



**Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate**

# SISTERS' JOURNEY

Summer 2010

## Celebrating 2010 Jubilarians

Our Jubilee Celebration on June 4, 2010 was truly a beautiful and festive occasion as we honored the ten women who marked special anniversaries of vowed life in our Congregation.

### Our Jubilarians

#### 70 Years

Claire Veronica Connellan, SHSp  
Mary Garrehy, SHSp

#### 60 Years

Eugenius Gallaher, SHSp  
Mary Greene, SHSp  
Catherine Killoran, SHSp  
Rosetta Leonard, SHSp  
Patricia Ann McManus, SHSp

#### 50 Years

Gabriella Lohan, SHSp  
Peggy O'Flaherty, SHSp  
Vera Ruane, SHSp



2010 Jubilarians: (Seated L-R) Sisters Gabriela Lohan, Vera Ruane, Peggy O'Flaherty, Patricia Ann McManus; (Standing L-R) Sisters Mary Greene, Catherine Killoran, Mary Garrehy, Eugenius Gallagher, Claire Veronica Connellan, and Rosetta Leonard.

The Sisters represent almost 600 years of dedicated service in ministries as varied as the women we honor this year. Here, either in their own words or in the words of their Sisters, are reflections on some of those years.

**Sister Claire Veronica:** Life is like a song — mystery to confirmation with all the in-betweens that form us. In retrospect such has been my life. I was born in Ennis, County Clare Ireland. In 1937 I surprised my parents and siblings by deciding to become a nun, as I was the most lively one in the family. I entered the Holy Spirit Convent in Mt. Bellew and joined the community in San Antonio, Texas in 1938. I have fond memories, especially of the choirs I prepared to give glory to God in church as well as enjoyment to concert audiences. Now, after 70 years of service, it's time to confirm that the Holy Spirit was with me all the way. My sincere thanks to my God and to my wonderful religious congregation.

**Sister Mary Garrehy:** I was born in Ireland in 1921, the third of six children and the first girl born to Martin and Katherine Garrehy. During the Senior's Retreat at

St. Mary's Secondary School, a priest asked me what my future plans were. I promptly answered "I'd like to go to Uganda to teach." He mentioned a convent in Mt. Bellew, Co. Galway and suggested I contact the Sisters there. By February 3, 1939, I was on my way to San Antonio, Texas. I have taught in primary, elementary, and secondary schools in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi and retired after 54 years of teaching. I love to cook and did so for ten years after my retirement. I still cook and dabble in crafts. *My God, how great Thou art.*

**Sister Eugenius:** I, Sister Eugenius Gallaher, the daughter of Scottish-Irish parents, was born in beautiful and historic Co. Sligo, Ireland. I was educated by the Marist Sisters in Carrick-on-Shannon, Leitrim, and then attended University College, Dublin before deciding to join the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate. I completed my religious formation at the Motherhouse here in San Antonio. My professional

## A Lifetime of Service: Sister Bridget Mary

Sister Bridget Mary Quinn died peacefully on June 16th after having been on hospice for almost a year. During that time, her physical health was fair but her memory worsened. However, with all of that, she continued to be the same gracious gentle person she always was. Every day Bridget Mary was up in her wheelchair and at activities with the other Sisters. On Friday, June 11th, we noticed a change in Sister's condition. Over the next several days, Sister Bridget Mary's condition continued to deteriorate. On Wednesday morning, there was another change so the Sisters came and stayed praying with her until she finally left us around 8:30 am.

Sister Bridget Mary loved her family, her Holy Spirit Community and her friends. A native of Waterford, Ireland, Sister Bridget Mary entered the convent in 1939. Her ministries included teaching in the various schools of the congregation in Mississippi, New York, and Texas. She also served the



Sister Bridget Mary Quinn SHSp (1920-2010)

congregation as formation director and as General Superior from 1975 until 1983. We are confident that she is interceding with God now for all of us.

## We Welcome a New Novice: Sister Iñutu



The Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate welcome Sister Iñutu Barbara Susiku! Some of our Sisters will remember our new novice as "Barbara". She has decided to use her birth name as a Sister, so she is now Sister Iñutu (pronounced Ing-oo-too).

Sister Iñutu's Reception into Novitiate took place on June 13, in Zambia, at the Moya O Kenile House. All our Sisters from the

other two Zambian houses in the area were present, with Sister Jeri as our Area Superior, leading the ceremony. Sister Iñutu was presented with a copy of our congregation's Constitution, our founder's biography, Margaret: Trailblazer for the Poor, the Program and Policies booklet for novitiate and the Liturgy of the Hours book by Sisters Monica and Isabel, while Sister Jeri explained the significance of each. Sister Rose presented our new novice with the beautiful symbol she will wear during novitiate. Then all of us gathered and blessed our Sister Iñutu.

Sister Iñutu then began the eight-day retreat with which all Sisters begin novitiate. Beginning with retreat makes clear for all of us that the Lord indeed is the Director of the novitiate.

## Celebrating Jubilarians (Continued from page 1)

life culminated in advanced degrees from St. Mary's and Fort Hays Kansas State Universities and certification from Our Lady of the Lake University.

Most of my professional career has been spent in high schools in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, where I taught advanced math and English, tournament speech, piano, arts and crafts, coached basketball, and, (at one stage in Natchez MS) taught the high school boys to master the art of knitting a sweater! I have also taught college in Natchez and Fort Hayes, Kansas, and authored the math curriculum for the Diocese of Dallas.

I enjoy classical music, art, reading, basketball, crocheting, and sight-seeing. Currently I serve as secretary in the Vocation Office and as an editor of the *Sisters' Journey*. Thanks to the Sisters of the Holy Spirit, I have had a full, enjoyable religious life and hope I have impacted the life and living of the many individuals with whom I have come in contact.

**Sister Mary Greene:** As I reminisce on the happy occasion of my Diamond Jubilee, there are some events and experiences that stand out. Growing up in South Roscommon, Ireland, we used to get periodicals in school and at the church telling us about the foreign missions, and I was influenced by these magazines and by the Sisters who were visiting their families and attending daily Mass. I entered St. Philip Convent in Mt. Bellew in 1948, and, by February 1949 was on my way to San Antonio, where I continued my spiritual and professional training. I served as an elementary school teacher, a social worker for the elderly, and in parish ministry. Currently, I am a Eucharistic Minister at Baptist Hospital and visit the elderly in the neighborhood and at a local nursing home. I am grateful to our community for all their support and I feel privileged to be able to carry on the charism of our foundress, Mother Margaret Mary Healy Murphy.

**Sister Catherine:** I was born in Edenderry, Co. Offaly, Ireland, the oldest of Mary and Tom Killoran's four children. My call to the Sisters of the Holy Spirit came in a rather unusual way: I was visiting Dunboyne Castle in Co. Meath when I accidentally met Sister Concepta Clerkin, who was there to recruit candidates for her community. After visiting with her I decided to join the Sisters and came to San Antonio in 1949, where I completed my religious formation and my professional education. I served in elementary education in my earlier years and, since 1970, have been involved in reli-



*The Jubilarians and their family and friends gathered for Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church.*

gious education and parish ministry in Texas, in Louisiana, and in Mississippi. This work has always been both energizing and challenging for me, I am grateful to God for His blessings and for the support and encouragement of my community over the past 60 years. I trust that the good Lord will give me whatever I'll need to continue doing His work for many more fruitful years.

**Sister Rosetta:** As I reflect on my life and its journey, I am aware that the Spirit works in various ways. I am the oldest of six children born to Ellen and Patrick Leonard in Galway. In school, we read magazines showing missionaries at work in far away places, and I set my sights on going to Africa as a missionary. All that changed when I met the Holy Spirit Sisters at a retreat at their convent in Galway when I was in 6th grade. That's when I heard of their missionary works in far away Texas. Expect the unexpected! I have served in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi as a teacher and school administrator, and I have taught religious education in both schools and parishes. After I retired, I became involved in the internal ministry in the congregation. I have also been involved in the struggles for human rights, in social justice, in the rights of the marginalized, and have participated in neighborhood development. My whole life has been filled with joy, satisfaction, and blessings. I express my gratitude daily to the Holy Spirit, to Our Lady, to my family and to my Sisters for my wonderful life.

**Sister Patricia Ann:** For over 43 years, Sister Patricia Ann was a teacher in Texas, Mississippi, and Louisi-

## Come and See!

*The Spirit Sends Us to Proclaim  
the Good News to the Poor*

Come and experience what it's like to live in a convent. Participate in prayer, meals, and recreation with the Sisters. Walk in the shadow of Mother Margaret, our foundress. Learn about our charism, our ministries our spirituality, and our great love for God's poor.

Spend a day, a weekend, a week with the Sisters to learn first-hand how the Sisters live out their lives through the vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience.

We have two "Come and See" weekends annually, one in the Spring and one in the Fall. Our Fall date is October 22-24.

If you feel you would like to visit at any other time, please let us know. If three or four ladies show an interest in that time, we can make arrangements to meet your schedule.

To add your name (no strings attached) to our "Come and See" mailing list, email Sister Gabriel Hession at [sghession@hotmail.com](mailto:sghession@hotmail.com) or call 210-533-5149, ext. 142.



Vocation Co-Directors Sister Genevieve Cunningham (left) and Sister Gabriel Hession (right).

## Celebrating Jubilarians, *Continued from page 3*

ana, and ended her career as a counselor at Mt. Carmel Academy in New Orleans. In 1986, she was appointed first manager of the St. Joseph's Apartments in New Orleans, La. She continues to serve St. Joseph's community in the church office and directs the distribution of Holy Communion to shut-ins. Whatever Sr. Patricia Ann did in her ministry she did with a dedicated heart. We congratulate her and thank her for her service and dedication to God's people. We wish her many more fruitful years in the service of God and His people. (by Sister Rosario)

**Sister Gabriella:** Thanks for my family who first nurtured me and continue to support me; the Sisters of the Holy Spirit who inspired me to have "a special predilection for the poor" (Constitution 1938 p.3); the children I taught who made me laugh; the parents who taught me to be faithful no matter the cost; the teachers, school board members, and pastors who inspired me to strive for greater professionalism; the friends who helped me discern my motivation, develop authenticity, and become more self-aware. Thanks for the 20 years experience with the Industrial Areas Foundation which taught me the best way to "manifest the compassion of Christ to the poor" (Constitution 1988 p.3) is to teach them how to access education, health care, transportation, and wages that will allow them to live with dignity and have time to rest and celebrate the Sabbath. Thanks be to God for everything.

**Sister Peggy:** Gratitude and humility are what I feel when I reflect on the past 50 years of religious life as a Sister of the Holy Spirit. I have received much love and support -- especially in difficult times -- from our Sisters in my various ministries over the years. The community has offered many opportunities for growth, both academically and spiritually, and I have benefitted from all of them. Along the way, I have made some good friends, both inside and outside the congregation, in the U.S., in Mexico, and now in Zambia. It has been said that we can learn much from the poor; indeed, that they can evangelize us. My experience confirms that opinion and I thank God that after 50 years I can still minister with the poor.

**Sister Vera:** More than fifty years ago, I became a postulant in the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate, and have been a member ever since. Down through the decades, the grace of God and the support of my earthly associates have been my mainstay, guiding my life through the usual growth, with its challenges, joys, and losses. My ministry has been in the

## Ministry Outreach: Journey Back to Texas

*By Sister Kay Jo Evelo*

Thirteen years ago, after twenty-eight years teaching in Louisiana and Mississippi, I learned that Texas was once more going to be my home.

My new assignment was St. Rita's, a delightful, multicultural school and parish, located in the eastern part of Fort Worth. I knew I was going to miss the people with whom I had shared my life with for so long, but the warmth of the principal, teachers, students, and parishioners of St. Rita's soon won my heart.

I was assigned to teach physical education for the next five years — actually, I thought, “a strange job for a Sister”, but I felt it was the “something different” I needed in my life. The school had been without Sisters for seven years, so my coming was considered a blessing. The parents were thrilled, as I came into contact almost daily with every student from kindergarten through eighth grade.

I felt that teaching physical education was just “the right thing” for me. What a joy! What a blast! I taught all the after-school sports throughout that five years. I love sports and had been involved in every sport in my youth — I even played semi-pro (fast pitch) softball during my junior year in high school.

At the end of the fifth year, I felt I had to resign. My 92-year-old Dad was going through hard times, so my community gave me permission to go and live with him in Houston. But, God had other plans and took Dad to Heaven just two months before I was to make my big move.

After Dad died and I was still in Houston, the St. Rita principal called



Always compassionate and interactive, Sister Kay Jo interacts with her fourth grade class at St. Rita School.

and asked if I would accept a teaching position for the coming year — in the fourth grade at the school. I accepted and, for the past eight years, I have been a full-time teacher in the fourth grade and, after school, have coached volleyball, basketball, track, and baseball/softball. I was also the Athletic Director. When not coaching, I tutored my students in math and reading.

The past thirteen years have been filled with love and happiness. God, and everyone at St. Rita's, has blessed and enriched my life — they have been my “second family”. I hope that my presence among them has brought them closer to Christ.

Next year, I shall begin a new phase in my life. My journey continues at St. Rita's where I shall be teaching first and fourth grade religion classes. My other duties will include supervising in-house suspension (when needed); substituting (when needed); striving to enrich and continue our Catholic identity throughout the school; continuing as Athletic Director; and helping out whenever and wherever I am needed.

I will continue to coach after-school sports and be known as "Coach Sr. Kay Jo." I am certainly excited about, and really looking forward to, my new assignment.

*A native of Houston, Texas, Sister Kathryn Joan Evelo joined the Sisters of the Holy Spirit in 1953.*



Sister Kay Jo works with students to raise funds for our mission projects each year. Above: Some of the St. Rita School students give Sister Miriam a \$4,000 check in support of the Sisters' work in Zambia.

## Excerpts of Tributes from Your Holy Spirit Sisters

**Sister Claire Veronica:** Thank you for your gift of music, your love of the classical, and your open-mindedness. Thank you and congratulations!—Sister Carmen

**Sister Mary Garrehy:** I was with Sister Mary during the Christmas holidays around 1945. We were invited to the pastor's house, and on our way there, Sister Mary fell and messed up her two front teeth. A testament to her good nature was the way she smiled when the popular song, "All I Want for Christmas Are My Two Front Teeth," blared from the radio and we all joined in to sing the song to her! —Sister Kathleen Mary

**Sister Eugenius:** Dedicated to her teaching ministry, Sister Eugenius empowered many young people to reach goals that would have been impossible without her inspiration and instruction. Her creativity has prevailed many times within the community, especially in preparation for our various celebrations, such as sea-



Sisters Claire Veronica and Mary Garrehy

sonal festivities, Jubilees, and memorial services. God truly blessed her with a brilliant mind coupled with able hands that turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.— Sister Gabriel

**Sister Mary Greene:** In her quiet and unassuming way, Sister Mary Greene is undoubtedly our most active neighborhood missionary. Thanks to her, the local residents are very well informed about current issues that may affect them, whether it be weatherization or voter registration; they are encouraged to avail of

whatever benefits to which they are entitled. She also is a Eucharistic Minister and visitor at local hospitals and nursing homes. —Sister Mary Margaret

**Sister Catherine:** For your spirituality and for the many talents you have shared in the missions among the very poor, we are so grateful. Your gentle yet powerful organizational skills in religious education and Catholic

### Celebrating Jubilarians, Continued from page 4

fields of education and healthcare; the latter included working at a birth center, a psychiatric hospital and in hospice services. Gratitude for life as experienced through persons, spirituality, events, and nature is trumped only by my inability to find adequate words of grateful expression. Tennyson said, "... echoes roll from soul to soul and live forever and forever..." I hope that I, too, have made some positive, indelible impacts. Being, in the words of Chardin, "a spiritual being on a human journey," I continue to pray for the grace to live in harmony with the Divine and with all aspects of our world until the day I hear from afar: "You are as welcome as the flowers in May" to the shores of Eternity!



Sisters Rosetta, Eugenius, and Peggy O'

identity are invaluable everywhere you minister. (Your delicious baking and cooking for your Sisters are also appreciated!) —Sister Carmen

**Sister Rosetta:** Life for Sister Rosetta has not been a bed of roses. She had her struggle with cancer, and she actually had her chemotherapy sessions while teaching at Holy Family School in Natchez MS, never missing a day of school in the process...Now she spends many days each week caring for the retired and infirm Sisters at Incarnate Word Retirement Center. Her lovely, cheerful smile and friendly spirit continue to bring joy and warmth to all she meets on her daily rounds. —Sister Bea



Sisters Patricia Ann and Mary Greene

the human dignity of all persons is natural to her. Congratulations and God's blessings on your 50th Anniversary.— Sister Bea

**Sister Peggy:** One evening at Mother of Perpetual Help Nursing Home, I was looking everywhere for Sister Peggy. It was about 9 pm when I found her in the dining room at the home. She was patting the hand of one of the female residents, singing to her while trying to get her to eat. This witnessed for me Sister Peggy's genuine, unconditional compassion. —Sister Janet

**Sister Vera:** Vera is a nature lover, always finding time to spend outdoors "befriending the earth," as Thomas Berry would say. Who else, besides St. Francis, would have squirrels eating from her hand? We congratulate you, Sister Vera, on this great occasion and wish you continued success as you move ahead into a possible third career. —Sister Bea



Sisters Vera, Gabriella, and Catherine

**Sister Patricia Ann:** For over 43 years, Sister Patricia Ann was a teacher, and ended her career as the Mt. Carmel Academy counselor. Now she serves at St. Joseph's Church and directs the distribution of Holy Communion to shut-ins. Whatever she did in her ministry, she did with a dedicated heart. We congratulate Sister Patricia for her service to God's people. —Sister Rosario

**Sister Gabriella:** With many outstanding qualities and gifts, Sister Gabriella has done a super job as treasurer for almost twenty years, during which time we have seen our financial assets flourish. We have witnessed her astute performance in the planning and supervision of the building of our new Motherhouse as well as in the sale of our original house. Recognizing

## Preparations Begin for Our 2011 Jubilarians

Already the Jubilarians for 2011 have met with Sr. Mary Fagan to begin planning for their celebration next summer. They have scheduled the community celebration for Friday, June 3, 2011. At this point in time there are eleven people who will celebrate:

- 70 Years: Sisters Laura Melody and Kathleen Mary Walsh
- 60 Years: Sisters Rosario O'Connell, Marguerite Connors, Theresa Queally, Theresa O'Toole, Marie Leonard, Teresa Healy, Mona Gavin, and Eileen Mannion
- 25 Years: Sister Janet Nall

## Message from Sister Miriam—



Dear Friends,

Many are familiar with the phrase “the lazy, hazy days of summer.” Although there is a certain amount of truth in this phrase, I believe summer energizes the seeds of new life nurtured in the spring. As Sister Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB says, “the abundance of produce signals the beauty and bounty

of this period, for summer is the season of ripening and abundance.” For those of us who live in the United States, this summer has also been a time of abundant sunshine and heat!

In this issue of *Sisters’ Journey* I’m delighted to share with you some of the “abundance” we as a Congregation have celebrated this summer. On June 4, ten of our Sisters celebrated fifty (3), sixty (5) and seventy (2) years of vowed life as Sisters of the Holy Spirit. On June 13, at our Formation house in Zambia, Sister Inutu Susiku entered the novitiate, and, on July 16, at the Motherhouse, Sister Kathleen Huguet took temporary vows for one year. Sister Bridget Mary Quinn and Sister Mercedes Kiely, came to the end of their earthly journey and went home to God to experience the abundance and fullness of life which God has prepared for His faithful ones.

Whether celebrating a Reception, Profession, Jubilee or entrance into eternal life, all were wonderful “Community Events” for the Sisters of the Holy Spirit. In San Antonio the Jubilee Celebration was truly the highlight of the summer for us, as we celebrated with the ten Sisters who together, have spent almost 600 years in the service of God and God’s people.

Sister Kathleen and Sister Inutu are signs of hope for the future and it was with great joy that we celebrated the step each one took in the formation process in our Congregation. And, although saying a final good bye to Sisters Bridget Mary and Mercedes was a time of sadness, it was also a time of celebrating lives well lived. I am so grateful to our Sisters and others, both in the U.S. and Zambia, who helped to make all of the celebrations so special.

So much of the abundance we experience, in our lives and our ministry, would not be possible without your generosity to us through prayer, encouragement and financial support. Thank you for your overflowing goodness!

Gratefully in the Holy Spirit,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sister Miriam Mitchell".

Sister Miriam Mitchell, S.H.Sp.  
General Superior



Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate

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to Serve the Poor in Their Need

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