



# Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, USA Province

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A PUBLICATION OF THE USA HANDMAID PROVINCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

## Approbation of the Institute 125 YEARS MARKED

**T**he official existence of every group of consecrated men and women depends on approval by the Church. One hundred twenty-five years ago, the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus reached this important milestone, and set the stage for expansion throughout Spain and other countries.

For the process began in 1875 Mary and Dolores with a group of young entered a novitiate in Within two years, the Córdoba, and were Madrid to continue There, on April 14, given recognition by a beginning Diocesan



Handmaids, this when Raphaela Porras, along Spaniards, Córdoba, Spain. novices left welcomed to their ministry. 1877, they were the Church as religious society.

A little less than ten years after its foundation, and after persistent initiatives and many prayers, the definitive approval of the Institute was given. A decree, written in very inspiring words, was received from the Holy See establishing THE HANDMAIDS OF THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS as a Pontifical Religious Congregation.

The date was January 29, 1887.

To the great joy of the sisters who celebrate this and countless other signs of God's love, this year the day will be commemorated by each Handmaid province throughout the globe. Through a community prayer of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, the Handmaids will ask for the light of the Holy Spirit as they prepare for General Congregation

XIX



### LETTER FROM THE PROVINCIAL

Dear Friends,

As you read this newsletter, I will be in Rome with Sisters Sagrario Núñez and Margaret Scott, representing the USA province as we take part in the Handmaids' General Congregation XIX. Sister Mary Ann Craig will also accompany us. With sisters representing each of the twenty-six countries having a Handmaid presence, we will convene for this world level meeting, whose theme is "*The Lord is changing the Institute. Let us rise to the challenge.*"

While in Rome, we will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the definitive approbation of the Institute of Handmaids by the Church. Sister Inmaculada Fukasawa, General Superior, sees the occasion as a moment to thank God for "His continuing providential care from our very beginnings up to the present moment, to thank the Church which accepts and confirms us in our mission, and to thank Saint Raphaela Mary for her fidelity and profound sense of Church which she passed down to us through the example of her life."

As we witness changes in our Congregation from places through persons and works, we rejoice in all the good being done and open ourselves to newness, asking humbly for your loving prayers and support.

With Gratitude and Hope,

*Sister Dorothy Beck acj*

Sister Dorothy Beck, acj

## PASSIONATE ABOUT THE EUCHARIST



Sr. Margaret Scott, acj, the director of St. Raphaela Center in Haverford, PA, has been travelling the world to speak about her book, *The Eucharist and Social Justice*, now published in both English and Spanish.

At the invitation of the Anglican diocese of Montreal, Sr. Margaret plans to return to Canada in 2012 to continue speaking about her twin passions, Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and Social Justice. She will also travel south once again to give a workshop in Ecuador, hosted by the Handmaids.

# The Eucharist & Social Justice

## AN INSEPARABLE RELATIONSHIP

Sr. Margaret's book, *The Eucharist and Social Justice*, based on her Eucharistic life as a Handmaid over many years, unpacks the many different aspects of the inseparable relationship that exists between the Eucharist and a commitment to social justice. She shows how the Eucharist opens our eyes to the sufferings of our world and is both political and potentially subversive. The Eucharist tumbles out of the sanctuary into the street; it is global; it is about inclusivity.

Sr. Margaret's speaking engagements about her book illustrate this very vividly. Having had many speaking engagements here in the US, in May, 2011, she was hosted by Handmaid communities in both Panama and Colombia. There she spoke to various groups including Handmaids, school faculties, students and members of the ACJ Family in both countries. When she flew into Bogotá, Sr. Margaret saw evidence of the widespread flooding everywhere, in the aftermath of some very powerful tropical storms. In Medellín, some members of the ACJ Family who attended her workshop there had lost their homes and livelihood to the raging waters. Others had lost family members to the urban violence that assaults so many ordinary people

in the shanty towns of Colombia. It was a very moving experience to listen to them sharing their conviction that Christ in the Eucharist is very close to them in their poverty and distress.

In August, Sr. Margaret visited Peru, where she gave a three-day workshop to the Handmaids who had gathered from all over Peru and Bolivia. In Lima, she also addressed a group of men and women religious from different Orders in the Center of the Conference of Religious. Finally, she met with a large group of the ACJ Family that had gathered in Lima to hear her.

In October, Sr. Margaret traveled north to Canada, at the invitation of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Montreal and Concordia University. There, in a parish center owned jointly by Catholics and the United Protestant Church, she gave a daylong workshop on the Eucharist and Social Justice for an ecumenical gathering of both English and French speaking Canadians. She also spoke at Sunday Mass in Holy Family Parish to a very mixed congregation: Catholics and Anglicans, young and old, and multi-ethnic. According to Sr. Margaret, "Truly the Eucharist is global. It has no borders."



## REFLECTIONS ON

## Ignatian Spiritual Exercises

*As part of their preparation for profession, novices must make a thirty-day retreat according to the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. Srs. Oanh Vo and Michelle Cimaroli recently completed this requirement at the Jesuit Spiritual Center in Wernersville, PA. Here they share some of their reflections and impressions.*

### **In Sr. Oanh's words...**

Before I began this retreat I had begged the Lord to allow me to know Him more intimately so as to love and serve Him more passionately. The Lord answered my prayer by opening my heart to the Sacred Heart of His Son, and there I experienced newly His unique, infinite love for me. How many blessings has He given me, even before I came into this world?! How many times has He tenderly welcomed back this sinful daughter into his fatherly arms without any conditions?

The feeling of God's love for me was so overwhelming that I could not help but cry out, "How can I ever sufficiently repay this love when

all that I have and all that I am is His?!!!" Well, thank God that what He wants from us is our total being, our open heart and not our great work. Thus, with God's grace and with a deeper conviction, I offered myself totally to Him in response to His generous love, committed to follow Him to wherever He wanted. With greater humility and courage, I desire to live this life more fully and more joyfully so that through me people may come to know and love this merciful God.

### **In Sr. Michelle's Words...**

I am so grateful for the time I was given to make the Spiritual Exercises. I felt so deeply how much it truly is a privilege and a gift. It was an amazing grace-filled experience that will continue to feed me for a long time to come. It was certainly a time for me to grow very much in the interior freedom that is so central in Ignatian spirituality. I was very touched by the abundance of God's love that calls forth in me a response of abundance, and I was incredibly grateful to receive nothing but confirmation of my vocation to the Handmaids, feeling my heart aflame to co-labor with Christ in our mission of unity and reconciliation. I felt very united to all who accompanied me in prayer and am deeply grateful for the fruit those prayers bore and continue to bear.



## Miami Hosts Soup & Bread Luncheon



Each year, the Miami Community of the Handmaids of Sacred Heart of Jesus sponsors a Soup and Bread Luncheon to benefit the province's mission in El Salvador. Through the generosity of St. Martha's Parish, in Miami, which provides an air conditioned space, and all the table cloths and paper goods, the event is able to host a few hundred guests. A minimal charge of \$10.00 covers the luncheon's cost.

According to Sister Maria Jesus Sagaseta, Superior of the Miami community, in addition to the parish's goodwill, many contributors and friends are responsible for the success of the luncheon. She explains that *"Everything from decorating and setting up to the final*

*clean-up is handled by many volunteers."*

As in the past, friends of the Handmaids supplied the chicken, pasta and all ingredients for the soup. The alumnae from the Handmaids' former Cuban school in Miramar, who remain devoted to the Miami sisters, underwrote the cost of the bread. Guests were served by members of the Spanish Prayer Group.

Srs. Teresita Motos and Cecilia Chen greeted the attendees. A three-piece ensemble provided music and entertainment during the lunch, while another group offered chances for religious items and other handmade gifts from El Salvador.

Following the luncheon, individuals who had been to El Salvador enthusiastically shared the mission of the Handmaids there. With captivating photos and explanations, the aim is to heighten the audience's awareness of this very worthwhile ministry. Much to Sr. Maria Jesus' delight, the event realized \$4,000. An added bonus was a private donation of an additional \$3,000 towards building a house for a Salvadoran family.



## WELCOME!

The newest face in the Handmaid's Wyncote community is Sister Lyan Tri, who has been missioned to the USA Province. Sr. Lyan made her final profession of vows in her homeland of Vietnam in October, 2010. Sr. Lyan pursued her M.A in pastoral ministry, majoring in spirituality in Manila, the Philippines. While there, she was also involved in retreat

ministry. She began full time ministry as a professed Handmaid with responsibilities for the girl's dormitory at the Handmaid's residence in Ho Chi Minh City, where she conducted retreats and days of prayer. Sr. Lyan is currently working at Ancillae-Assumpta Academy, where she coordinates the school's STEM Lab. We are grateful for her presence and warmly welcome Sr. Lyan!

The Third Annual Journey of Hope Celebration will be held at the Knowlton Mansion in Philadelphia, on Wednesday, April 18, 2012. A cocktail reception will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by a silent auction and program. This year's celebration will honor three Handmaids who have marked fifty years of consecrated religious life – Srs. Maureen Gillespie, Kathleen Helbig, and Julia Walsh.

Co-Chairpersons for the event are Mary Mealey and Mary Trautwein Breslin, members of the Handmaid Province Advisory Board, which hosts the event. Other chairpersons are Rodie Alvaré-Henson, Silent Auction Chair, Carol Angelo, Program and Tribute Book Chair, Tom Breslin, Sponsorship Chair, and Debbie Giordano, Alumni Chair.

Please plan on joining the sisters and their friends and supporters for an evening that promises to be a memorable one! For additional information, visit [www.acjjourneyofhope.org](http://www.acjjourneyofhope.org).



## HANDMAIDS IN THE COMMUNITY

Sr. Gloria Petrone and Lynette Kyle were invited to take part in World Mission



Sunday on October 23rd at the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia. Lynette was honored to have been asked to be a lector for the liturgy, which was celebrated by newly appointed Archbishop of Philadelphia, Most Rev. Charles Chaput.



Sisters Theresa Vu and Kayjoy Cooper recently participated in the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's Disease, held at Citizen's Bank Park. The 5K event was attended by several thousand walkers and

their dogs in honor of ill or deceased relatives or friends. Sr. Theresa completed the 5K Walk, while Sr. Kayjoy worked the Advocacy Booth to encourage support for legislation aimed at providing aid to Alzheimer's research and families. Sr. Theresa tells us: *"The most touching group I spoke to was several dozen young people with 'Superheroes' on their tee shirts, who were walking in solidarity with their classmate who just lost her mother in her early forties. This experience showed me that Alzheimer's is not just a disease of old people. It does a lot of damage at any age."*

The Lower Merion Police Department Canine Unit Officer Eric Curcio, along with his friend, Tank, made a surprise visit to Sr. Philomena Monte in Haverford.



Srs. Florentina Iruretagoyena, Marietta Jansen, Margarita Martin, Angela Cordero, and Pilar Dalmau.

Sisters from Athens and Atlanta, GA gathered on December 31 to celebrate the holiday season. Pictured are

# IN THE HANDMAIDS' PRAYERS



*We ask that you please keep in your hearts and daily prayers, the following special requests:* The intentions of those who wish to remain anonymous, all married couples who are trying to conceive, all who are undergoing surgery, all who are sick or suffering, all who are seeking employment, all married couples, family peace, our gracious benefactors, the souls of the deceased, people of Haiti, those affected by natural disasters, AAA students and families, an improved economy, and religious vocations and formation.

*Please also kindly remember the individuals and families who have requested our prayers:* Alday Family, Alvaré Family, Melina Angelo, Mike Basile, Beck Family, Benner Family, George Beschen, Sr., Jody Boyle, Nicky and Donna Brennan, Tom Breslin, Briggs Family, Paul Brophy, Burgig Family, Diane Butts, Francis Caputo, Grace Carlin, Bill and Susan Carney, Carr Family, Mary-Joan Carson, Denis Cassidy, Cianciulli Family and Friends, Clam Family, †J. Patricia Connor, Cook Family, Michael Cosentino, Barbara Craig, Mary Joe Dalu-Williams, Josie D'Amico, DeGrasse Family, Michael Dellomo, Tom DelRicci, Dominic Dieu Vinh Nguyen, Frank and Emily DiPietro, †Pedro and Carmen Directo, Sister Phyllis DiRenzo, IHM, John P. Donohue, Dougherty Families, Dyer Family, Marta Embree, Tim Eckert, Eddowes Family, Barbara Eichman, Joseph Martin Espinosa, Assumption Escauriaz, acj, Farnon Family, Robert Farwell, Sr., Karen Feeney, Anthony and Carmella Ferrero, Helen I. Ferrier, Ferrier Family, Jennifer Fischer, Jim and Susan Fitzpatrick, Josephine Flaherty, Flannery Family, Ting Franco, Rachel Freed, Ken Freeman, Esq., Joan Frisco, Peg Gaffney, Gallagher Family, Beth Gallagher, John Gallagher, Bill and Carol Gatt, Rose Harmsen, acj, Ruth Held, acj, Knox Family, Edward Knox, Ted Koerper, Philomena Laky, Langan Family, Lario Family, William and Eileen Larkey, Mary Anne LaSalle, P.J. Lawn, Leone Family, Mildred A. Lester, Robert Joe Lester, David Lipton, Lodge Family, Juan J. López, Julio P. López, Charles Lynch, James Lynch, Magee Family, Mancusco Family, Margaret and Richard Mandel, Steve and Theresa Marchese, Marino Family, Nikole Martino and Children, McAndrews Families, McAvoy Family, McCann Family, Harry McClaren, Molly McDonnell, Norbert J. McGettigan, McHugh Family, June McKenna, Fr. Patrick Medina, SAP, Philomena Monte, acj, Monte Family, Chip Moran, Dagoberto Mosquera, Bernadette Mullen, Murray Family, Nicoladse Family, Bob Nicoletti, Noga Family, Rosemarie Novielli, Novielli Families, O'Callaghan Family, Orr Family, Potts Family, Quigley Family, Ramsey Family, Ada Rivera, Reilly Families, John Ryan, Sam Segal, Sesso Family, †John C. Seydow, Sharkey Family, Shaw Family, Debbie Shea, John and Lee Shiffer, Zoey Shute, Stephen Specht, Bob and Margaret Mary Spillane, Alfred Spitalieri, Stach Family, Stanton Family, Robbie Sweeney, Tinari Family, Tolbert Family, Elizabeth Tran, Vander Neut Family, Villarino-Marzo Family, Bill Vinci, Jack Widman, William Family, Mary Winter, Winter Family, Angie Woods, and Zimmer Family.

*"THE MORE DIFFICULTIES WE ENCOUNTER, THE MORE TRUSTING WE SHOULD BE  
AND THE MORE UNITED TO GOD IN PRAYER."*

St. Raphaela Mary

## **Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus USA Province Development Office**

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