May God bless us with grateful hearts, that we may praise and thank Him unceasingly...
Dear Friends,

Greetings to you in this spring season as we continue to celebrate the joy of Easter. For us as Daughters of Mary and Joseph, this is also a time of particular gratitude because we join with other religious around the world in observing 2015 as the Year of Consecrated Life. Proclaimed by Pope Francis, this special year reminds us of the awesome vocation which shapes our meaning and purpose in the Church today.

Embarking on life as consecrated religious women is something we could never have dreamed of carrying out on our own. As we look back on our 89 years of ministry in California, we recognize that the many works the DMJs have realized here were made possible only through the generous support and encouragement of many family members, collaborators, benefactors, co-workers, friends, and associates.

As I write this letter, I am reminded of a little incident that occurred some years ago. A gentleman who was not particularly enchanted by the Catholic Church shared with me this observation: “You Catholics don’t do anything on your own! Why, you take your sins to the priest in confession, you have all these saints you ask to help you, and then you call the priest in when you are dying. You can’t seem to do anything alone!”

He was so right. Ironically, that was one of the nicest compliments he could have paid us Catholics; we do have a sense that we are mysteriously connected…whether we think of that connection as the Mystical Body, the Communion of Saints, the Beloved Community, or use a more inclusive-sounding term, like the People of God.

Hopefully, all of us are among the growing members of the human family who recognize that we creatures on Earth never do anything alone; we are certainly linked spiritually, but also biologically in the delicate balance of nature. We do not act in isolation…ever. We never really accomplish anything on our own.

So that brings me back to the gratitude that we, the Daughters of Mary and Joseph, have toward you, our friends. We reflect on the myriad ways in which you have both sustained us and allowed DMJ ministries to begin, be fruitful, and continue. In this 2015 Year of Consecrated Life, we rejoice in you for having been partners with us in the great work of the Gospel. We could never have done that work alone! We are ever grateful.

Blessings always,

Sr. Karen Marie, DMJ
on behalf of the DMJ Regional Leadership Team

“Partners in the Great Work of the Gospel”

Our Mission:

We are an international community of vowed religious women. We are committed to deepening our relationship with Jesus Christ. This relationship manifests itself as an individual and corporate response to the needs of today’s world. Our mission is to be a compassionate, joyful presence enabling those to whom we minister to recognize their value and dignity. We are dedicated to sharing the merciful love of God with all who experience brokenness or poverty in any form.

Our Vision:

“Be there for the whole Church, be there as a pardoned sinner who has found peace and rejoices in the merciful love of God.”

© Msgr. William Van Crombrugghe, Founder
On October 19, 2014, the Daughters of Mary and Joseph celebrated with five of their sisters who reached significant anniversaries in their years of religious life and service to the Church.

Three of the women religious, Sister Mary Enda Creegan, Sister Nora Agnes Murphy and Sister Louis Marie Hanrahan (front row) rejoiced on their 60th anniversary of “first profession of vows”. Sister Mary Mortz and Sister Linda Webb (back row) celebrated their 50th anniversary of “first profession”.

The Mass was celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Curry at St. John Fisher Church in Rancho Palos Verdes. In his homily, the bishop thanked the five women religious for their combined 280 years of faithful vowed service in the Church and in their religious community.
New Life in Paramount

What do DMJs do after “retiring” from full-time ministry in Catholic Schools? The answers are numberless, but let us mention our most recent retirees at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Paramount.

For starters, we began the Year of Consecrated Life by celebrating our own Sister Anna O’Reilly. She is celebrating her 60th year in religious life. She joined scores of other religious in our Archdiocese this past January in a special jubilee Mass at Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral.

Sr. Anna has spent nearly all of her 60 years in Catholic school education. Forty-three of those years she had been the principal at Our Lady of the Rosary School.

Following that, however, Sr. Anna didn’t miss a beat. Twice a week, she and Sister Ellen Mary are visiting the sick at Promise Hospital. Each time, they divide up a list of approximately 50 patients who have requested a religious visit. Individual visits for pastoral counseling come naturally after that. This has Sister Ellen working on her Spanish, through community classes offered by the city, to better communicate with some of those served. She has also gone back to teaching handwriting to 4th graders at the school.
Sister Peggy and Sister Brigid Mary stay actively involved at Our Lady of the Rosary School. Sr. Peggy is there to aide the Pre-K and KG teachers at recess times so they can take a much-needed break.

Sr. Brigid Mary is there to help the students prepare for the school liturgies. She preps the readers and leads the students in singing at Mass. She also instructs a group of students after school. They learn to play the recorder and accompany the singing at liturgies and other activities.

All four of these “retired” Sisters remain active in parish activities and are known and much-loved by the people. One practice of theirs is to feed the hungry at their door. They lend an ear to all their dear friends as well as visiting them in times of need. The people know they can depend on the Sisters. The pastor, Fr. Julio Gonzalez, has mentioned that he is very grateful to have their presence in his parish.

Perhaps their greatest service to the community is prayer. Each of these Sisters has a deep prayer life that is a source of strength and comfort for all the parishioners.

As one of these Sisters said: “This is why I entered (religious life): praying for and supporting the teachers, the parishioners, and family...very happily retired in Paramount!”

~Sister Helen Vigil
Her Other Home for the Holidays

Mid December might find some of us heading off for the local shopping mall, others a nearby ski resort, or others still, the annual office party. In recent years, there is one DMJ who can be found heading in another direction entirely; mid December finds Sister Margaret Mary Haller packing her bags for a beloved village in Ghana.

Earlier in her religious life, Sr. Margaret Mary spent two years ministering there at the Padre Pio Leprosy Rehabilitation Centre in Ahotokurom, Cape Coast. The Centre consists of a village named Enyinndakurom and a medical centre for former leprosy sufferers, a residential child care centre, and a school for special needs children. Sr. Margaret Mary’s annual, month-long visits run by the Daughters of Mary and Joseph have been made possible over the years by the donations of generous benefactors.

While formerly the Director of St. Elizabeth School at the Centre, her yearly role each winter takes a different turn. “Now I go there as an elder,” says the 83 year old nun. “That means I can do what I want!” Being the irrepressibly extroverted and joyous woman she is, her “eldering” involves visiting the senior residents at St. Clare’s, showing up at the kids’ soccer games, working on projects with the special needs children, traveling to the Accra marketplace with Sister Monica Smyth for holiday provisions, in short, honoring the friendships she has developed with the people at the centre. Sr. Margaret Mary can only adequately explain her yearly sojourns by saying, “I’ve fallen in love... I love the people there.” Margaret explains that, like folks everywhere, what the residents at the Ahotokurom village appreciate so much is to be listened to and recognized and remembered. The impact of Sister’s annual visits to the village was evidenced by a young Ghanaian man who exclaimed last December, “Now it really feels like Christmas because Sister Margaret is here!”
And the other eleven months? Sr. Margaret Mary can be found at St. Joseph Center in Venice, CA where she volunteers three days a week in the Monetary Advisory Program. Familiarly known as “MAP,” the program is designed to help financially and/or mentally challenged individuals, some of whom are homeless, manage their money. Always, for Sr. Margaret Mary, the bottom line is the magic of forming compassionate relationships—wherever she might find herself. On a daily basis, Margaret shares life with nine other DMJs residing at the Rose Avenue community in Palms, CA.

-- Sr. Karen Marie, DMJ

Sr. Margaret Mary Haller

Loving God, we love how you love us. We love how you free us. We love what you have given and created to surround us. Help us to recognize, and to rejoice in, what has been given, even in the midst of what is not given. Help us not to doubt all that you have given us, even when we feel our very real shortcomings. We thank you for the promise and sign of your love in the Eternally Risen Christ, pervading all things in the universe, unbound by any of our categories of logic or theology.

We offer you ourselves back in return. We offer you our bodies, our little lives, our racing minds and restless hearts into this one wondrous circle of Love that is You. My life is no longer just about me, but it is all about You.

—Richard Rohr. OFM

Future Milestones

August 29, 1926—August 29, 2016
- DMJ’s arrived in California -
  90 Years

March 6, 1817—March 6, 2017
- Foundation of DMJ’s -
  200 Years
Sister Thérèse Martin Schwalenberg (1925-2014)

Evelyn Thérèse entered the Daughters of Mary and Joseph on February 2nd, 1951 and took the name in Religion of Sister Thérèse Martin. Her patron saint, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, “the Little Flower”, became a guide for her all her life. She lived the spirituality of St. Thérèse...of always relying on God’s merciful love and the belief that one can achieve goodness through performing the humblest and simplest of tasks.

Thérèse taught music for 17 years at Pius X High School in Downey. Her music program was second to none. Everyone wanted to be part of her Choral groups—whether it be the Sarton Chorus, the Madrigal Singers or other groups—that was where the life was! Thérèse had the special gift of bringing out the best in everyone. Thérèse was a gifted musician and Choral director, but even more important than what she accomplished--was the manner in how she did her ministry. She always made the other person feel good—knowing that when talking with Thérèse, you had her undivided attention and that she really cared. Often Thérèse would follow up a conversation with a little note or cute card.

A very special word to Thérèse all her life was the word JOY. In the papers she wrote in the hospital entitled, “My Wishes After Death,” she wrote that she wanted the community to celebrate at dinner of the day she died with colorful decorations and wine! “Rain or Shine—Rejoice!”, she told us. Thérèse was a JOY to so many of us. It is said that we grow into and become how we see God. For Thérèse this was especially true. She saw God as “Goodness”, as “Joy”, as “Beauty”, as loving the little and insignificant. We thank God for our dear Thérèse and for all the good she accomplished while with us. Let us go forward in JOY!

Sister Philomena Mulholland (1928-2014)

Sister Philomena was born on 7 August 1928, in Dundalk, County Louth, Ireland. She began her novitiate in Castlecore, Ireland in 1952 and completed her novitiate, pronouncing her first vows in Belgium. Between the years of 1955 and 1995, she was missioned to St. Michael School, San Francisco; St. Paul the Apostle School, Los Angeles; St. James the Less School, La Crescenta; Our Lady of Peace School, Sepulveda. Having retired from her teaching profession, Sister Philomena was missioned to Our Lady of the Rosary in Paramount where she served as head school librarian for a number of years.

Sister Philomena’s gentle, calm and prayerful attitude soon gained the love and trust of the children and parents. She was particularly amused by the little first graders who loved their books so much that they didn't want to return them to the library. Sister Philomena was extremely kind and loved the children. One of Sister's assisting librarians said that she really learned a great deal from her, not just library skills, but practices that would help with her own children. Sr. Philomena would advise her to never tell a child, “Don't do that”, but always say, "Remember to do it this way."

Sister loved to keep in touch with world affairs and she was a lover of poetry and nature. Her last poetry recitation was on Christmas Eve when she quoted the following:

The quality of mercy is not strain’d
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blessed him that gives and him that takes.
Sister Mary Jensc (1928-2015)

Mary Elizabeth was born in San Francisco on February 28, 1928. She was three years old when she walked into the home of Gertrude and Raymond Jensch, into a new world of love and devotion. Peggy, a Boston bull terrier, greeted her, her first dog in a succession of canine friends to be. This new tightly-knit family lived in Saint John’s Parish, Hyde Park, San Fernando Valley.

In 1950 Mary entered the Daughters of Mary and Joseph. With whole-hearted generosity she dedicated herself to the service of God and the Church. She enriched our community with her many gifts; deep faith, enthusiasm, joy, humor, compassion, and her many professional skills. During her formation years she deepened her spiritual life and conscientiously dedicated herself to prayer – a pattern that grew steadily and sustained her through the years.

In 1967 the DMJ’s opened Saint Joseph’s High School in Santa Maria in conjunction with our Brother Community, the Josephite Fathers. Mary was one of the pioneers. She served as teacher and vice-Principal and left a lasting legacy of achievement and friendship. Her next assignment was Saint Bernard High School in Playa del Rey where she served as both teacher and student counselor. In the early 70’s Mary was called back to Community to assume the role of Provincial leadership. During the 70’s she developed another passion – a passion for social justice and gave herself generously to it. She visited Delano several times to support Caesar Chavez and the Farm Workers. In the past several years she has been part of an Interfaith community in Culver City.

In 2008 Mary came to live in Marian Residence. She said she was retiring but no one took that seriously. These later years did give Mary time to enjoy her pet dogs, Phoebe and Derby. She also cultivated an organic garden and kept us supplied with tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, squash, rhubarb and even pumpkins. And finally during these last two years Mary responded to a call to a new ministry, teaching ESL to women at Presentation Learning Center in Watts. With a bounce in her step, she headed off every Monday morning – truly a ‘grand finale’ to her life’s call.

“I thank the Lord that the Year of Consecrated Life coincides with the Synod on the Family. Family life and consecrated life are both vocations which bring enrichment and blessings for all. They are the spaces where human growth comes about through relationships, and they are also places of evangelization. Each can help the other”

—from Pope Francis’ Apostolic Letter on the Occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life.
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<th>In Honor of…</th>
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<td><strong>DMJ’s that taught me at St. Joseph (Santa Maria)</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. Sara Faulhaber Hulse</td>
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<td><strong>DMJ Jubilarians (2014)</strong></td>
<td>Ms. Christina Johnson</td>
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<td><strong>St. Paul the Apostle Church, Los Angeles</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ted Wynne</strong></td>
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Remember Your Loved Ones In a Special Way

Enroll your loved ones, living or deceased, in the Daughters of Mary and Joseph Prayer League.

Beautifully decorated Enrollment Cards are mailed according to your request. All prayer requests are placed in the chapel at Marian Residence where the Sisters pray for your intentions each day.

To request enrollment forms please contact:

Sr. Linda Webb
(310) 377-9968

Requests may also be made in writing to:

Development Office
5300 Crest Road
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275
In Memory of… (those remembered are in BOLD)

Jack Adam
Sr. Helen Vigil, DMJ

Sr. Mary Agnes
Mel Dangcil

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Sr. Mary Anne
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Anne M. Buist
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Mrs. Dan T. Buist, Jr.

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Maureen Burbach

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Mr. James Dalton

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Kay Daly

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Michele D’Amico

Sr. Mary Benedict Day
Eileen Stallings

Sam DeFelice
Mrs. Irene DeFelice

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David Disco

Wes & Toyoko Doi
Mr. & Mrs. Steven J. Doi

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Ms. Michele MacKenzie

Sergio Gonzalez
MJRC Staff

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Gayle King  
Nita Lehrrack  
Sr. Thérèse Martin  
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Diane M. Schilz  
Nancy J. Skinner  
Ann C. Walters  
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Mr. Martin C. May  
James McCombie  
Mr. John Becker  
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Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bussard  
Charles McDonough  
Ms. Nancy McDonough  
Johanna Muelleenbrook  
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Sr. Mary Jensch  
Virginia Miller (Ginger)  
Mr. David Miller  
Jane & Robert C. Moriarty  
Mr. Robert A. Moriarty  
Kimi Nakanishi  
Ms. Helen Kawaguchi  
Mary, Marily, & Bill Nash  
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Hansen  
Deborah Neri  
Carlotta Neri  
Vincent D. Nestico  
Mrs. Vincent Nestico  
Mike & Peggy O’Neill  
Ms. Kathleen O’Neill  
Zachary Ontiveros  
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Sr. Mary Jensch  
Arnaldo Peralta  
Mrs. Louise Peralta  
Sr. Mary Perpetua  
Barry & Kathy Blodgett  
Teresa Galvez  
Sally & Sue Nowinski
In Memory of… (continued) (those remembered are in BOLD)

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Barbara Nugent
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Weiner
Joe & Carol Quarucci

Sr. Philomena
The Sisters Of The Holy Faith
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Bob & Anne-Marie Ritter

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Ramos & Flores Families
Mrs. Elsa Ramos

Vendu Rau
Doreen Johnson

Rita Reynolds
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Ms. Mary McDermott

Roger Richcreek
Sr. Mary Jensch

Catherine Anne Robley
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Mr. & Mrs. David Costley

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Leo Trembley
Daughters of Mary & Joseph

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Ms. Janice Kuglin

Geraldine C. Vidovich
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Ann Grant Villa
Ms. Susan Grant

Cathleen Ward
Mr. & Mrs. Brendan Laffey

Ward (my cousin)
Ms. Maureen Daniger

Margaret Welker
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We have made every effort to list the names of those remembered accurately. If we have made an error, please let us know and we will correct our records.
Daughters of Mary and Joseph
Development Office
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