longer a church, but much effort, time, and resources have been put into renovating it in order to make it again a place of hope, of refuge, care and free-

dom and of relationship to others.”

As an Eastside landmark, the Healy-Murphy Center – located at 618 Live Oak St. – serves at-risk youth who either dropped out or are in danger of dropping out of the traditional school system. Healy-Murphy youth can participate in accredited high school diploma or G.E.D. programs, and receive literacy and career development and training. In addition, the organization also provides an on-site daycare and parenting classes to pregnant or parenting teens. All participants are able to receive health services such as check-ups and nutrition education, and any teen who has been a victim of abuse can take part in support groups and counseling services offered at the center.

Healy-Murphy officials envision the Center for Family and Community Engagement aiding in the continuing growth and neighborhood revitalization efforts on the Eastside. “(The building) was in bad need of renovations,” said Healy-Murphy Executive Director

Douglas Watson. The center will also welcome the broader community, he added, for activities such as parenting workshops, support groups, health fairs, and performing arts programs, among other things.

Friday's dedication of the building comes 128 years to the day after Mother Margaret Mary Healy-Murphy, who strongly fought against prejudice toward the black community, welcomed the first group of people to St. Peter Claver, the first Catholic Church and school for the black community in Texas.



Healy-Murphy Child Development Ministry *Sister Kathleen Huguet*



I am a full time teacher for San Antonio Independent School District and I am stationed at Healy Murphy Child Development Center. My students are three year olds. There are many joys in working at HMCDC. I enjoy watching the

children as they master the social skills needed to become part of the class "family". I also like interacting with teen moms as they drop their children off before heading to school or college. The staff is wonderful and I have learned a lot from them as they work with infants to four year old children. The people I serve are children who are being raised in all types of family situations. There are single moms, single dads, grand-parents and foster moms of all ages. The one thing they all hold in common is that they love their children and want the best for them.

Each day I wake up with the excitement

of wondering what the day will bring. What new insights will I receive from my students or their parents? What new piece of information will I learn that will help them succeed?

I remember back to the days after the Novitiate when I was looking for a job. I spent a year subbing and wondering what would be in store for me. I would never have guessed the beautiful plan God had in mind for me. A job appeared where there was none and I have learned that God's plan is always better than the one I dream up.



The Tobit Ministry *Sister Jo Murray*

I volunteer at Catholic Worker House and I also serve on the CWH Board. Recently one of our full-time staff members, Dennis Washington, died unexpectedly during the night of a heart attack. Dennis was formerly one of our homeless guests who came to CWH for meals. He was a willing worker and was welcomed to join the volunteer resident community who live next door in Faith House. Sister Kathleen Mary Walsh was the one who secured Faith House as a donation to The Catholic Worker in the 1980's.

Dennis was the third person who died at Faith House. Kim Ruskoski, a homeless Korean woman who lived in a private apartment at Faith House preceded Dennis in death. Urusolo Olivan, a home-less man from Mexico who had cancer, had to leave Haven for Hope when he was put on hospice. He came to live in the apartment after Kim's death and died there in 2012.

When homeless people die where are they buried? Sometimes family members, relatives or others bury them. Many homeless people are buried in the "Paupers' Graves" section of a cemetery. Here in San Antonio

that cemetery is on the far south side of the city outside Loop 1604. Now the more recent answer in our city to burying homeless people is The Tobit Ministry initiated and largely funded by Paul and Betty Vance, who purchased an area in the Cordi-Marian Sisters' Resurrection cemetery which is now called The Tobit Garden. "The Tobit ministry devotes itself to the reverent burial of men and women who were homeless and have no other options provided by family or friends". The particular faith and culture of the deceased person is respected.

Paul Vance chose December 8, 2015, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which was also the opening of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, for the dedication of The Tobit Garden, since "burying the dead" is one of the corporal works of mercy (Matt. 25:40). The mother and daughter of the deceased man, Dennis Washington, were notified of the dedication. Word was spread among Dennis's family and friends, and many of them came from as far away as Houston and Corpus Christi to attend the ceremony. It was a blessed time of reuniting and remembering for many of them who had been out of

touch for many years and had not seen Dennis since he was a child.

On March 5, 2016, a Memorial Mass was celebrated at the Tobit Garden by Archbishop Gustavo Siller. After Mass, a procession for the transference of the remains of Urusolo and Dennis to their permanent grave sites took place. Since Kim's death had occurred prior to the establishment of the Tobit Garden her remains will soon be transferred from her present gravesite to the Tobit Garden. Thus all three who had resided at Faith House will be buried side by side. Again, Paul Vance has generously offered to assume the entire cost of the transfer and burial.

The Tobit Garden is beautifully landscaped. It includes a sculpture of the 'Homeless Jesus' lying beneath a blanket on a bench. (The sculpture was inspired by the bronze statue presented to Pope Francis by artist Timothy Schmalz). The Tobit Ministry seeks out partnerships with individuals and organizations concerned with the poorest people in our community. For further information on this ministry of mercy go to www.tobitministry.org.

We Really Need Each Other *A Letter from Sister Geraldine Klein*

The year has rolled by quickly again and what a year it has been! There are times when I don't know whether to be grateful for the challenges we face or just sit down and say, "Nothing can be done". But you and I know that the latter is not really an option. Yes, things can look far too big for us to undertake or to challenge, but I, for one, believe that not only am I, or are we, not alone, we always have the upper hand. How? First, the old saying, "There is power in numbers" (of people) gives hope, and secondly, and most importantly, the One who created us and loves us unconditionally is ALWAYS WITH US. Isn't that what we celebrate at Christmas: Emmanuel, God with us! Believe it!

I attended the Assembly of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious this past August and one of the speakers gave a powerful reflection on "Finding Ground in a

Groundless Age". It is important that we come to understand that you and I live in an unprecedented time when humanity is shifting to another level of consciousness. We are living on the edge of something that is not-yet and hence it is difficult to see anything but that we are trying to stand on shifting ground. However, I believe it is a privileged time. We are part of the "New Creation". "See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Is. 43:19) The Jesuit priest Teilhard de Chardin once wrote, "Our role is ...through every form of effort to raise the power of love upward..." There is a song by Bernadette Farrell, "Love Goes On". In that song there is a verse that says, "Love alone has shaped our souls and our hearts are always restless/ Until Love becomes our purpose, new creation to unfold." I think that captures the "why" and the "what" of the movement to the "New Creation".

Does that all sound too philosophical, too abstract? Well, when you boil it down it's what Jesus told us, "Love one another *as I have loved you*." When we really try to live that way, it raises the powers of love upward. When we uphold the dignity of each person, when we look beyond the cracks in another's personality, when we let go of our cherished position and truly listen to the other, when we let go of our fears and step forward to relate to a homeless person—all of these actions raise the power of love upward. The time has come when each one of us can change the world around us into a caring, thoughtful, respectful place. Let's do it and let's do it together.

We need each other! Thank you for what you do, for you are raising the powers of love upward. Emmanuel has come and is with us. We believe and rejoice.

Sister Geraldine Klein



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The Murphy Ranch House

On October 26, 2017, a van and two cars filled with Holy Spirit Sisters (approximately 19) pulled out of the driveway of the Motherhouse. They were headed to ECHO RANCH, Mother Margaret's one-time home. They went to attend the unveiling ceremony of a Historical Marker which was to be placed on the Murphy Ranch House. The ceremony was an all-inclusive event of people, organizations, public officials,



etc. The Invocation, Color Guard Procession and Pledges involved the Corpus Christi Fire Department. The National Anthem was beautifully sung by a member of the River Hills Baptist Church, Corpus Christi. The highlight of the day was an Open Air Play entitled "Legacies of the Past", vignettes from Mother Margaret's life, presented by students from Texas A&M University, Del Mar College and the Home

School Association of Corpus Christi. Following this production, Sister Geraldine gave a brief historical overview of the Congregation from the time of Mother Margaret to our present day. The Proclamation of Dedication was delivered by the Honorable Judge Huff from the Historical Commission. The marker, already in place by the front door of Mother Margaret's home, was unveiled. The Sisters then enjoyed a picnic lunch on the grounds of our Foundress, Mother Margaret's ranch.

Sister Marguerite

