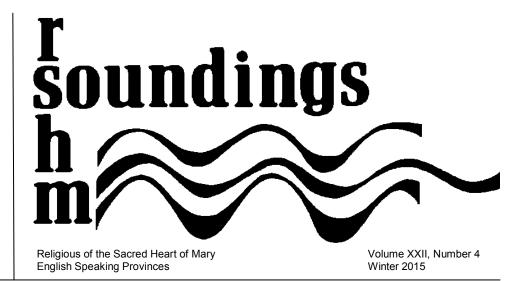
RSHM SOUNDINGS is a quarterly publication of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Eastern and Western American and Northern European Provinces, and Zambezi Region. Waves sent out, reflected back, reveal an inner reality not always evident on the surface. Thus SOUNDINGS probes RSHM life in expanding circles of ministry and community. You, our readers, are part of our life. We invite your comments and suggestions so that your thoughts may be reflected in these pages.



# FRANCIS, REBUILD MY CHURCH

## WINDOWS AND DOORS

by Cathy Minhoto, RSHM

LOS ANGELES, CA When questioned about convening an ecumenical council, John XXIII stated that he wanted to throw open the windows of the church so that we can see out and the people can see in, while "letting the fresh air of the Spirit blow through." In another view of the church, the affable Pope wanted the church not to be a museum of antiques, but a place that "tends the blooming garden of life." John XXIII was definitely a "window" man, challenging the pre-Vatican II Church to dust off sills, to unlatch locks, to look at the world, to be attentive to the signs of the times and to allow the "joy and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of all people, especially those who are poor and in any way afflicted" to be our joys and hopes, our griefs and anxieties. (Gaudium et Spes).

Our current Pope, the eversurprising Francis, has his own perspective of the Church. In his exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, Francis describes the church as a place with wide open doors—authentic disciples of Jesus keep the doors open to grace, inviting, welcoming, waiting "like the father who keeps his door open" so when the prodigal child returns, he can pass through



it" (#46). I must confess that when the doorbell rings on a Saturday morning, I would much prefer to ignore it, especially if it is our regular neighborhood proselytizers, whose enthusiasm I admire, but whose persistence I find disconcerting. For this reason, the door image pulls me outside of my comfort zone where the unknown may call me to places where I would rather not be.

I think that Francis sees the follower of Jesus as a doorman/

woman who opens doors, carries luggage, assists others in finding their way. This gospel doorman/ woman is at the service of others, risks pushing out boundaries, embraces diversity, and reverences the presence of the wounded and Risen Jesus in surprising places—among unaccompanied children crossing borders, with women, victims of domestic abuse, with all those enslaved by disease, violence, and war

I was moved when Jorge Mario Bergoglio chose the name Francis saint of Assisi. lover of the poor. mystic and prophet, follower of the Christ of the no-place, singer of a canticle of creation. Through this new Francis, I think that the invitation of Jesus is being given once more: "Francis, don't you see that my Church is crumbling? Go, then and rebuild it." With Francis, let us rebuild our Church as people of passion and compassion, of inclusiveness and mercy, of wonder and joy. Let us be both window persons and door persons in this invitation to renew, reshape, and rebuild a Church that is truly missionary, embracing all persons, going forth in hope and joy, proclaiming a God of abundant love for all creation.◆

# A CHAPEL RENEWED

by Jacqueline A. Murphy, RSHM



ARLINGTON, VA Over the past few years Marymount University Arlington undertook a development plan for the renewal of parts of the campus. The Sacred Heart of Mary Chapel was one of those places chosen for this process. Dr. Matthew Shank, President of the University, asked his wife, Lynne Shank, to serve as chairperson of a committee that included representation from Campus Ministry, the RSHM resident sisters, a faculty and staff member, and an architect. We were guided by the recognition of the centrality of the place of worship and the chapel itself-a place representing our Catholic identity.

First, a plan was made to replace the frosted glass windows with stained glass windows. Ten of the windows were to be made in the traditional stained glass format: in these we present the Joyful Mysteries and the Mysteries of Light. The remaining ten would be shaped as "medallions" with each one of them representing an important person, or theme which has been part of the long term history of the University and the founding RSHM Community. Among the very first choices were the crest of the RSHM and that of the University. "Tua Luce Dirige" fit so well with the motto of the religious community "Ut Vitam Habeant". These two windows will hold a place of honor facing each other at the very front of the chapel.

We did not want to discard the old and replace only with the new. Restoration of the original chapel Cross was done by a local wood worker who did a similar job to restore the four wooden statues of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary, and of St. Joseph and St. Therese of Lisieux. These statues had been part of the chapel ambience for more than 50 years. After several other steps of renewal in the sanctuary, the final and most central part of the sanctuary, the altar, the tabernacle table, and matching ambo were built according to our specifications by a local carpenter.

Then, starting with the outside doors and entrance, we proposed a "redesigned" main entrance. It includes a portico which will be a gathering place, a fully accessible entry of partially glassed doors, new paint, flooring, pews and kneelers. The redesign allows all who pass by to have a full and clear view of the chapel and sanctuary from the outside. Accents to the interior beauty come from renewed lighting, both direct and indirect, and a new sound system.

In the late Spring of 2014, Bishop Paul S. Loverde consecrated the new altar. Our Campus Ministry Team and students "dressed" the altar with new cloths. The Bishop spoke eloquently of the altar as the place where Christ becomes truly present for us.

As the work of restoration continues, this house of prayer keeps its central place on campus and will continue to reflect the elements of our Catholic identity and the RSHM heritage.



# GOD'S ADDRESS

by Rev. Cletus Mwiila

KALOMO, ZAMBIA "Francis, don't you see that my house has collapsed? Go and repair it for me." The Lord continues to say the same in today's world. So who is Francis of today? What repairs does the Church require today? "Love God, believe in God, worship God. Honour worthy men and women. Should a maiden or widow or orphan seek your aid, then provide it" (Adrian House: 2001).

In the twenty-first Century, we realize the many challenges that threaten the Church. They are stretching from materialism that overshadows the poor, to misbehaviours that destroy the moral fibre of society. Pope Francis has been inviting the world and the Church to be aware, in the light of the Gospel, that life involves joys and sadness. He has called us to be friends of the needy, to repair the Church for Christ. The passion of the poor, the troubled is the passion of Christ. God casts down the mighty and raises the lowly.

Repairing the Church may mean to announce the poor Christ to the world, in order to grow a church that is a friend of the poor, the marginalized and the lonely. Christ was poor and that inspired St. Francis.

The call of the Church today is to be fulfilled and smiling in the midst of the poor (refer to *Evangelii Gaudium*). It is a call to see Jesus who walks among the poor with a glance full of love. That look is a prayer, invoking the coming of the Kingdom.

In order to experience a Smiling Church, with open hearts in our time we must be ready to accept the Lord who passes by our tent, clad in the rags of our lowliest brothers and sisters. "Master, what is your address?" The Lord's address is poverty. "If you do not remain in me, as a branch joined to the vine, then you will not bear fruit"(refer to John 15). Now Jesus dwells in the house of the poor. He dwells in the Church that has passion for the poor. The one who loses his suffering sister/ brother's address, also loses God's address.

# MISSION TODAY AND TOMORROW

by Breda Shelly, RSHM

KINGSTON, ENGLAND We often hear the directive given to St. Francis of Assisi by Jesus, "Go, rebuild my church!" Francis went to St. Damiano and began to rebuild the old broken down chapel, which became the convent of the Poor Clares and is today a place of pilgrimage. Those words are directed to each of us as we continue to build the church in our various ministries. We see mission today with new eyes, open eyes that include all people, their traditions and their cultures and we can say that the Church is indeed a missionary Church. It is concerned with the joys, dreams, sorrows and anxieties of all peoples (Vatican II: Gaudium et Spes). Its challenge is to build a society where justice and peace reign and where the rights of all people are respected.

The foundation was laid by those who went before and the legacv that we have inherited is rich and vibrant. The ground work for succession is in process; the seed has been sown. But these are anxious times for those involved in succession, especially in the training and preparing of people—religious (local priests and indigenous religious communities) and lay people to carry on mission of Christ "that all may have life." Our task is to support and train younger members; to support and assure them that they have the necessary gifts and talents to go forward into an uncertain future.

Faith-based groups are actively involved in the lives of the people and work tirelessly to bring about

peace in situations of conflict, to eliminate hunger, to provide healthcare and means of livelihood. Those who bear the torch today need to be strong not only in faith and commitment but also in raising funds to sustain their ministries. Funders are interested in results. The approach to seeking funds must be SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound (George T. Doran Management Goals).

My ministry with Misean Cara (Mission Support from Ireland) has put me in touch with our sisters and partners in the field in Zambezi, Mozambique and Brazil. I recently attended a Conference in Dublin—

Mission Today and Tomorrow accompanied by two young sisters Africa. Beatrice from Magaya (Zambezi) and Arsénia Sapatinho (Mozambique). In her reflections on the meeting, Beatrice wrote "What impressed me the most was the emphasis on the fact that we exist and work in a continually growing and changing world . . . we are only part of a whole . . . what I begin others will carry on. This awakens the growing need for solidarity and good succession."

Our RSHM Constitutions express this calling: In communion and participation with others we assume our prophetic role in the Church. Sharing a common spirit of faith and zeal, we are present in the reality of the world as builders of solidarity and agents of evangelization (Constitutions 27).

# YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE November 2014 - February 2016 Rooted in Christ LIVERPOOL ARCHDIOCESE

A banner with the above design by Barbara Bailey, RSHM is in Liverpool Cathedral for the duration of the present Year of Consecrated Life. The opening ceremony included a ritual in which representatives of different congregations and forms of consecrated life blessed a sapling, to be planted later in the cathedral grounds as a symbol of our ongoing commitment.

### CONTRIBUTORS

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Clevie Youngblood, RSHM is chair of the Religious Studies Department at Marymount School of New York.

# HOW WE ARE REBUILDING THE CHURCH

by Clevie Youngblood, RSHM

NEW YORK, NY The San Damiano Cross is one of the treasures that I visited every time I went to Assisi when I lived in Rome. It is an icon cross with images other than the crucified Jesus. Like all icons it is an invitation to encounter the sacred. What I love about this cross are the images of the women at the foot of the cross and the angels celebrating. They remind us of what it takes to "rebuild my Church."

The women at the foot of the cross are Mary, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, wife of Clopas. They are a reminder of the many women throughout history who have borne witness to the Risen Jesus and have been the foundation of the Church. To rebuild our Church today we need the wisdom and talents of women. At Marymount School we are preparing young women to be the foundation.

To rebuild our Church we need to engage, enable, and empower its members. One of the best ways to engage is to enable and empower. At Marymount, students of all ages are trained to care, serve, and lead through programs like Retreat Team, Peer Assistant Leaders (pals), chapel leadership, Diversity Awareness Initiative for Students (DAIS), and earth watch expeditions. Then we



The Cross at San Damiano in Assisi

put them in charge. Like Mary Magdalene who "provided for them out of {her} resources" (Lk 8:3), students give their time, talent, and treasure to service activities like fundraising for the children of Zimbabwe, immersion experience with the homeless, advocacy for children and those in poverty through M-PACT (Marymount Philanthropy and Community Transformation), and Service Saturdays with local organizations like the Yorkville Pantry. Sophomore Social Justice students advocate for funding on behalf of social service agencies at the Bank of Mellon New York. Students on the summer Service Trip worked with Catholic Relief Services and advocated in the Washington offices of their congresspersons and senators. Earthwatch participants studied about and took actions to care for creation (in the form of sea turtles).

Liturgical leadership is another means of empowerment. Like the angels on the San Damiano Cross students are the messengers of God. Chapel Services always feature student lectors from the youngest to the oldest who proclaim God's Word. Upper School students regularly give the "homily." They use their training in biblical and theological interpretation to offer truly meaningful and faith filled reflections of the scripture and challenge their classmates to develop their relationship with God. At school Masses students serve in all of the liturgical roles and join with the presider in leading the Eucharistic celebration for the entire school community. It is at such celebration that the church of Marymount School is truly visible as students, staff, parents, and alums join in prayer and praise of God.

As the Hand of God on the San Damiano Cross blesses the work of the Son, our work of engaging, enabling, and empowering is similarly blessed and provides hope for what our Church can be.

# A CHURCH "ON THE MOVE"

by Irene Cody, RSHM

ARLINGTON, VA Good Shepherd Parish in Inwood in upper Manhattan holds many happy memories for me. I was baptized there, received my First Holy Communion and was confirmed there by New York's then revered Patrick Cardinal Hayes. All of these events took place in the original church located at the time on the corner of Broadway and Isham Street.

However by 1935 the Catholic population had outgrown the small wood church built in 1912 and a decision was made to erect a much

larger, more modern stone building.

This fact gives rise to one of my most vivid memories as a child. Instead of demolishing the small church, the Paulist Fathers decided to move the entire building across to nearby Cooper Street to be used in the interim for daily and Sunday worship.

Imagine our fascination as each day after school dismissal, we children eagerly watched our church inching across the street on gigantic wood rollers! For several days it became our after-school delight until

the church arrived safe and sound in a plot of ground belonging to the parish. Then our attention turned to the construction of the "new" church, the progress of which we could see from our classroom windows. The completion and dedication of a grand and strikingly beautiful edifice in 1935 became a lasting memory for young and old alike.

For me this story seems to symbolize our Church "on the move" today as it makes necessary changes to serve the many needs of the People of God throughout the world.

# A POPE NAMED FRANCIS

by Joanne Safian RSHM

ROME, ITALY No doubt you have all already read many articles about Pope Francis' style, actions, and decisions. So I am not sure how much I can add to what you know.

Francis selected his papal name after Francis of Assisi, calling him "the man who gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man" and stating, "Oh, how I would like a poor Church, and for the poor." His own life is witness to this desire. He lives not in the papal apartments but in rather spartan rooms in Santa Marta guest house; I have heard that he gets his own corn flakes and eats breakfast with everyone else. His clothes and accessories are simple-no gold, no jewels, no throne. The cross he wears is iron and depicts Jesus the Good Shepherd. His ring is silver plate, his staff plain, and he sits in a plain wooden chair.

I am sure you are familiar with how Francis has reached out to the poor, the disabled, the elderly and the marginalized. But did you know that he makes his own phone calls, often to the surprise of the recipients who were certainly not expecting to hear from him? And did you know that, after learning from a homeless person that it was hard to keep clean, he directed that showers be installed near St. Peter's Square? He has hosted a global gathering on autism. And in the coming months you will hear more about the campaign against human trafficking he has initiated with leaders of virtually every religious faith. He encourages open and lively discussion and is likely to pop into meetings of the various departments of the Curia.

Francis is as popular as a rock star. Every Wednesday, from the windows of the school where I studied Italian, I watched literally hundreds of buses bringing thousands of people to the public audience. One day I asked the workers in St. Peter's Square how many chairs they set up—30,000 every Tuesday afternoon, to be removed on Wednesday after the audience, and this routine repeated every week.





**NEXT ISSUE:** 

LAUGHTER— GOD WAKING UP Those chairs only fill half the space. The rest is standing room. The crowds sometimes extend down Via della Conciliazione. After the audience, the Pope travels the square, greeting people. One day he lifted a couple of little boys up to ride with him. On Easter, he took the "Popemobile" out of the square; then it was too crowded to turn around, so they returned on side streets, no doubt to the delight of onlookers and the horrror of the security detail.

More important than mere celebrity, however, is that Francis' authenticity has made him an icon of what people are seeking from their Church. A number of my young friends have decided to "give the Church another chance" because of what they see in Francis. And Francis would welcome them and tell them that they, too, are to be "missionary disciples" proclaiming "the joy of the Gospel."



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Please remember in prayer Cathrine Chitali, RSHM, former Soundings staff member, who died January 19, 2015

# BELONGING AT ALL SAINTS

by Virginia Dorgan, RSHM

NEW YORK, NY It was 1989 when Vincent Dorgan, brother of Virginia Dorgan, RSHM, came from his home in Virginia, to the installation of his former classmate, Ted Parker, as the pastor at All Saints Church in the heart of Harlem, NYC. Kathleen Kanet, RSHM came with Virginia to the Liturgy celebration. The community was so warm and welcoming that Virginia and Kathleen took to heart the "You all come on back, now" invitation of the ushers. The Sunday Masses were lively and long, heartfelt and inspiring. Many of the parishioners were lifelong members. Virginia and Kathleen were parishioners for the first years and then later Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, leader of the Lectors and more recently Kathleen a Parish Council Member.

Gradually All Saints parishioners became integrally connected with activities of the Center of International Learning (CIL) which later became Network for Peace through Dialogue, the non-profit organization directed by Kathleen and Virginia. Parishioners were on the board of directors, hosted Living Room Dialogues, participated in its conferences, and helped with fundraisers.

In 1995, CIL hosted the Kumasi choir from Ghana and All Saints became their hub as they performed in NY. This developed into a corre-



spondence between All Saints and St Paul's Church in Ghana and became a part of CIL's Communities in Dialogue Program. Later when CIL turned its focus to sustainability. Virginia with another All Saints parishioner led the Girl and Boy Scouts of All Saints in a project to GreenMap the parish boundaries. They looked for, described and photographed community gardens, child friendly sites, playgrounds, recycling bins, redevelopment opportunity sites (empty lots), traffic hazard zones. This later became one entry to the 2002 eleven-day international workshop of CIL in NY called "Neighborhood by Neighborhood: How can we build a Sustainable World"(2002).

From 2001–2011, Kathleen Kanet with a youth leader and team

6

of adults worked intensively with All Saints and other Harlem youth in leadership training. Over the years the programs took on different names with different emphases. Youth Practicing Democracy helped the young ones to examine issues and speak to them. Crossing Boundaries linked six youth groups internationally in learning and sharing about the Rights of the Child. In Confronting Concerns the participants interviewed 150 other Harlem youth regarding their greatest concerns. They then analyzed the results and presented them for further dialogue in a series of Saturday workshops. The youth leaders also presented several workshops for their parents and guardians in intergenerational conversations. This group of young people then organized a city-wide youth conference which was held one Saturday in 2011 at Marymount Manhattan College.

For all of these years, Virginia and Kathleen have worshiped with the community at All Saints. They have seen confirmations, weddings, baptisms, funerals; shared in the joys and heart aches of the people. Most recently they brought the fruits of the 2014 RSHM summer Festival of Learning and initiated reading and reflection on St. Mark's Gospel after Sunday Mass. They have become a part of the family.

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