



Eastern American Province

2015-2016

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That all may have LIFE and have it to the full.

MOTHER BUTLER MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL – OUR 50TH REUNION – REMINISCENCES

By Joanne Murphy Wickbergm

Our 50th High School Reunion was held on April 30th, 2016 at the Radisson Hotel, New Rochelle. It was a much anticipated event, not to mention most exciting for the 55 who attended. Time is an equalizer. We are now in our late 60s and sexagenarians by definition. We wore name tags to jog our memory back to the past, to recall the person before us... who we once were and who we are now. We added a few pounds, gray & silver hair, a few wrinkles!

We've all followed different paths in life, doctors, teachers, nurses, business professionals...all of these most gratifying professions and we were so well prepared by our wonderful teachers.

They were, by far, an inspiring and exalting influence. Walking into the beautifully decorated room, hearing the chatter, laughter, and some squealing, ring out brought us back to our past. It was as if, only yesterday, we were all together. Could it be that 50 years have not flown by? We were reliving our MBM spirit with the same enthusiasm. It was simply wonderful getting together again. We pledged to continue meeting every couple of months and revisiting the happiest days of our lives. We all have something in common. We have our youth and we have MBM!

Our Mission

The SHM-EF embraces all those who desire to share in the spirit and charism of the RSHM and their founder, Jean Gailhac, and foundress, Mere Saint Jean. The RSHM treasure the friendships and associations shared with students, faculties, staffs, families and colleagues over the years. All are invited to participate in the SHM Extended Family, which embraces all who want a deeper understanding of the challenges of the Church today and the RSHM Institute's focus on justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

LENTEN DAY OF PRAYER 2015

By Catherine Bennett, RSHM

On March 13th, 2016, two Sundays before Easter, we held our Lenten Day of Prayer at Marymount Convent in Tarrytown. Mass at 11:00 A.M. was celebrated by Rev. Senan Taylor, O.F.M. Cap., who gave an excellent homily, as always right on point. After Mass, we enjoyed our lunch together, greeting old friends and meeting new ones. Lunch was followed by the afternoon's program: a period of quiet prayer led by Sr. Patricia Fahey, RSHM. Sr. Patricia described the ancient Scripture prayer of *Lectio Divina*, using

the Gospel of the day – which was John 8:1-11, about the woman taken in adultery. It was such a prayerful time for all of us as we heard the loving way that Jesus protected the woman from being stoned by the Pharisees. After we had spent some reflective time in silence we were able to share with each other how Jesus spoke to us. We were encouraged by Sr. Patricia to continue this prayer form, using the Readings from the daily Mass.

NEW COSMOLOGY PRESENTATION IN KINGSTON

By Michelle Phelan, RSHM

The RSHM Extended Family, Kingston, had the privilege to listen to a lecture on “The New Cosmology” presented by Sister Catherine Vincie RSHM. The audience was spell-bound and had the highest praise for Sister Catherine. They are waiting for more information on this Inspiring subject.

Many of our members come to Sunday Mass here at Marymount, Kingston on Sundays. These meetings keep the group very united. New members are always welcome. Best wishes to all RSHM Extended Family Members.

Join us for future events with your Extended Family

SHM EF Fall Retreat: September 16-18, 2016

Second Sunday with Father Senan- an Extended Family Gathering: October 9, 2016

Father Gailhac Day: Saturday, November 12, 2016

Advent Day of Prayer: Sunday, December 11, 2016

Lenten Day of Prayer: March 12, 2017

For more information on these events, go to <http://www.alumni.fordham.edu/calendar/list.aspx>

CATHOLIC CHARITIES VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

By Wanda Medina

In January of 2016, I started a new placement at Catholic Charities in Florida. I am teaching English to a group of women from Immokalee. The experience thus far has been quite challenging and rewarding.

In regard to the challenges, I find that it is difficult to cater to the needs of each and every student. I want each of them to

excel and to learn as much as possible, but this is difficult. It is challenging because each student has different academic strengths and weak-nesses. Despite the varying levels of understanding, each student has found the English language to be quite complicated, as do I. As a result, I translate everything into Spanish, in order to help

the women comprehend the topic at hand. I have to admit that this is quite challenging for me, but I am receiving much more than I expected in return. These women are helping me to master the Spanish language. My written and verbal skills in Spanish have greatly improved. I truly believe that this is what the



WANDA MEDINA

experience is all about - being able to give and allowing myself to receive.

Although this position is difficult, I find it to be very fruitful. The groups of women I work with lift one another up. They help translate the topics presented in Spanish and collectively help one another when the topic is not fully understood.

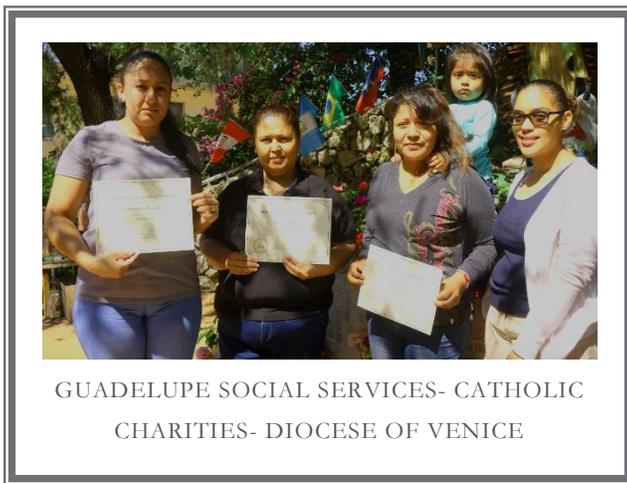
Essentially, they are each other's greatest fans and they empower one another to continue

learning, despite the many challenges experienced.

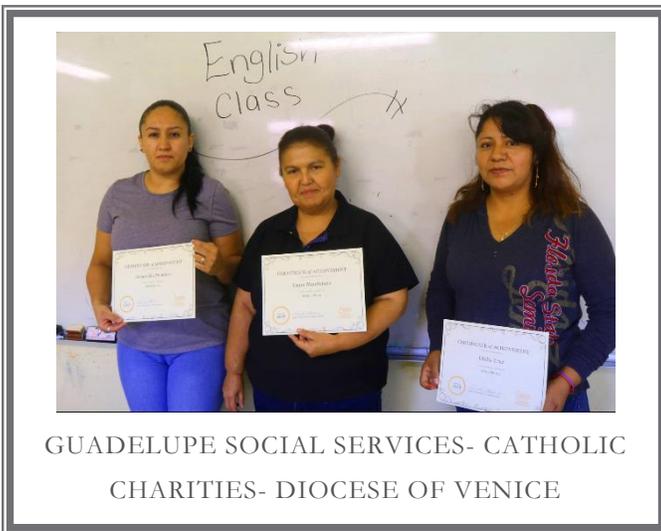
The most touching part of this position is being able to watch the children of the parents assist them with their class work. The parents show a level of vulnerability by asking their children for help, when they are unable to

understand a topic. It is great being able to watch the children connect with their parents. In many cases the

child can only understand the parents, but has lost his/her ability to speak the Spanish language. So I have to say the beauty of this placement is being able to watch the kids reconnect with those that they love most.



GUADELUPE SOCIAL SERVICES- CATHOLIC CHARITIES- DIOCESE OF VENICE



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DID YOU KNOW???

A List of wonderful RSHM Community Resources

These are some of the ministries where the RSHM serve. For this issue, we have an article about the Columba Kavanagh Houses. In future issues, we hope to provide more about the other ministries.

Eastern American Province (EAP)

Ministries:

Columba Kavanagh House
Cormaria Retreat House
Centro Corazon de Maria
Marymount Convent
Marymount School of New York
Marymount University, VA
RSHM Volunteer Program
RSHM LIFE Center
Weaving Center

Art Conservation
Legal Aid Service of Collier County, FL
Legal Services, New York
Legal Services at the RSHM LIFE Center, NY
Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society

An RSHM Institute Ministry:

RSHM UN NGO

A Ministry supported by the RSHM EAP

LifeWay Network, Inc.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

By Betty Flynn

On Saturday, June 4, 2016, I attended the Marymount Manhattan College Alumnae reunion where I joined the Class of 1966 to celebrate their 50th Anniversary. I had taught many of them as Mother Celestine Marie RSHM. After a lively "catch-up" luncheon, we gathered for a '66 class meeting. Many of the alumnae expressed their fond memories of the role the RSHM faculty and staff played in those college

years. They expressed an interest in reconnecting with their mentors through the Extended Family events and volunteer program. Email addresses for the Class of 1966 were gathered and will be used to offer the Extended Family Newsletter to all who request it, as well as invitations to future events.

I'm looking forward to the Class of 1967's 50th Reunion next May!!

“MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE”

By Suzanne Ochs

Amidst cold and windy weather, which caused roaring whitecaps to remind us of Nature’s presence, close to 50 members of the SHM Extended Family came together at Cormaria to pray, laugh, eat, reflect, rest, and share.

The EF Spring Retreat, held on April 1 – 3, was to celebrate the Year of Mercy, and touched greatly on the Prayer of St. Francis. This simple and touching prayer is one that resounds the most to me, and I’m certain to the others in attendance

as well. While being reminded that we can all be instruments of positive change, we learned to relax our minds & souls thru meditation and Tai Chi Chih. We ate tasty nourishing food. We laughed and reminisced about the past. We hugged and talked about our

present struggles. We celebrated Holy Eucharist. We witnessed a family’s grief, and hoped that we could lend whatever tiny support could be given at such a time. We were inspired by Joan Chittister’s Call to Action speech.

As a personal note, this was my first retreat with the EF. In fact, I signed up for the retreat not

fully understanding that this was an Extended Family weekend. Upon arrival on Friday night, I felt nervous, an outsider, not knowing anyone and feeling out of place as I saw women who DID know each other talking and laughing over shared events. These feelings lasted for about 10 minutes, however. I was embraced as only a community could embrace. Some of the EF had belonged to the RSHM community; I myself had been a postulant with the community roughly 15

years ago. It was life affirming to see those who had shared my journey during those discerning years. We are now living in a time when hate seems overwhelming;



being merciful and a channel of peace seems unsurmountable. The fact that all the wonderful people at the retreat still felt the Gailhac spirit, that fire, that passion, that drive to BE.... it is something that I want back in my own life. Thank you to all who organized this retreat.

COLUMBIA KAVAGNAH HOUSING THOSE IN NEED **By Annette Cunningham and Georgette Lawson, RSHM**

In 1985, a ministry was founded by RSHM Sisters Georgette Lawton and the late Alice M. Biegen. The purpose of Columba Kavanagh House is to provide permanent housing with supportive services to formerly homeless single men and women with a history of mental illness or substance illness (drugs/alcohol.) The initiative gave courageous and creative expression to the words of Christ that inspired their founder. Trusting in their experience of and the urgency of the need, the pioneers of Columba Kavanagh House, Inc. (CKH) did what their Founder had done nearly a century and a half before. They identified available skills and reached out to friends who shared their ideals.

The Sisters had been sheltering homeless women on a temporary basis in the basement of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, NYC. Demonstrating that there are no coincidences for those with a mission, they began analyzing how to **direct the hope** in a new and practical direction. As Provincial Treasurer, Sister Alice had been tasked with the mission to explore permanent housing options in NYC for RSHM Sisters in Europe who wished to return to New York to begin new ministries but who needed permanent housing. In the portfolios of brokers with whom she worked were many buildings designated SRO (Single Room Occupancy.) These buildings were still occupied but the living conditions were deplorable. Repairs were being neglected and landlords were not providing basic services.

Sister Alice had done many building projects from the ground up in South America and had a history of managing building projects both in the world of

educational facilities, and in her current work as Province Treasurer. Tapping into their experience and the resources the city could make available, CKH was able to acquire a vacant City-owned building at 209 East 118 Street, and began substantial rehabilitation in 1989. Columba Hall HDFC opened its doors to 110 homeless single adults in August 1990. Earlier that year two privately owned Single Room occupancy buildings had come on the market and the Sisters and their growing number of allies began the hard work that enabled them to open the doors to 63 more homeless single adults in February 1992 in **EGA Hall/HDFC**. The growing alliance was able by October 1993 to open the doors of **GEMA Hall HDFC** to 87 more homeless single adults.

Columba Services, Inc. a not-for-profit corporation formed in 1990 provides supportive services to its tenants. A staff of counsellors offers them:

- Supportive and informational counseling;
- Health and mental health monitoring and referral;
- Community life skills such as meal planning and preparation;
- Personal hygiene, apartment care, money management;
- Substance abuse/MICA counseling and referrals;
- Job related supportive services and referrals;
- Recreational activities;
- Crisis intervention;
- Benefits assistance.
- Sister Georgette Lawton, RSHM works as Eligibility Coordinator.

2016 RSHM JUBILARIANS Renewing Their Commitment to Their Vocation

75 years Barbara Carvalho R.I.P.
70 YEARS Christine Marian
 Carolyn Roesel
60 YEARS Margarita Cardenas
 Brigid Driscoll
 Ethna Egan
 Maria Mercedes Gomez
 Bridget Mary Lyng
 Gerry McGinn
 Virginia McKenna
 Michaeline O'Dwyer
 Rosemary Seibert
50 YEARS Mary Heyser



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