



SHM Extended Family Newsletter

Eastern American Province

2010-2011 Events

[Volume 1]

April '11 Annual Retreat in Sag Harbor, NY

By Jamie Burke Clark

Over Palm Sunday weekend in April, forty-eight Extended Family members enjoyed their annual retreat at Cormaria in Sag Harbor. Sr. Ann Marino, RSHM retreat director at Cormaria, along with Sr. Virginia McNally, RSHM encouraged the group to reflect on the miracles in our lives where God has been revealed to each on a personal level. As we



celebrated the Palm Sunday liturgy, with the waving of palms, listening to the powerful words of the readings and hymn singing, we were mindful of Jesus' walk through Calvary and were inspired to put ourselves in the scene; in particular where "Jesus consoled the women."

Through talks, prayer and sharing, the group further explored the concept of rock in relation to how rock can be both a strength and protection (think cave and strong foundation) as

well as a burden and an obstacle (this barrier, rock wall and things that weigh us down). As an exercise, we were asked to pick up a stone from a basket set on the altar. We then carried these stones for the duration of the retreat. In a symbolic gesture of laying our burden down, we were invited to return our stone to the basket on the altar during the closing gathering.

Although, many of us were returnees, each, new and old, felt renewed and grateful for the opportunity for spiritual sharing especially at the start of Holy Week.

One retreat member wrote that "the level of sharing in my group was profound." Another wrote: "Being with such a deeply spiritual community is such a relief from the pressures of our lives." Based on these comments and other feedback, we know that many Extended Family members are already looking forward to attending next year's retreat!



Join us to welcome
the Extended Family



Who are the SHM-EF?

The RSHM treasure the friendships and associations shared with students, faculties, staffs, families, co-workers, and friends over the years. The desire for all to connect in a mutually enriching way led to the global formation of the Sacred Heart of Mary Extended Family and includes lay women, men, and children who support the RSHM community. The SHM-EF embraces all those who want "to share in the life-giving mission of Jesus Christ" (RSHM Mission Statement); all who desire to share in the spirit and charism of the RSHM founder, Jean Gailhac, and foundress, Mere Saint Jean; and a desire to deepen an understanding of the challenges of the Church today and the RSHM Institute's focus on justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, promoting "the life and dignity of all our sisters and brothers" (RSHM Mission).

March 2011 Day of Lent explores the Prodigal characters in us all

By Pat Healy

Forty-five Members of the SHM Extended Family EAP, both RSHM and non-RSHM, gathered at Marymount, Tarrytown on March 13, 2011 for a Lenten Day of Reflection titled "Love and Forgiveness," based on the parable of The Prodigal Son. After Liturgy in the chapel at 11:00AM, we moved to the auditorium for a delicious lunch arranged by Annie Randazzo, Co-Chair of the Extended Family.

After lunch a panel composed of Angelica Hinojosa, Sr. Ellen Marie Keane, RSHM and Pat Healy, representing the three characters from the parable,



discussed the different aspects of the story, from each one's point

of view. Their discussion was aided by visual representations of Rembrandt's "The Prodigal Son" and by references to Henri Nouwen's book "The Return of the Prodigal Son." A half-hour of silent reflection was followed by a lively discussion among all the participants. Many could relate the story to circumstances in their own lives and brought the reality of the situation home to all of us. A ritual of forgiveness brought the afternoon to a close and set us on the path for a thoughtful and fruitful Lent.

Religious Groups Take a Stand Against Human Trafficking in USA

By Angelica Hinojosa

On March 26, 2011, over two hundred people, including RSHM and Extended Family members, joined at Fordham University for a conference on the "Human Trafficking of Young Women." The joint effort between Fordham and the Coalition of Religious Congregations to Stop Trafficking of Persons (NY-CRC-STOP) brought members of various religious and academic communities together to participate, educate, discuss, and develop their plan to combat the sex trade of young women. The diverse panel consisted of a survivor/grassroots organizer, Queens Supreme Court judge, Brooklyn District Attorney, and a facilitator from CRC-STOP. All advocated for the growing need of education and advocacy for victims of the illegal sex trade, which is prevalent in the US. Films like "Breaking the Silence" and "Very Young Girls" are documentaries demonstrating the underground world, as does a new book by the survivor/grassroots organizer entitled, "Girls Like Us."

Everyone left the conference with ideas OR what they could do as individuals and groups to make a difference (i.e. commitment to prayer, make a financial donation, mentor a young person). For more information, view the films, read the new book, contact the LifeWay Network regarding the new Safe House for human trafficking survivors, review the Safe Harbor Act and the New York Anti-Trafficking Law of 2007, contact NY-CRC-STOP, and contact Girls Education and Mentoring Services (G.E.M.S.) to see how you can help.

<http://www.gems-girls.org/>

<http://lifewaynetwork.org/coalitions/nycrc-stop/>

http://www.fordham.edu/Campus_Resources/eNewsroom/topstories_2072.asp



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

“Women and Spirit”: captures essence of commitment to service of others

By Dotsie Ryan-Beck

In celebration of the RSHM founder, Pere Jean Gailhac, RSHM community members and SHM Extended Family members had an enjoyable day November 13, 2010, when about 80 people attended a special exhibit at Ellis Island.



A full bus of sisters, RSHM and SHM-EF members left Tarrytown bound for Battery Park, in Manhattan. Those who were not taking the bus met at Battery Park for the ferry ride across to Ellis Island.

Under clear skies and a cool breeze, we set off to view a very special exhibit, “Women and Spirit: The Catholic Sisters in America.”

The exhibit is a traveling exhibition depicting the innovative, action oriented women whose passion for justice helped shape our nation’s social and cultural landscape. Since first arriving in America nearly 300 years ago, sisters built schools, colleges, hospitals, orphanages, homeless shelters and many other enduring social institutions. As nurses, teachers and social workers, sisters entered professional ranks decades earlier than most other women and established landmark institutions that continue to serve millions of Americans from all walks of life. The exhibit now recounts the untold story of these unsung heroes, documenting a vital and significant perspective of American history.

What better way to honor Pere Gailhac, who himself, sent six Irish sisters along with Mere Basil as superior, where they set sail from the Motherhouse in Bezier and arriving in New York, on February 28, 1877. These sisters arrived in Sag Harbor, Long Island, New York

began teaching catechism to young adults.

After viewing the exhibit, we returned to Battery Park and after a short walk across the park we enjoyed a delicious catered lunch in the auditorium at the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. This was a rather fitting setting since



Mother Seton was the first American saint to be canonized by the Vatican, foundress of the parochial school system in the United States and started the religious order, The Sisters of Charity. A lively discussion of the exhibit and the events of the day were topics for discussion.

Volunteering to further connect RSHM and SHM-EF

By Sr. Mary Heyser, RSHM

The RSHM-EAP Volunteer Program will provide an opportunity for lay volunteers to share our RSHM Mission, to collaborate with us in our diverse ministries, to live Gospel values and those of the Catholic Social Teaching in order to work for structural change, and to bring abundant life to all.

At this time the RSHM-EAP are looking at 3 types of Volunteer Service:

1. Short Term Volunteer serving in our sponsored ministries
2. One Year Volunteer serving in the USA in connection with RSHM,
3. Two Year Volunteer serving internationally in connection with RSHM.

We will start with the Short Term Volunteers at Marymount Convent. These Short Term Volunteers will provide some of the following: take a few sisters for a drive, take some sisters out to eat, offer to take sisters to a movie, take some sisters shopping, possibly visit a sister to read to her or simply listen and talk to her. This program is currently in process of being established. It will be done in collaboration with the Coordinator at Marymount Convent. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sr. Mary Heyser, RSHM at mpheyser@gmail.com, Susannah Bourbeau at subourbeau@hotmail.com, or leave a message at the Provincial Center (914-631-8872).

Ethics and religious pluralism

By Sr. Patricia Fahey, RSHM

Members of the Sacred Heart of Mary Extended Family joined the RSHM at Tarrytown, NY on February 26, 2011 to celebrate the founding of the RSHM Institute. The topic chosen for the day was 'Religious Pluralism from the perspective of Prophecy and Mysticism.'

The presenter, Dr. Jeanine Hill-Fletcher, Associate Professor of Theology at Fordham University, who earned her Doctor of Theology degree from Harvard Divinity School, shared with us her own interest and expertise in religious pluralism, examining the three major religions from the perspective of Prophecy Mysticism. The presentation, discussion within small groups and the sharing and questions raised within the total assembly were enlightening and dynamic. Dr. Hill-Fletcher's vast knowledge and experience, her fidelity to her own Catholic heritage endeared her to all. She stressed the urgency of the topic, Religious Pluralism in the global world of the 21st Century.

The day concluded with the celebration of Liturgy in the Butler Memorial Chapel followed by light refreshments and energizing conversations.

Update on year's events: Extended Family at Marymount International School in Rome

By Sr. Rosaleen Sheridan, RSHM

The Extended Family here at Marymount International School has had a very interesting and good year. In October 2010, we had 23 people join together to plan and prepare for the year. One of our questions was to identify the purpose and the objectives of the group and define our mission.

In November 2010, we had our first prayer meeting and quiet time for reflection which was led by one member of the group. This was followed by light refreshments and a chance to enjoy each other's stories.

In March 2011, we had Sr. Kathleen Connell give a wonderful talk on Father Gailhac and our mission, of his special human qualities, his zeal and his love for each of the Sisters who worked with him.

For the beginning of the new school year we have planned a day of prayer and quiet as well as a visit to the Generalate to become more aware of the Institute, its work, role and function.

Marymount International School in Kingston renews spirit with Extended Family events

By Sr. Michelle Phelan, RSHM

The RSHM Extended Family, Kingston, held its Eighth Meeting in November 2010. A very informative presentation was given by a member of "STOP THE TRAFFIK," a London-based organization. Those who attended were given many new insights into the horrible problem of boys, women and children who are caught up in this evil.

At the March 2011 meeting, Sister Kathleen Connell, RSHM, led us in a morning of prayer and input. Her theme was "Entering into the Lenten Season Together." People were very happy to have this opportunity at the beginning of Lent to reflect together.

We were fortunate to have such inspiring speakers for our meetings. The upcoming gathering in November, 2011 will center around, "Our Foundress, Mother Saint Jean Pelissier Cure". Sister Andre Dullaghan, RSHM has agreed to share with us her research and her knowledge of the Beziers region. We look forward to her presentation.

People are gradually entering into the spirit of our Extended Family and we hope that others will join us in the future.

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

Instituto Marymount in Rome spreads spirit through events

**By Sr. Nicoletta Scotti,
RSHM**

The Extended Family of Roma has had seven meetings (from November 2010 to June 2011). The participants (about 25 people) from the very first encounter requested meetings on spirituality and formation on a monthly basis.

After listening and gathering the respective requests, expectations and needs of the participants, it was decided to focus on our RSHM charisma, a precise and visible way of experiencing God.

Our charisma has its roots in the personal relationship with God: TO KNOW AND LOVE GOD AND TO LET HIM BE KNOWN AND LOVED. It is our gift for the Church as well as for the world.

It is our goal to create the Kingdom of God here and now. We are all called to put our resources to the service of those who are more in need of justice and dignity (Declaration of mission).

We have seen that there are specific conditions which favor the knowledge of God:

- the awareness of the presence of God
- the awareness of the whole person before God.

The work of the knowledge of God is parallel to the knowledge of one's self. These two aspects are interrelated and complementary.

In our meetings we treated this subject starting from God's Word, by approaching it through the theological vision of Father Gailhac. We looked at the names that he attributes to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as our Christian life is inserted in God, the Trinity: "In Him we live, we move and we exist" (At. 17,28).

Every meeting has been characterised by four moments:

1. Preparation
2. Listening and silence
3. Sharing
4. Conclusion

In the final evaluation of this work the need to continue to follow this path emerged, as it was considered a tangible and meaningful experience in God which led the participants to concentrate, focus and center one's self in God through awareness, silence, prayer and confrontation.

Our next meeting will be held in October 2011.

Extra resources

RSHM LIFE Center

<http://www.youtube.com/user/RSHMCHANNEL#p/u/5/Atiz36YOxmU>

Cormaria

<http://www.youtube.com/user/RSHMCHANNEL#p/u/10/vupiON2ZxLg>

Jubilee 2011

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOXjK18AKJE>

Follow the following instructions:

Click on one side of this box. Then **place** mouse on each link. Select **Ctrl** on the keyboard. A hand icon will appear on a link and you are able to click the link to open video.

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SHM-Extended Family is an annual publication sent via email to subscribers. It provides a year-end review of local events in the Eastern American Province.

To include others in receiving this email, update your contact information, and/or receive event information, please send an email to shirleys@rshmeap.org.

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