Longueuil, December 1844

God has led me. I live in peace with my Sisters in the midst of my numerous occupations. Beg Mary, our tender Mother, to obtain all the grace of being a good religious so that I may follow the pathway God has marked out for me and lead along it all those for whom I am responsible.

Blessed Marie Rose
From coast to coast (and internationally as well) the Sisters of the Holy Names continue the charism of Blessed Marie Rose—they lead by example, and their actions speak volumes.

In this issue of Perspectives, we share some of their stories. On this spread, we feature three 2015 Ministry Grant recipients that, through their education and social outreach ministries, are actively changing lives.

Responding

In the small community of Dufur (pronounced “DO-fer”) Oregon, you’ll find Sister Patricia Pfenning ‘hanging around.’ “As I’ve said from the beginning, I show up, and I hang around. I’ve learned that people need to be able to have someone who is consistently around. I am willing to listen and try to make connections.”

Dufur is a friendly agriculture community, with rolling hills of wheat and a stunning view of Mt. Hood. It has 604 residents, three churches, one K-12 school, a post office, market, hardware and feed store, a couple of restaurants, and a historic hotel. It is a 15-mile drive to the nearest medical facility or shopping center. Because of the rural-ness, Sister Patricia’s goal is to get the members of the community to look out for one another and help each other out as necessary.

“One woman shops at Walgreens (in The Dalles); she earns points that allow her to get many items free. Last year, she made up bags for moms on the Giving Tree with shampoo, lotion, toothpaste, laundry soap and more.”

Sister Patricia is Director of Religious Education at St. Alphonsus Church, oversees the Pantry—a food bank, participates in the community potlucks and visits those in need—the homeless and the elderly.

She checks in on her neighbor Ralph who is 95 years old and getting quite weak. She and other neighbors bring him dinner and stay to watch football or baseball. They take him to the bank or store or do his shopping for him. She, with the help of the neighborhood lawyer, helped Ralph get his affairs in order.

Sister Patricia uses the Ministry Grant funds to bridge the gaps when the community just doesn’t have enough to go around. There are children in need of preschool tuition and a homeless man whose needs vary. The St. Alphonsus parish helped fund tuition for a college bound young man, but money is tight, so Sister Patricia sends him care packages once a month. The town is lucky enough to have a community pool, but not everyone can afford swim passes for their children, Ministry Grant funds help.

“I won’t give up hope of doing an Easter Sunday Community Meal; I wasn’t able to do it last year. It will mean buying Easter napkins, candy and whatever else it will take to make it a special day for these folks. I will draw on people in town, not just the parish, to join me in cooking and serving.”

“I make it clear to all that I am a religious and hopefully am a witness to my faith and to those who preceded me in the community. I let them know from whom I get the money to help them. I think my greatest longing is for the people I meet to have an experience of God as I do. But as Sister Amelberga said, ‘Feed them first.’ ”

The photos on the front cover, each demonstrating an action verb, were originally used at Sisters of the Holy Names Chapter 2015.
Mary’s Corner, in Cohoes, New York (Just up the Hudson River from Albany), is an outreach program that supports families with infants and young children. A ministry of the Ladies of Charity, with participation and donations from other faith-based organizations, Mary’s Corner is an example of how people of faith are stepping up to fill the gaps in our social services system.

Sister Joyce Houle volunteers at Mary’s Corner two days a week. She meets with each client and helps them determine their needs.

“Since our (SNJM) foundation, we have been involved with children and women. Mary’s Corner provides everything a young mother (mostly unwed) and some single dads need for their babies: from birth to their fourth birthday.”

The red banner hanging outside Immaculate Conception School says “The road to college starts here.” This K through 8th-grade school is located in a mostly immigrant neighborhood of people from Mexico and Central America, where the road out of poverty led to downtown Los Angeles. Parents want a Catholic education for their children so they can become successful adults and participating citizens of the United States. The road to success starts at the front door of Immaculate Conception School (ICS).

For the past 29 years, Principal Mary Ann Murphy, a former SNJM, keeps the tradition, values and charism of Blessed Marie Rose alive in the heart of ICS. She is no stranger to a Sisters of the Holy Names education having attended Holy Names elementary and secondary schools and Holy Names University. “You are part of the fabric of my ministry. I am proud to be Eulalie’s daughter and follow in her footsteps,” said Mary Ann.

Teachers and parents all remark on ICS’s profound sense of community and commitment to excellence all stemming from its strong leadership; students flourish in its safe and nurturing environment.

ICS is a first-year recipient of a Ministry Grant; the school will use the grant money to support the purchase of Chromebook laptop computers and two mobile carts to integrate blended learning supported by technology in the elementary classrooms. With new computers that are mobile, students and teachers will share the computers in their classrooms. The Chromebooks will facilitate the differentiation of instruction to meet individual student’s needs. The goal of the faculty is to monitor students’ progress on the learning continuum.

Sister Daleen Larkin is a member of the School Board and serves on the Policy and Planning Committee, which supports the principal in her role as the instructional leader of the school. Pat Boroughs, Associate, is a substitute teacher.

“The teachers are well prepared to educate students for the demands of the 21st century. They go the “extra mile” to ensure that the students have an opportunity to be successful.” —Parent review, GreatSchools.org
In 1989, Sister Kay Burton arrived in Jonestown, Mississippi from Spokane, Washington. She began tutoring children after school and having homework sessions. The program has grown to include Summer School classes, GED classes, Girls to Women Program, piano lessons and concert performances, housing improvements, carpentry classes, gardening, sports teams and activities.

Sister Kay, a former secondary school teacher, invited the secondary schools that are sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Names to become part of a Shared Mission Program. Through the years, students from New York, Florida, California, Oregon, and Washington have traveled to Jonestown to teach summer school, assist with housing improvements, gardening, and participate in the sports programs. As needed, schools receive Charism Grants to help finance the students’ participation in this volunteer opportunity.

From the beginning, students from Holy Names Academy in Seattle, Washington have been making the 2400 mile trip to Jonestown. Below are reflections from three of the 2015 participants.

Analise “While we had all participated in service projects before, we knew that this would be unlike any experience we’d had before. We braced ourselves for total culture shock—and it indeed was quite a shock—but we were not ready for being so warmly and genuinely welcomed. Everywhere we went we were greeted with genuine smiles, handshakes, and sometimes even hugs from total strangers who wanted to know about us: our lives and our stories. Sister Kay quickly made us feel a part of the community by immediately putting us to work. The way Sister Kay integrated us into the community lessened our shock of the poverty we saw. We quickly realized that life was different in Jonestown than what we were used to; (perhaps we are used to an overabundance of “things”) our eyes were opened.”

Katie “We were in Jonestown to teach, but in the end, I ended up learning much more than I had taught. Spanish was my subject. It was great because it was completely new to most of the students. Each day I would have a new lesson, and after class, it was fun to watch them try to remember the Spanish words for colors, numbers, or family members, depending on what we had learned. It was an eye-opening experience because it also showed me how difficult teaching really is—coming up with a new and engaging plan each day was a challenge. It made me appreciate my teachers throughout the years even more.”

Kirsten “Throughout our time in Jonestown, we had many adventures, but my favorite memory was volunteering in the community garden every evening. Started recently by Sister Kay, this garden took an unused space and created a beautiful, thriving, organic garden. However, the best part of the garden is not the food it produces but the community relationship it fosters. Many of the kids come in the evenings and help. Though we worked hard, we had a great time joking around, singing, and having water fights with the hoses. In the garden, we weren’t just teachers and students, or people from different parts of the country, we were all friends. A task as simple as gardening gave us the ability to bridge cultural gaps to become our very own community, a community that I will remember and cherish for many years to come.”

Sister Kay sums up their participation in these words: “I personally cherish the times spent with the high school students. Being a former high school teacher and principal, I like the interactions of discussions, planning, evaluating, challenging, being challenged and feeling inspired by the students’ commitment to service and justice issues. The crucial Summer School sessions we have had for these thirty years were and are dependent on the Shared Mission volunteers.”
**Rise -ing Above**

“Knowledge is power. Having knowledge and learning about new things opens up your opportunities and you can make more choices in life.” —Brittany DeWeaver

This is a sentiment Blessed Marie Rose knew well and is at the foundation of the SNJM charism. Brittany DeWeaver, a senior at Holy Names High School, Oakland, is a shining example of the SNJM charism at work and the success that can be achieved when a person is offered opportunities and support.

Unlike the majority of her classmates, Brittany lives in East Oakland—an area with one of the highest crime rates in the Bay Area. She was born into a cycle of poverty. “A cycle of poverty is a cycle of violence, a cycle of misfortune, prison, death,” said Brittany. “It’s a cycle that I didn’t want to be a part of.”

Brittany attends Holy Names High School on an Achieve Scholarship, which sends a select few promising, low-income students to college-prep high schools. The program not only pays her tuition but also provides counseling, tutoring, and other resources. Brittany takes full advantage of every opportunity offered; she has perfect grades and hopes to become the first in her family to go to college. “To be the first in my family to go to college is life-changing,” she said, “for me, for my family, for my community, my friends.”

In early December, Brittany was profiled in CBS San Francisco’s “Students Rising Above” series. The show selects students who have demonstrated a strength of character in dedicating themselves to their education while overcoming the challenges of their circumstances.

Brittany is an example of the ‘kindled fire’ on the earth, of which Blessed Marie Rose spoke.

Watch the CBS video at https://vimeo.com/143416362

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**Take -ing Office**

On January 4th, we welcomed our new Province Leadership Team: Sister Maureen Delaney as Provincial, and Sisters Mary Breiling, Guadalupe Guajardo, Margaret Kennedy and Mary Rita Rohde.

Sister Maureen has tirelessly been working in Tutwiler, Mississippi for the past 28 years developing education, recreation and enrichment programs for all ages in this rural Mississippi Delta area. Sister Mary is from Oregon and has been working on the ongoing development of Mary’s Woods at Marylhurst as well as retreat and hospitality ministry. Sister Guadalupe, also from Oregon, has served as senior consultant to the Nonprofit Association of Oregon. California’s Sister Margaret oversaw the care and community life of the Sisters at Merrill Gardens in Campbell, taught elementary and secondary schools and was one of the founders of Next Step Learning Center in Oakland.

Sister Mary Rita, from Washington, founded and served for ten years as Director of Nuestra Casa, an education and service organization for immigrant families in Sunnyside, Washington.

The Leadership Team serves a five-year term. We look forward to the future...
by Sister Elizabeth Liebert, Director of Novices

The U.S.-Ontario and Manitoba Provinces officially opened their new combined Novitiate location in August 2015 with the welcome of Sister Michelle Garlinski, a native of Winnipeg, as the first Novice. The new community, located in Berkeley, California, enjoys a rich location for education, worship and conversations with other religious. Forming the new community with Michelle is Sister Elizabeth Liebert, who serves as Director of Novices, and Sister Carol Nicklas.

In addition to serving as the Novitiate, the new house is intended to be a site of hospitality: a place of welcome for friends, Sisters, and those interested in exploring religious life. “Although religious life will not likely ever enjoy the huge spike in numbers that took place between the conclusion of World War II and the Second Vatican Council, religious life is by no means dead,” said Sister Elizabeth. “There are already hints pointing to religious life of the future, and the primary architects of this future are just arriving now. It’s for those of us currently in religious life to listen intently to the experience, ideas, and ideals of these women and come alongside them as sisters as they bring the future to life and for the rest of us to applaud their courage and creativity in forging new paths.”

Celebrate

On November 21st, Sisters, Associates, and friends filled the Marie Rose Center, and their voices rang out in song both in English and Korean, for a most joyful celebration—Sister Sophia Park’s profession of perpetual vows.

Sister Sophia, born Jung Eun Park, studied at Ewha Women’s University in Seoul, Korea before coming to the United States. She earned an M.A. in Christian Spirituality from Seattle University and a Ph.D. from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. Since 2009, Sister Sophia has been an Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Philosophy at Holy Names University.

Sister Sophia said a few words about her journey—to leave for “the unknown land.”

“The SNJM community to me is the motherly ground. According to the theologian, Sara Ruddick, motherly thinking can be characterized as ‘authentic love, adjustment to the needs of the others, and freedom to let it go.’ Thinking of my journey in this community, I can say I have encountered this motherly ground in the SNJM community. I continue this journey to leave for the unknown land with my dear Sisters, in the unity of the SNJM charism. I want to continue this journey with all the people of the world who will share our charism in the future.”

As a respected author on the topics of cross-cultural spiritual direction and religious life from a global feminist perspective and a sought after speaker for Younger Sisters conferences, she is well on her journey.

“I believe God is doing something new (Isaiah 43:19), and we are all a part of it. Although I do not know what the future will look like, I know that this is where God is calling me to be now.”

–Sr. Michelle Garlinski, Novice

Michelle’s reception as a Novice took place in Holy Names Chapel at St. Mary’s Academy in Winnipeg on July 31. Michelle has served there as Director of Campus Ministry for the past decade. Having attended St. Mary’s Academy for six years and being an Associate since 2007, Michelle is no stranger to the SNJMs.

“I think that my reception as a Novice was the happiest day of my life,” said Sister Michelle recently. “I truly felt a sense of deep joy. I was overwhelmed by the support of the SNJM community gathered and the many who have been and are continuing to pray for me. I believe God is doing something new (Isaiah 43:19), and we are all a part of it. It is a gift to be accompanied by Sisters walking with me on this journey. Although I do not know what the future will look like, I know that this is where God is calling me to be now.”

Sr. Michelle Garlinski

Sr. Marcia Frideger places the ring on Sr. Sophia Park’s finger.
Pray -ing

A Gift of Prayer is a thoughtful and special way to honor a friend or relative, celebrate a special occasion: birthday, wedding, anniversary; or for special intentions, such as improved health, successful surgery, comfort, strength, peace or whatever is needed.

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“I support the Sisters of the Holy Names because my grandmother used to be part of them. Supporting the Sisters helps me feel connected to her.”

–Dorothea Popp, Sacramento, CA

Remember -ing

To learn more about the life and ministry of these Sisters, visit www.snjmca.org: select Sisters Obituaries under News and Events

Sister Doreen Crossett
Sister Elizabeth Miriam
March 30, 1928–September 21, 2015

“Simplicity of living, if deliberately chosen, implies a compassionate approach to life. It means that we are choosing to live our daily lives with some degree of conscious appreciation of the condition of the rest of the world.”

DUANE ELGIN

Sister Mary Louise Guenther
Sister Regina Rose
March 18, 1914–November 16, 2015

“My heart is overflowing with praise of my Lord, my soul is full of joy in God my savior.”

LUKE 1:46

Sister Margaret Spiller
Sister Jonathan Mary
October 5, 1943–February 6, 2016

“And still after all this time, the Sun has never said to the Earth, ‘You owe me.’ Look what happens with love like that. It lights up the sky.”

HAFEZ

Sister Mary Christine Fleitz
Eileen Fleitz
January 1, 1916–October 10, 2015

“I have called you by name, you are mine.”

ISAIAH 43:1
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Upcoming Events

April 2  Golden Jubilee
May 2  Annual Strawberry Drawing
May 14  Southern California Golden Jubilee
May 18  Villa Maria Del Mar Santa Cruz Dinner
May 25  Strawberry Luncheon at the Campbell Community Center
June 4  Senior Jubilee

Your Prayer Ornaments graced our Christmas tree in the entryway to our Chapel, and now the Sisters and Associates will pray for you and your intentions all year long. We are grateful for each and every one of our benefactors.

Thank you for your gifts and your friendship.