Celebrating...

26

Years of ministry in California!
Our Dear Friends of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph,

This year marks the 90th Anniversary of the presence and service of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles!!! On August 29, 1926, at the invitation of Bishop Cantwell, seven DMJs arrived in St. Augustine Parish in Culver City to begin our new ministry in education. This edition of DMJlink is devoted to the telling of our story.

As we look back over the past 90 years and see how our presence grew and spread to so many other communities, we remember and give thanks to God for the many opportunities given us to serve as instruments of God’s loving mercy and compassion to the people throughout California and beyond. At our Regional Meeting this past March, we put up a time line on the wall and asked our sisters to take sticky notes and list their various ministries under the appropriate years. In reviewing the myriad of ministries, including education in over 12 primary schools and 3 high schools, evangelization on Native American Reservations, in prisons, parishes, hospitals, universities, retreat ministry, we are amazed at how we have been greatly blessed, and continue to be so graced, with and through all those who have shared and supported us in these ministries!

It was a poignant exercise. We looked at our “heydays” of the 60s, 70s and 80s as well as our years of diminishment. All in all, it has been a wonderful time for a small community such as ours!

How many lives have been touched by our Sisters is difficult to determine. Surely it is in the tens of thousands!! We were good educators, but we wonder too if those touched by us also realized that our charism as DMJs was to be “Instruments of Mercy.” Did our people experience God as Mercy through us? We surely pray that they did! And we also wonder if this charism of mercy is being passed on by those we touched, being lived on in our students and co-workers.

As you may know, Pope Francis has declared this year to be an Extraordinary Jubilee, a Holy Year of Mercy. Whether through hospitality, acts of kindness, forgiveness, or other expressions of love, he is inviting all people everywhere to be instruments of God’s mercy: “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful”. Pope Francis encourages all of us in his assuring words that “Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope”

Looking to the future with hope, we DMJs continue to remember in gratitude each of you, in your generosity and your examples of living mercy. You have made it possible for us during these past 90 years to serve God’s people as instruments of God’s loving mercy in so many ways. May God bless all of us as we live our Founder’s admonition: “You are the instruments of the mercy of God. Let no difficulty stand in the way of this ministry.”

The DMJ Leadership Team on behalf of all our DMJ Sisters
While we don’t use the word *jubilation* very often, it is age-old and derives from the Latin word *jubilatio*, which according to the Oxford Latin Dictionary means *loud shouting, rejoicing, whooping, or gladness*. That sounds rather wild... It has been said that St. Augustine considered jubilation an expression of joy that cannot be adequately expressed in words. Every year the Daughters of Mary and Joseph celebrate the anniversaries, or Jubilees, of Sisters making their first vows, of taking that important step on their way to pronouncing their life-long vows. In the Biblical tradition, the observance of a jubilee extended beyond a single day. In the DMJ tradition, a Sister celebrating her anniversary may enter a time of *jubilatio* for the whole year! Granted, it may be more toned-down than the word would imply in Augustine’s time, but perhaps only a bit!

In 2016, five DMJs are observing their Jubilees. Four sisters are celebrating 60 years: Sr. Kitty Moloney, DMJ, Sr. Margaret Mary Haller, DMJ, Sr. Teresa McShane, DMJ and Sr. Alice Nugent, DMJ. Celebrating her 50th Jubilee is Sr. Karen Marie. If we were to list the ministries of these five Sisters and the places in which they have served, it would be long and varied, encompassing multiple countries and very diverse ways of responding to the needs of the People of God.

For them, this year of jubilation was put in motion with a special Eucharistic Liturgy at the Los Angeles Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels on January 31st celebrating the men and women religious of the Archdiocese who have Jubilees this year. The cathedral choir led the congregation in the singing and rejoicing that is proper to great jubilation. The celebrant, Bishop Joseph Brennan, reminded those present that religious provide the world with “love, sweet love,” something badly lacking in our world today. The DMJs were honored at that Mass for having served the Archdiocese since their arrival in Culver City in 1926, 90 years ago.

Firmly rooted deep within, jubilation is an expression of the joy one has in belonging to God as a Christian and in being energized by the Spirit -- a joy that has staying-power. ~Sr. Karen Marie
Ninety Years in California

The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy. (Psalm 126)

It's always a very good idea to celebrate a birthday. And this year, 2016, we are putting that idea into practice as we celebrate ninety years of ministries in California.

As we move forward it is time for us to pause and reflect on our past and at the same time look forward to what lies ahead. George Santayana writes this thought in a more poetic way: “We must welcome the future, remembering that soon it will be the past; and we must respect the past, remembering that it was once all that was humanly possible.”

On August 13, 1926, the first seven Daughters of Mary and Joseph, with Sister Modwina O’Driscoll as Superior, set sail on the Zeeland from Antwerp, Belgium to New York. From New York the Sisters traveled by train to Los Angeles, arriving in Culver City on Sunday evening August 29th.

St. Augustine School, Culver City, 1926; Morning Star School, San Francisco, 1930; St. Paul the Apostle School, Los Angeles, 1935

From 1926 to 1935 the Daughters of Mary and Joseph established three schools in California. The first, St Augustine School in Culver City, opened September 7, 1926. From its initial enrollment of 160, it reached 620 within 20 years. Thus began for the Daughters of Mary and Joseph a long history of education in St. Augustine School in Culver City. Today the Sisters continue to serve in St. Augustine Parish.

In 1930 the Daughters of Mary and Joseph were invited by Fr. Stoecke, SVD, to staff Morning Star in San Francisco. From an initial enrollment of only fifteen students there was an increase year-by-year until it reached its capacity of 300 in the 1960s. The Daughters of Mary and Joseph withdrew from Morning Star in 1985.

Early in 1935, the Paulist Fathers invited the Daughters of Mary and Joseph to staff St. Paul the Apostle School in Westwood. The school opened on September 10, 1935 with an enrollment of 100 students from grades one through six. Thus began a long history, continuing to the present, of the ministry of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph in St. Paul the Apostle School.

For the next ten years, after the opening of St. Paul the Apostle School, there was, what appeared to be, a hiatus. During this interval, the three existing schools were able to expand only because of an influx of Daughters of Mary and Joseph from England. To meet the continuing need for more Sisters we opened novitiates in Los Angeles and in Ireland 1943 and 1947, respectively.
Ten Years —Eight Schools

Between 1950 and 1960, the Daughters of Mary and Joseph opened eight schools. In retrospect that seems to be an almost impossible accomplishment. Although the elementary schools were staffed primarily by DMJs they were ably assisted by dedicated lay teachers. During those same years the DMJs assisted in the staffing of three High Schools: St. Pius X, Downey, Bishop Conaty, Los Angeles and St. Bernard in Playa del Rey.


In 1950, Msgr. O’Halloran invited the Daughters of Mary and Joseph to staff Precious Blood School in the Westlake area of Los Angeles. The same year the DMJs agreed to staff St. Sebastian School in West Los Angeles. The Sisters taught at Precious Blood School until 1971 and at St. Sebastian School until 1973.

In 1951 our community opened two schools on the opposite ends of the State of California: St. Michael School in San Francisco and Our Lady of Peace School in Sepulveda. St. Michael School is located on a hilly residential area known as Ocean View. St. Michael School opened with the first four classrooms in September in 1951. A new eight-classroom school opened early in 1952. In the mid 1960s the pastor, Fr. Mulvihille invited the Sisters to join the council. This was a new expanding ministry experience for our Sisters. St. Michael School closed in 1989.

In 1951 Fr. James Leheny, the Pastor of Our Lady of Peace Parish invited the Daughters of Mary and Joseph to staff the new school. Our Lady of Peace School opened with six classes – grades one through six, with an average of fifty students per class. The school had to expand twice in order to meet the continual expanding enrollment. The Daughters of Mary and Joseph continued to minister in Our Lady of Peace School and Parish until 1992.

In 1952, after completing the construction of parish buildings, at Our Lady of the Rosary in Paramount, Fr. McHenry invited the Daughters of Mary and Joseph to staff the school. The enrollment in the school grew at such a rate, that within six years the original eight classrooms had to be doubled. The Daughters of Mary and Joseph continue to assist in the school as well as being involved in many parish ministries.
The Daughters of Mary and Joseph arrived at **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel**, Mill Valley on August 30, 1955. School opened two weeks later with an enrollment of nearly two hundred students in grades one through four. A grade was added each year until it reached eight grades. The Daughters of Mary and Joseph continued to staff **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School** until it closed in 1985.

**St. James the Less School**, La Crescenta opened on September 11, 1956 with two hundred students in the first four grades. By the sixties, when the school had expanded to eight grades, enrollment had increased to around 400. The Daughters of Mary and Joseph withdrew from teaching in 2000 but continued, when possible, to volunteer in the school.

In a *quid pro quo* negotiation, involving staffing **St. Bernard High School**, Playa Del Rey, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles required the community to staff **St. Anthony School**, El Segundo when it opened in 1956. The Sisters continued to teach there until 1971 when, due to shortage of Sisters they withdrew from the school.

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**Staffing Archdiocesan High Schools**

The Daughters of Mary and Joseph moved into secondary education in 1953, when three Sisters helped staff **St. Pius X High School**, Downey. The Sisters taught French, Music, History, English and Mathematics.

In 1956, **Bishop Conaty High School**, Los Angeles, was the second High School venture of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph. Three Sisters joined the staff teaching Religion and Spanish.

Beginning in 1958 and until 2007, numerous Daughters of Mary and Joseph taught at **St. Bernard High School**, Playa Del Rey. They filled such staffing needs as French, Mathematics, Home Economics, Speech, School Councilor and Vice-Principal.

In 1964, **St. Joseph High School** in Santa Maria opened its doors to its first sixty students. The staff consisted of two priests of the Josephite Fathers, two Daughters of Mary and Joseph and a part-time P.E. teacher. Over the years, and to the present, the Daughters of Mary and Joseph taught many subjects including History, Spanish, English, Religion and French and have been part of school administration.

The Daughters of Mary and Joseph taught and administered at **St. Louis de Montfort School** in Santa Maria for forty years. September 1964 marked the official opening of St. Louis de Montfort School. One hundred students and three teachers comprised grades 1-3. Each year a grade was added until the school year 1969-70 saw eight full grades and the first graduation class. Although no longer involved in the school, the Daughters of Mary and Joseph continue to minister in the parish.
**Moving Inland**

For forty-five years we ministered in the Inland Empire – San Bernardino Diocese. Beginning with education our ministries soon spread to Religious Education at St. Mary’s Indian Mission, Morongo Reservation, to RCIA, Faith Communities, Scripture Study and whatever else was needed in Parish ministry. A new dimension began in recent years with volunteer service in Carol’s Kitchen which provide meals for the hungry. Our community in the Banning area was known for its warm hospitality.

**1960 and Beyond**

In 1959, to meet future community and ministry needs, we purchased property in Rancho Palos Verdes from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The first phase of the building plan was completed in 1961, with the opening of our new Novitiate and Community Center. In January 1963, we completed the second phase with the opening of Mary & Joseph Retreat Center. The final phase was completed in 1994, with the building of Marian Residence, a retirement Center for our older sisters. We continue to utilize our former Novitiate as a DMJ Hospitality and Administrative Center for our community.
In 1962 St. Peter Alcantra School – later changed to St. John Fisher School, was opened in temporary classrooms on our property adjacent to our Novitiate. After a few years a permanent school and convent were built on St. John Fisher property. The School expanded over the years. In 1970, the Daughters of Mary and Joseph withdrew from being part of the teaching staff.

When the Mary & Joseph Retreat Center opened in 1963 its ministry was directed almost entirely to married couples’ retreats. Today, while it continues to serve married couples it has expanded its ministry to a vast spectrum of individuals and groups. The mission of the Retreat Center is to provide an environment of serenity, prayer and natural beauty where one can “come away and rest awhile.” and return to our lives with a new sense of God’s presence.

The Present

And so we've traveled through 90 years of our full lives in California and are struck by the mysterious gift of memory – a calling to mind of that immense storehouse of past experiences and looking at them in the present. They are intimately part of us and make us who we are in this moment.

Today, our call to Mission remains as alive as the day we entered the Daughters of Mary and Joseph – maybe even more alive because it has been well-seasoned and tested! We are more aware that to be fully human is to be open to the fullness of life. Upon retirement, many of our Sisters set their hearts on being volunteers in whatever capacity it was possible, usually in their favorite ministry. Several of us are engaged in pastoral ministry, teaching, justice work, outreach to the poor and to those who are ill and/or in need of a listening, loving heart.

For all of us, in whatever way we are able, we continue to share with Christ in his Mission to be living signs of the love and mercy of God through our commitment to being women of prayer. In our prayer we grow in greater solidarity with the whole world, especially with those who suffer in any form.

In reviewing our story we are in awe and give thanks for the ways our God has blessed so many through the gift of our charism. The consciousness that all is gift grows more deeply in our lives. We are full of gratitude and always full of hope.

~Sisters Alice Nugent, Nuala Briody and Linda Webb
Sr. Ruth Schwalenberg, also known as Sr. Marie Valentine, was born on November 5, 1931 in Baltimore, Maryland. Her immediate family was small: her parents, Herman Valentine Schwalenberg and Anna Marie Wright, and her older sister, Thérèse Martin, DMJ. Ruth met the DMJs at St. Paul the Apostle Elementary School and entered the Community in August 1950.

Ruth pursued Spanish studies which prepared her not only for teaching Spanish at Bishop Conaty High School but greatly influenced her life-long love and service within Hispanic culture. Ruth’s desire to learn new things and to discover their deeper meaning seemed to permeate her life in so many ways. She was a voracious reader with a tremendous capacity to remember and integrate into her life whatever she read.

As a woman of deep faith and prayer, Ruth was vibrantly alive and open to the creative and prophetic spirit within and around her. Ruth shared her joy of life with all of us. As a teacher, she saw in her students each one’s uniqueness, beauty and possibilities, welcoming, supporting and believing in them as they were, and challenging them to “follow their dreams”.

In parish ministry, Ruth was asked to serve as Pastoral Associate/Coordinator, especially working with the Hispanic community in various parishes. Her pastoral experience as a missionary in Brazil along with her studies in Rome during Vatican II shaped her understanding of Church—as the People of God.

As a member of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph, Ruth had a deep and profound love for the Community and for the Founder. Her spirit of joy, hospitality and welcome permeated her life and “spilled over onto all around her”. Always very generous in spirit, Ruth left her missionary work in Brazil when she was called to Rome to become our Congregational Leader, where she embraced this new ministry of leadership. Ruth was convinced that the renewal of the Church and Religious Life begun by Pope John XXIII in Vatican II should be our vision and life as well.

She loved the word ALLELUIA. ALLELUIA was her life; ALLELUIA was her song!! Ruth has shared her light and vision with us and now she has returned to the LIGHT from which she has come. We are all very grateful...
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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:
Daughters of Mary and Joseph
5300 Crest Road
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray.

—Rumi
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(SB those remembered are in BOLD)

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January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.

We have made every effort to list the names of donors accurately. If we have made an error, please let us know and we will correct our records.

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if the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy,
if a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you,
if the simple things in nature have a message you understand, rejoice,
for your soul is alive.

—Eleanora Duse

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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.

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° Msgr. William Van Crombrugghe, Founder
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—Pope Francis

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