



# Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

## USA Province

VOLUME 7 ■ ISSUE 2 ■ SPRING/SUMMER - 2016

A PUBLICATION OF THE USA HANDMAID PROVINCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### FROM THE PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR



Dear Friends,

As I write this, I am very much aware of the presence of our Handmaid foundress, St. Raphaela Mary. Today, May 18th, is her feast day, and as we remember all that she gave to the Church and to the world, we celebrate her life with gratitude, reverence, and love.

St. Raphaela was a woman of deep faith and abiding trust in God. Her life's mission and all that she believed stemmed from her relationship with Christ in the Eucharist and an unwavering desire to please Him.

In our USA community, each of our sisters are dedicated and committed to do the same. We work for the care and defense of life, and we unite with all those who labor for it, promoting education in solidarity, respect for human rights, justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Our sisters in Athens see Christ in the faces of the immigrant families they support with some of life's necessities. In Philadelphia, they reach out to those who are on the margins of society, promoting justice in parishes and through university teaching. In Miami, our sisters extend their hands to serve those who struggle with homelessness, addiction, and poverty. In Haverford, our sisters open their doors to those seeking spiritual refreshment and renewal. In Wyncote, they nurture and guide the paths of the next generation of 21st century learners.

Though life today is very different from the nineteenth century Europe that first bore the fruits of St. Raphaela's vision, as Handmaids we move forward ever aware of and inspired by our foundress. Striving to find God in all things, we endeavor to courageously and compassionately respond as she did, enabling all to experience the love of Jesus Christ.

We are grateful for God's blessings on our ministries and ask for your continued prayers to further our Handmaid mission.

With hope and joy,

Provincial Superior

### *Remembering Brigid McGarvey, acj*



Sister Brigid McGarvey, a member of the Wyncote community of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for 44 years, died peacefully at the St. Joseph Manor in Meadowbrook on Wednesday, February 10, 2016. She was 89 years young.

Born in Ireland on December 2, 1926, Sr. Brigid came to the United States as a young religious and began working at the Handmaids' school in Germantown (Ancilla Domini Academy). In 1972 she came to Wyncote and began working at Ancillae-Assumpta Academy as a preschool teaching aide. Later, she took on the responsibility of preparing lunches for the entire preschool and kindergarten children. In the kitchen, Sr. Brigid was in charge. Her menus rarely varied from week to week, but the students loved her selections. It has been said that of all the wonderful lunches she loving prepared and served to the children, she was most famous for her hotdogs and her macaroni and cheese.

Living a life of simple needs and wants, Sr. Brigid's quiet and gentle demeanor and her unmistakable hospitality were gifts that she brought to her ministry each and every day. She also brought the lilt of her Irish brogue to many a conversation.

A visitation, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial was held at Holy Redeemer St. Joseph Manor, on Monday, February 15, presided by Reverend Timothy Judge. Sr. Sagrario Núñez offered a beautiful tribute in a eulogy of Sr. Brigid. Following the liturgy, the Handmaids processed in unison to Sr. Brigid's interment at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Cheltenham, PA.

We rejoice in the gift of her life and ask all to keep Sr. Brigid, her family, and the Handmaids in your prayers.

# CELEBRATING 90 YEARS

## INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS HIGHLIGHTED THE HISTORICAL JOURNEY

- EXHIBIT #1 1890 - SAINT RAPHAELA MARY - "THE HANDMAID STORY UNFOLDS"
- EXHIBIT #2 1926 - "COMING TO PHILADELPHIA" - THE USA JOURNEY BEGINS
- EXHIBIT #3 1945 - "WITH LOVE AND FOR LOVE" - THE HANDMAIDS EXPAND IN EDUCATION
- EXHIBIT #4 1957 - "A TIME AND A PLACE FOR GOD" - BLESSED RAPHAELA MARY RETREAT HOUSE BEGINS
- EXHIBIT #5 1959 - "SOWING THE SEEDS" - THE HANDMAIDS SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS TO OTHER CITIES



In April 2nd, at the Sheraton University City Hotel, the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were honored for reaching a milestone and were celebrated for their 90 years of dedication and service in the United States.

The program for this year's *Journey of Hope* began with a series of interactive displays that chronicled the sisters' nine decade journey. Designed and coordinated by event chairperson Lori Stefanowicz, guests wandered through a maze of artifacts and memorabilia that defined the works and presence of the Handmaids. A video presentation featuring the Aquitana, the ship that carried two sisters from England to begin the USA's first Handmaid ministry in Philadelphia, was just one of the highlights of the exhibits. Guests were pleasantly surprised to learn some of the stories and anecdotes the sisters shared.

Leading up to the event, a "Celebrate the Sisters" initiative was conducted with Jacques and Marie Gordon serving as committee chairs. Over \$75,000 was raised to benefit the sisters in gratitude for the work they have done throughout their ministries.

A silent auction and raffle, coordinated by Debbie Giordano and Susan Singer was also offered throughout the evening. Concluding the *Journey of Hope* was a brief Blessing Service presided by Msgr. Hugh Shields.

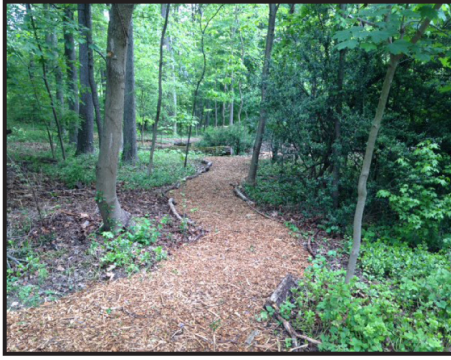
### Looking Back on the Journey

Just as the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was founded by two women, Raphaela Mary Porras and her sister, Dolores, the first community of Handmaids in the United States was also begun by two women: Virginia Vivanco and Gabriela Dillon. Joining them shortly after their arrival to the USA, were sisters from Havana, Cuba and others from throughout Europe. This group of pioneers worked tirelessly in promoting the education of young women, and by 1928, there were over two hundred University students and one hundred business women enrolled in classes that offered instruction in sewing, art, music, typing, English, and Spanish.

1928 also marked the year that Marie McKeown and Mary Brennan, the first two American women who entered the Handmaid novitiate in Rome. Throughout their twenty years in West Philadelphia, the Handmaids, in addition to their ministry of education, were also deeply committed to Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, days of recollection, and sacramental preparation for entrance into the Church. In a short time, they were joined by additional sisters from South America and Europe, and gradually, the Institute grew, spreading beyond 34th Street, which closed in 1945.

It was then that the Handmaids moved to Wyncote, and in the years that followed, added communities in Germantown and Haverford. In Germantown, the sisters conducted Ancilla Domini Academy, and in 1957, the sisters opened Blessed Raphaela Mary Retreat House in Haverford. In the years that followed, the Handmaids heeded their mission by going "wherever they were needed" to establish additional ministries. This led them to Kimberton, PA; Baltimore, MD; Atlanta, GA; and Beaumont, TX. Today the Handmaids maintain five ministries in the US and a mission in El Salvador.

# A Path of Peaceful Reflection



Saint Raphaela Center has recently completed Phase I of a walking trail located outside the Center in Haverford. The trail extends from Coopertown Road through the landscaping leading to the employee parking lot. Members of the student body from St. Joseph's University volunteered their time and service in completing this initial phase of

the project. Further plans call for the addition of several other trails that will extend throughout the back portion of the property. Once completed, the project is expected to enhance the serenity and peaceful sanctuary offered not only inside the retreat center, but along its beautiful exterior, as well.



## CHANGES ANNOUNCED

Sister Belen Escauriaza recently announced several changes to the sisters serving in the Handmaid USA ministries. These changes are expected to take place by August, 2016.

- Sr. Dorothy Beck will rejoin the community in Wyncote.
- Sr. Uyen-Chi Dang will make her final profession of vows on August 13, 2016. She will also be resuming the position as Director of Religious Education at Ancillae-Assumpta Academy in Wyncote.
- Sr. Belen Escauriaza will join the community in Haverford and will serve as Community Superior.
- Sr. Jessica Kerber will assume the position of Director of the St. Raphaela Center in Haverford and will be a member of the Haverford community.
- Sr. Margaret Scott will remain in Philadelphia and has been named Community Superior.
- Sr. Asunta Thanh will join the community in Philadelphia.

## THE 2015-2016 ANNUAL FUND NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

Please consider the many good works sponsored by the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the ways in which your support will assist their ministries.

PLEASE MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TODAY



THINKING ABOUT PLANNED GIVING?

Here are just a few options:

**BEQUESTS** offer the easiest way to remember the sisters. After naming family members in your will, designate the Handmaids as a bequest recipient.

**LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES** are another way to provide a benefit for the Handmaids. When a policy is no longer needed or a new policy can be purchased, the Handmaids may be designated as beneficiaries.

**RETIREMENT PLAN GIFTS** may be another choice in leaving a gift to the Handmaids with tax benefits at the time of donation.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE OPTIONS OR OTHERS,** Please contact the Province Development Office at 610-642-5715.

*"The more difficulties we encounter, the more trusting we should be and the more united with God in prayer."* Saint Raphaela Mary

## *Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

### *USA Province*

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## **IN THE HANDMAIDS' PRAYERS**

### *Please pray for the souls of our dearly departed including:*

Nunzio Arnao, Gally Auld, Catherine Azeff, Mary Agnes Barnes, Francesco Battaglia, Charles Benham, Charles P. Bennett, Joanne Brown, Carmelita Bush, Roger Campbell, Eline Carmona, Tom Carney, William Clement, Christopher Collier, Anne B. Connor, Helen Conroy, Tim Craig, Gene Daniels, John Decker, Thomas Deely, Ann Derk, Josephine Dicciani, Joseph DiNunzio, John Dolhancryk, Maureen V. Drudy, Edward Duff, James Ermi, Mary B. Farano, Bernard Fitzgerald, Edward J. Fitzgerald, II, Eugene G. Fitzgerald, Russell Fitzgerald, Margaret Fleming, EJ Flynn, Helen Garczynski, Robert Gerhard, Loretta Glatfelter, Gino Greatti, Diana Greco, Stephen J. Griffin, Lou Gutowski, William Hamburger, Richard Harris, Donald E. Healey, Susan G. Heaney, Phil Heller, Jim Herron, William Herron, Donald Hines, Thomas Horn, Hazel Humphrey, Teresa Avila My Huong, Jerry Jung, Joanne B. Kaminski, Rita Kelley, Denise Marie Kender, Meghan Kerns, Thomas M. Kirby, Albert E. Kocher, Thomas Koenig, Jack Kowal, Henry K. Kurz, Ellen M. Lawrence, John Lockhead, Helen Lubaczewski, Rita Lundrigan, Matthew Luti, Joseph Lynch, Stephanie Machen, Alexander Maggitti, J. Francis Mahoney, IV, Jordie Maine, George J. Marcinowski, Joanne Marinelli, Bonnie Marshall, Thomas Martinka, Anita Martorano, Flavia Mas, Verda McBrattney, Anita McBride, Thomas McBrinn, Mrs. McElhenney, Sr. Brigid McGarvey, acj, Catherine McKeon, Kathy McNamee, Judy Meccariello, Margaret Meehan, Daniel J. Morris, III, Michael Morris, Edward Morton, Terrence Mulhern, Rosario J. Murdano, Rita "Linda" Myrtetus, Robert V. Nicoletti, Herminio Núñez, Andrew Nush, Dave O'Brien, James Osmansky, Joe Petrone, Sr., Sally Ann Potchen, Edward Puchowski, Rose Raschiatore, Theresa Reigle, Patricia Reutsche, Joshua Rice, Linda Rimer, Thomas Rochford, Rosa Maria Rodriguez, Dr. Robert Roma, Joseph Romano, Mrs. Ryback, Alexander J. Sansone, William Scott, Elizabeth G. Smetona, Jeanne Smitherman, Arlene Snyder, Dale Sokel, James Sponsler, Helene Stafferi, David Stout, Theresa Sullivan, Patricia Tappan, Betty Taylor, Joseph Thanh, Elizabeth C. Thiel, Francis Thomas, III, Philomena Thomas, Robert Tingle, Anthony Tong, Betty Tongate, Gino Topetta, Kelly Tulio, Barbara Valavanes, David and Phyllis Wharton, Fredrick Wilhelm, Marion Wilson, Edith Woodward, Ann Wurster, Sr. Anne Marguerite, VHM, and Eleanor Zerbe.

### *Please pray for the requests offered on behalf of:*

Kay Acuazzo, Nancy Agostini, Mrs. Anderson, Sr. Antonina Avitabile, MSC, Sr. Fidelis Berk, O.P., Daniel Carik, Sr. Regina Casey, MSC, Mary Ellen and Bob Clark, Richard Coletta, Sr., Sr. Eileen Corrie, MSC, Blaise Davis, Theresa Delacy, Helen Dulin, Barbara & Donald Eichler, Mary Erhard, Kathleen M. Flanagan, Fr. Tony Gilborges, OSFS, Stephanie Griffin, Joanne Harbani, Maureen Howe, Helen P. Kambin, Mimi Limbach, Sylvia & Paul Lin, Kathryn Llewellyn, Hank Manion, Alice McKay, Suzanne McMullin, Paul McNichol, Catherine Meyer, John Miller, The Mullin Family, Mr. & Mrs. Mundy, Daniel Murray, Karen Newell, Maria O'Malley, Philip O'Neill, Tony Palestini, Sr. Lucy Panettieri, MSC, Terry Rawles, Suzanne Rettes, Ed Rodgers, Fr. Anthony Russo, Ruth Scott, Patricia Speakman, Nancy Stephens, Sr. Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC, Bunny Taddeo, Luke Thomas, David and Trung Van, Sr. Arlene Van Dusen, MSC, James Walker, Larry & Mary Wharton, and The Zajac Family.