

VISION

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK

Living Lives of Love

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SISTERS
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Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

You know that in every generation, in a variety of places, there are Sisters of Charity and their colleagues who have spread the mission of charity.

From the early pioneers, the 33 Sisters who remained in New York to care for the orphans, to this present day there are pioneers working in street ministry and in safe houses, being present to women who are recovering from being trafficked. There are Sisters working with immigrants, teaching English as a Second Language, developing cottage industries, and facilitating the path to citizenship.

Yes, we built hospitals, child-care institutions, and schools in the past. Today we see our partners in mission meeting these needs. We serve in new ways with those living on the margins. We share our abundance and presence as volunteers, participate in community endeavors, and collaborate with others to eradicate poverty and care for the earth.

We serve our brothers and sisters directly and by working for systemic change, not just in New York but in Guatemala as well. Let us rejoice together as we realize the many ways our Sisters and colleagues reach out to others in need today.

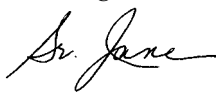
In every generation we are called to spread the mission of Charity. What will be the response of this generation? How will we live the service of love in this our time? How will we empower others to do the same?

The Charity of Christ urges us—impels us—even demands that we be the servants of the poor. Our world cries out in pain and suffering. The victims of violence are legion. These people and their homelands demand a response from us. Our homeland also demands a response.

In whatever place we find ourselves we must do no less than respond to the gospel call to love one another. What is the response demanded of you, me, and us?

This sacred season of Lent and Easter provides us with the grace, courage, joy, and energy that we need to be faithful to the journey.

Blessings,



Jane Iannucelli, SC
President



The Sisters of Charity's newest member, Sr. Rosenda, came to New York to visit with the Congregation and attend the Assembly in April. She stopped by the Sisters of Charity Center on January 20 to say hello to the staff. From left to right, Sisters Eileen McGrory, Dominica Rocchio, Mary Ann Daly, Geraldine Hanely, Rosenda, Jane Iannucelli, Miriam Kevin Phillips, Karen Helfenstein, and Regina Bechtle. All were happy to greet and meet Sister Rosenda.

VISION enables the Sisters of Charity of New York to make a cohesive statement about how we reveal God's love in our lives and the many and varied ways in which we respond to the signs of the times.



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Sister Rosenda Makes First Vows in Guatemala

By Sisters in Mission in Guatemala



Sister Rosenda knelt at the altar to read her vows as Sisters Jane and Nora looked on.

On December 28, 2014, outside the Cathedral of Santa Cruz del Quiché, Guatemala, Christmas festivities were still in evidence. Inside the cathedral, there were last-minute preparations for the Mass of the Feast of the Holy Family and Sr. Rosenda Castañeda González's vows. The music began followed by the of priests from her town, the local clergy, and Most Rev. Rosolino Bianchetti Boffelli, Bishop of the Diocese of Quiché.

Following the homily, Sr. Jane Iannucelli called Sr. Rosenda forward while Sr. Nora Cunningham (Novice Director in Guatemala) testified to her preparation for this step, and Bishop Rosolino ensured it was being done freely. Sr. Rosenda's family, the Sisters and Associates, as well as the gathered



assembly were moved as she prayed, "...with gratitude from the deepest level of my being I desire to respond to your mission of revealing your love in service to all, especially the poor." As the first Sister of Charity from Guatemala, she consecrated herself by vows. She, Sr. Jane, and the witnesses then signed the vows. Her mother and father presented the pin, which was blessed by the bishop, to Sr. Jane, who then put it on Sr. Rosenda with joy, which resounded throughout the cathedral in applause.

Supper with family and friends followed at the Barbara Ford Peace Center.

Sister Rosenda's Vows: (translated version)

Heavenly Father, you call me by name. Today I want to respond gratefully from the bottom of my heart to your mission. I want to reveal your love in service to all, especially the poor. I commit myself to follow your Son, Jesus, and to consecrate myself to you with my whole being.

I, Rosenda Magdalena Castañeda González, in the presence of all of you and of Sister Jane, our president, pronounce the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience for three years, according to the Constitution of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of New York.

Father, grant me the grace to be faithful to these vows and to live my commitment with joy, through the intercession of Mary our Mother, of St. Elizabeth, and of all the saints and martyrs. Amen.



Sister Jane presented the Sisters of Charity pin to Sr. Rosenda after it was blessed by Bishop Bianchetti Boffelli. Sister Nora Cunningham, far right, Novice Director in Guatemala, prepared Sr. Rosenda for this step in her formation.



From left: Sr. Nora Cunningham, Novice Director in Guatemala, María Pablo Andrés Santos, and Manuela Quiché Tzoc

From left: Sisters Gloria De Artega, Nora Cunningham, Jane Iannucelli; María Pablo Andrés Santos, and Manuela Quiché Tzoc

Two Young Women Enter Sisters of Charity Postulancy in Guatemala

By Sisters in Mission in Guatemala

It was the second joyous occasion within the week for the Sisters of Charity of New York in Guatemala when Sr. Jane welcomed two Guatemalan women as Postulants on January 3, 2015.

At a Mass celebrated in the formation house, Sr. Jane presented Manuela Quiché Tzoc and María Pablo Andrés Santos with a bible, the Sisters of Charity Mission Statement, and

a medal of St. Elizabeth in a ceremony following the homily.

The two families filled the house to capacity, which added to the joy of the occasion. Lunch followed and people relaxed in the beauty of the day.

There were many tears of joy this day but also some of sadness as families began to leave and their daughters stayed to begin their new life.

Sisters and Staff at Convent of Mary the Queen Fund Scholarships for Guatemalan Girls

*By Ceil Harriendorf, SC
in Guatemala*

While recovering from an illness at the Convent of Mary the Queen, Sister Marie Tolle, a missionary in Guatemala for the past 34 years, told the Sisters about a small educational scholarship which she began eight years ago with the financial support of a dear friend.

Its first recipient was a young man who is now married, the father of two children, and a guitarist in the Novillero parish choir. Over the years, the program has funded more than 15 young



Four young ladies are the beneficiaries of the generosity of the Convent of Mary the Queen staff and Sisters. The four will be enrolled in "Basico," with hopes of continuing their education.

people. Many have graduated "Basico"—a course of study comparable to US grades 7 through 10. "Additionally," Sr. Marie says, "the program has always encouraged young women to continue their education."

The Sisters at the Convent of Mary the Queen wanted to do the same.

After some discussion, they decided on a Happy Hour Fundraiser! Thanks to Administrator Sr. Betty Kolb, residents, and staff, it was a delightful hour

and, more importantly, their efforts resulted in four full scholarships. Basico tuition is \$120 per person, per year.

Because of caring individuals at the Queen, this simple scholarship program is empowering young people, improving lives, and helping to shape the future of Guatemala, one student at a time.

Three Came North

By Mary E. Mc Cormick, SC

The Opening of the New York Mission, 1817

The community begun by Elizabeth Ann Seton and her companions in 1809 quickly attracted the attention of bishops eager for the services of the sisters. In 1817 Bishop John Connolly asked for sisters to begin an orphanage in the city of Elizabeth's birth. He was encouraged to do so by several laymen, including Robert Fox, whose daughters attended the Academy in Emmitsburg.

With the permission and encouragement of Father Dubois, Elizabeth and her Council chose Sisters Rose White, Cecilia O'Conway, and Felicita Brady as the first pioneers of what would become, in 1846, an independent New York community. Their stories provide interesting insights into the early days of the foundation. Not everyone who entered the community stayed. Of the first three women sent to the New York mission, only one remained in the community until her death.

Rose Landry White (1784–1841) was the widow of a sea captain whose son Charles attended Mount Saint Mary's along with the Seton boys. A woman of enormous talents and capabilities, she and Elizabeth had much in common and became good friends. Both were able to weather a community crisis brought on when a Sulpician superior favored Rose over Elizabeth and disrupted the harmony in the fledgling sisterhood. A peaceful resolution allowed the two to recommit themselves to their friendship, respect for each other, and acknowledgement of each one's gifts.

Cecilia O'Conway (1793–1865) was the community's first postulant. She had intended to enter an order of Spanish contemplatives, but was persuaded by her spiritual director to join the new American community instead. Cecilia had inherited from her father a facility in languages and for her first eight years in the community taught in the Academy and took on administrative responsibilities as well.

Felicita Brady (b?–1883) was born in Ireland and entered the community in 1814. Her sister Ellen entered in 1817 and died the following year.

Accompanied by one of the New York trustees, the sisters



made the seven-day journey with Elizabeth's words to comfort and challenge them: "You will often be at a stand in a situation so new to you, but only do your best and leave the rest to God."

When they arrived on August 20, 1817, the house promised them was not ready; they stayed with the Fox family for several weeks. They moved into a dilapidated frame house (known as the Dead House because it had been used as a surgery during the Revolutionary War) and made it into their first home in New York.

The Roman Catholic Benevolent Society provided each sister an allotment of \$36 a year, an amount by no means sufficient to maintain themselves and the

orphans. In order to provide for their young charges, the sisters slept on mattresses on the floor and lived on a diet of soup, potatoes, and carrot coffee.

A Ladies Society mandated by Father Dubois was organized to provide needed assistance. Their appeal to the women of the city brought in generous donations from Protestants and Catholics alike. The mission was eventually expanded to include larger accommodations for the orphaned children and free schools for the Catholic poor.

Other sisters were sent to New York to meet the requirements of the increasing numbers of those to be served and by 1846 the mission included 62 sisters.

Of the first three, though, only Rose White remained a member of the community. She was elected Mother in 1821 after the death of Elizabeth Seton, and was elected again in 1833. In the intervals she taught in Washington DC, Emmitsburg, Brooklyn, and Frederick, Maryland.

Cecilia O'Conway withdrew from the community in 1823 and became a cloistered Ursuline Sister in Quebec, taking the name Sister Marie of the Incarnation. Her leave-taking was marked by a painful rift between herself and the community. She had refused to comply with the Superior's request to return to Emmitsburg until she had received the necessary

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Sister Nancy Kellar – Citizen of the World Extraordinaire

“A citizen of the world,” Saint Elizabeth Seton called herself. Yet Italy was the only country outside of the United States that she ever visited. Imagine what Elizabeth would make of a Sister of Charity who—in her 54 years of ministry—has visited 48 of the 50 states, 8 provinces of Canada, and 52 countries on every continent but Antarctica!

When young Nancy Kellar stepped into the novitiate at Mount Saint Vincent in 1960, her future looked fairly predictable. After several years preparing to be a Sister of Charity, she would make her vows and then be sent on mission to teach or nurse or care for children. “Well, did God ever have other plans for this girl from Manhattan!” laughs Sr. Nancy.

In 1971, after teaching in elementary and high schools, Sr. Nancy began full-time ministry in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. A founding member of the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton House of Prayer in Scarsdale, where she remains an active member, she played key roles in the Charismatic Renewal in

the Archdiocese of New York and at the national level. Later she moved to Rome where she served as the first woman director of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office (ICCRS), and was honored for her work in planning events for the Jubilee 2000 Year. She soon became widely known as a gifted, engaging speaker.

Since her first transatlantic invitation (Rome, 1981) she has logged many thousands of frequent flyer miles, as requests to speak at charismatic conferences and retreats poured in from around the world. Whenever and wherever the Spirit summoned, Sr. Nancy responded with a heartfelt “yes”—whether the call came from Borneo, Croatia, Pakistan, or Zambia.

Recently, this intrepid Sister of Charity wrote an account of some of her travels. As you read this combination of a Rick Steves travel guide and the letters of Saint Paul, don’t miss Sr. Nancy’s sense of joy and wonder in the great things that the Holy Spirit has done through her. *Regina Bechtle, SC*

In Sr. Nancy’s own words ...

The call to preach the Gospel and my passion for the Holy Spirit led me around the US and Canada in the 1970’s.

The Rome Conference in 1981 was the beginning of the international part of my ministry of teaching that has taken me to 52 countries around the world. Initially the gatherings were Catholic Charismatic outreaches to lead people, churched and unchurched, to experience a personal Pentecost. Then they expanded to sisters/priests, women’s, youth, and ecumenical events.

The conferences were held in fields, parish halls, tents, cathedrals, and national shrines. In Haiti thousands sat on the ground in an open field. In Tasmania, off the coast of Australia, poor descendants of convicts crowded into a parish hall, excited that a speaker had come to them from the mainland. In Uganda I spoke at the Shrine of the Uganda martyrs, in Poland at the Warsaw Cathedral, in Assisi in a tent at its highest point, in Bethlehem in Manger Square, in Israel from a boat on the Sea of Galilee, and in Dublin, Ireland,

from the horse-jumping grounds!

Eventually I was asked to lead training seminars to prepare others to conduct “Growth in the Spirit” courses. I used a book I had written, *There’s Always More*, to teach groups in Australia, Pakistan, Brazil, Colombia, and El Salvador. In Germany I taught young adults in a School of Evangelization. In San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy (Padre Pio’s town), I helped run a seminar for 600 delegates in the healing ministry from around the world.

In Colombia, Brazil, and El Salvador,

young people showed me the vitality of the Church in Latin America. In Lithuania, Poland, and Slovenia I found that the youth were the evangelizers of their often-atheistic Soviet-era parents. In Malta I met members of Youth Arise International and worked with them on Charismatic youth events before World Youth Days in Rome and Toronto.

Retreats for priests and sisters were especially meaningful to me. In Australia and New Zealand Bishop Sam Jacobs and I gave week-long retreats to priests. In Ghana Sr. Pauline Cinquini joined me as priests and sisters came together for retreat. In China, Sr. Pauline and I led two sisters' retreats: to a community of St. Joseph Sisters in Beijing and to a Sisters' Formation Program with sisters from all over China.

New ways to spread the Spirit

In some parts of the world, new Ecclesial Communities of lay men, women, and families who live alongside priests and religious are the focus of the Charismatic Renewal. These communities in France, Switzerland, Brazil, El Salvador, and Australia gave me great hope for the future of the Church. In France I spoke to the celibate community on the vows and in each of them was encouraged by their enthusiastic reaction to my talks on community. In Switzerland the community, which includes many children, has restored life to a twelfth-century Cistercian monastery.

Very popular in recent years are women's conferences sponsored by Catholic diocesan offices. One conference in Borneo, Malaysia, brought together 500 women in a country less than 1% Catholic and gave me my longest trip yet: 35 hours!

In places like Germany and Sweden I discovered that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal introduced the renewal to the Protestant Churches, a reverse of what happened here in the US. Ireland brought together for its conference not only Irish Protestants and Catholics, but also an English-Irish minister, and me as an American-Irish Sister, recognizing

that the need to pray for reconciliation and unity crossed the oceans.

As the only woman speaker at an Ecumenical International Leaders conference in Jerusalem, I challenged the men to realize that we women did not feel included when they greeted the assembly as "brothers." In Panang, Malaysia, it was I who was challenged by the evangelistic zeal and suffering of the various Christians ministering there. In Bethlehem, a Catholic International Conference became ecumenical when I agreed to be translated into Arabic for the Muslim crowds looking on.

Memorable people

As a member of the ICCRS Council, I had the privilege of meeting Pope John Paul II several times. On one occasion when we joined him in his private chapel for the celebration of Eucharist, Sr. Pauline played her guitar and led the singing.

Among the remarkable sisters I met on my travels were cloistered Carmelites from Karachi, Pakistan, who traced their foundation back to the Carmelite monastery in the Bronx.

I was blessed to spend one special day with Cardinal Suenens in his home in Brussels. We reminisced about our beloved founding member, Sr. Marjorie Walsh, whose friendship with the Cardinal led to her witnessing to him about the Charismatic Renewal in the United States. That in turn led him to influence Pope Paul VI and begin the positive response of the Popes to the worldwide Charismatic Renewal.

I discovered it really is a small world. In India Sr. Pauline and I met a former Christian Doctrine Sister who knew Pauline from St. Brigid's parish, Manhattan. From her experience in that parish's small prayer meeting, Maria Elena had been instrumental in introducing the Charismatic Renewal to India. In Singapore I met an American couple who had given their lives to the Lord in a parish mission that our House of Prayer had conducted in their Connecticut parish. In Japan a priest

who had been taught by Sisters of Charity in St. Ignatius Loyola School, Manhattan greeted us warmly.

Some people I remember because of the sorrows they shared with me—for example, Father Bibal, an Episcopal priest in Palestine, who grieved that his catechism students were forgetting how to read because school had been closed to them for so long.

I will remember one priest in Eritrea, East Africa, for my most embarrassing moment. After a week of ministry, I started the day in my pink culottes for what I thought was a sightseeing trip. After an hour's drive through beautiful countryside, I realized my host, Fr. Vittorio, seemed anxious to arrive at some unknown destination. I discovered we were headed for his home town where a church full of people (including women in long dresses and mantillas) were waiting for me to give a talk and to pray with them. As if that weren't bad enough, we then went to a wedding reception where I (still in my pink culottes) met Fr. Vittorio's family, the rest of the town, and his Bishop!

Rich and poor together, with all God's creatures

In El Salvador and Haiti I stayed in the homes of very wealthy families whose renewal in the Spirit had led them to reject the teaching about poverty that they had learned as children: "It's just the way God meant it to be." Their new commitment to the Gospel had moved them to take leadership in working for social change for their poor workers and neighbors.

I chose not to enter a missionary community because I hate heat and bugs—but the Holy Spirit has worked on my overcoming that aversion! Not only was it hot in places like Brisbane, Australia, and Recife, Brazil, near the Equator, but it seemed to get hotter than usual when I arrived in places like Trinidad, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania.

In Zambia I stayed in a convent where my room faced onto the outside

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LEFSA celebrates the life of their beloved co-founder, Sister Dorothy Gallant

On the second Saturday of every month for nearly 25 years, Sr. Dorothy Gallant could be found with the Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates (LEFSA) team members, welcoming the homeless and the formerly homeless to prayer, faith sharing, and a hot meal, committed to revealing God's love to all who walked through the door. And so it was fitting that on the second Saturday of January 2015, over one hundred of Sr. Dorothy's friends came from near and far to pay tribute, express their gratitude, and proclaim their love for the woman whose own love and tireless work helped change their lives.

The memorial service was opened by the newly created choir, the Daughters of LEFSA. The seven talented women processed into the room singing, *We've Come This Far by Faith*. The songs performed were a combination of Sr. Dorothy's favorites and songs that expressed their feelings for their Sister.

The choir's leader, Tara Robinson, daughter of James Addison, LEFSA team member and Projects Manager—who was once homeless—reflected on the experience. "It was an honor for me to sing at the memorial. I am happy and grateful that Sr. Dorothy and Sr. Teresa Skehan, RSM (LEFSA co-founder), came into my father's life because through their intercession, my father is back in my life." Deborah Byrd, LEFSA team member and member of the choir, said of the experience, "It was a true honor to sing for Sr. Dorothy."

The program called them readings, but the words delivered by Iris Sanky, Wesley Mitchell, and Diane Mack were warm, revealing tributes not only to Sr. Dorothy, but to themselves and their own life journeys. The tell-tale titles included, "Her Undissolved Love"; "A Debt of Love"; and "What Can You Say?"



Bill Hurley, left, and James Addison

The readings were met with shouts of affirmation, laughter, and tears by all who knew the petite woman who fought with all her might for the people she loved fiercely.

A letter from the Sisters of Charity was read by Bill Hurley, Associate and former Director of Development of the Congregation, who worked with Sister Dorothy in obtaining funds for 19 years. (The date of the memorial service coincided with the Sisters of Charity Pre-Assembly Congregation Day. Sadly and with much regret, many sisters were not able to attend.) Bill was deeply moved by the service, saying, "I thought it amazing how many individuals Sr. Dorothy directly touched. She showed each that they are loved and they responded. I also think of how they protected her and 'for a little woman,' she sure had a big heart. I see now that her circle philosophy surely has worked."

Eulogies were offered by George Horton of Catholic Charities, Deborah Canty, a LEFSA team member, and James Addison. Mr. Horton recalled his many conversations with a relentless Sr. Dorothy when time came to submit grant applications to Catholic Charities for LEFSA. Mr. Horton made it clear that his respect for Sr. Dorothy and her work was rivaled only by the admiration and affection he held for his dear friend.



(Above) the Daughters of LEFSA, (left) George Horton from Catholic Charities, (right) Deborah Byrd, team member



Team member Georgia James, LEFSA Director Karolina May, and many others celebrated Sr. Dorothy's life.

James Addison was the last to eulogize Sr. Dorothy, an emotional and difficult task for the friend who sat at her bedside at the Convent of Mary the Queen in her final days. James recounted his story of being lost, homeless, and without hope until the moment he calls his "epiphany." It was then that he reached out to the two Sisters he knew visited the shelters every week. It was the beginning of a relationship that would help him reclaim his life. At one point, unable to speak, James said, "You don't know," which was immediately met with, "Oh yes we do!" from the crowd. They all knew because they all had their own experiences with the love and acceptance that helped them transform their lives.

At the close of the memorial service all were invited to share their own personal stories of Sr. Dorothy. The many who called her friend lined up to recount their own journeys and tell of the impact Sr. Dorothy had on their lives.

Sister Dorothy's legacy truly lives on in the hearts of the many whose lives she touched with her kindness and generous spirit. The Sisters of Charity proudly continue to sponsor LEFSA, begun by Sr. Dorothy and Sr. Teresa in 1986.

Beloved Sacred Heart School principal and third-grade teacher, longtime best friends, die days apart

By Dr. Gracelyn Santos

This article is reprinted with permission from the January 29, 2015 issue of the Staten Island Advance.



Last weekend, former Sacred Heart School students were deeply saddened to hear of the death of beloved teacher Sister Marguerite Mahony, who taught third grade at the West Brighton elementary school for 25 years.

It followed other sad news, the death exactly three weeks earlier of Sister Thomas Marian, Sister Marguerite's best friend and colleague, who was the equally beloved principal of Sacred Heart School for 26 years.

(The two were known as Sister Angelita Maria and Sister Thomas Marian at Sacred Heart; when they retired from teaching, they took their baptismal names and became Sister Marguerite Mahony and Sister Eileen Grubert, respectively.)

The students' sadness—mine included—is immense, with the enormous roles these two exceptional educators played in our education, the building of our character and, ultimately, our lives.

I graduated from Sacred Heart School in the 1980s and, like every former classmate or student I've ever come across since then, I'm grateful for my time there—the friendships I cultivated, whether they were in the classrooms or on the basketball courts, and the love of learning instilled by the teachers at Sacred Heart.

Those who taught me were Ms. Patricia McKee, second grade; Mrs. Norma Kane, third; Sister Louis, fourth; Miss Patricia Quinn—who became Mrs. Thompson before year's end—for fifth; Sister Delores, sixth; Mrs. Lydia Marron, seventh, and Sister Mary Vogel for eighth. Each one was exceptionally good, each one I'll never forget.

But Sister Thomas and Sister Marguerite, both members of the Sisters of Charity of New York, were exceptional.

Former student John Clark agreed. "A lot of children have grown up to be good adults, went on to do good things, and perhaps raised good families because their parents had the foresight to send them to Sister Thomas and her wonderful faculty."

Westerleigh resident Marybeth Morrison added: "Sister



Sisters Marguerite Mahony, left, and Eileen Grubert

Thomas and Sister Marguerite were simply the best. I'm thankful to have known them and will always treasure my childhood memories because of them."

Sister Thomas Marian

To this day, I fondly recall the warm, carefree days in Sacred Heart's playground on Castleton Avenue during recess: Of playing hopscotch, T.V. tag, jump rope or a watered-down version of handball with our "Super-Pinkies" with my friends; of eating Pop Rocks and sharing Bubble Yum and Bubbalicious bubble gums.

When Sister Thomas rang the big gold bell at the end of the 45 minutes, all students stopped in their tracks and obediently lined up to return to our classrooms. No fuss, no questions. We just did.

Why? Because Sister Thomas possessed the exceedingly rare quality of commanding respect, not because she demanded it or instilled fear in us, but because she deserved it.

We students loved her and behaved accordingly to make her proud. Our parents proud. She was, after all, our principal. Our leader.

We never questioned her gentle but stern authority. Perhaps on some level, our young minds recognized that she "made" our school—our childhoods, really—a safe and happy place for learning and laughter.

Said former Sacred Heart student Judy Conti, who grew up in West Brighton and is now an attorney in Washington, D.C.: "Sister Thomas didn't need to yell or intimidate. We all had a healthy respect for her, and of course, no one wanted to cross her, but she earned that through her calm but firm demeanor.

"She did it with all the right kinds of tough love—high expectations for all of us and the way we were to behave as children, but also the kind of guidance and encouragement we needed in order to rise to those expectations ... Can you imagine any other principal of any other school anywhere

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1982-83 Class 8-1 at Sacred Heart School, Staten Island. Sr. Mary Vogl, class teacher, on left, and Sr. Eileen Grubert, Principal, on right.

in the history of the world who rarely ever raised his or her voice, yet still commanded so much respect, obedience and love? She was one in a million.”

Sister Marguerite Mahony

Sister Marguerite Mahony taught third grade at Sacred Heart for a quarter-century, and then, in the last few years, was a music teacher. Prior to that, she taught at St. Mary’s School in Rosebank, according to her niece, Kathleen Catanese of Great Kills.

“When I went to see her in the emergency room when she was sick, there was singing coming from her cubicle,” Ms. Catanese said.

“It turns out her two male nurses had been former pupils at Sacred Heart and they were singing hymns she had taught them. Nurses who treated her in her last days remarked on the music coming from her room.

“Her grandnieces and nephews were singing to her, and even when she was unable to speak, she tapped the beat and clapped her hands.”

Sister Thomas regarded Sister Marguerite as her dearest, closest friend, as well as “an ancient relic from Richmond Town,” because she knew so many people and so much about the Island, Ms. Catanese said.

Sister Marguerite’s family settled in Tompkinsville in 1848. She was born in a house on St. Andrew’s Road in Richmond, and graduated from St. Patrick’s School in Richmond and the former St. Peter’s Girls High School in New Brighton.

In retirement, she took a course in clowning, joining a group that volunteered at local hospitals and nursing homes. Dressed in full clown regalia, she was known as “Merry Melody.” Her last “gig,” as she liked to call them, was in June 2014.

“Great and dear friends, Sister Thomas and Sister Marguerite

lived in St Patrick’s Villa in Nanuet and then at the Convent of Mary the Queen in Yonkers. She and Sister Thomas enjoyed traveling, they went to Ireland, the Canadian Rockies and upstate New York.

“[Sister Marguerite] was very saddened by the loss of her great friend, Sister Thomas. I think the Lord knew heaven would not be complete for either one of them without each other,” Ms. Catanese added.

Rest in peace, Sister Thomas and Sister Marguerite. Thank you for being such an important part of countless childhoods and for constantly reminding your young students how important we were to you and to the Lord.

Sister Thomas and Sister Marguerite remembered:

James Perrone, Class of 1991

“High school principals on Staten Island have told me they can tell which students came from Sacred Heart because they were intelligent and had good manners. My personal favorite story was in December 1990, just two days after Christmas. I lost my paternal grandfather. At the wake I was surprised when in came Sisters Thomas, Angelita, Louis, Mary Vogl, Genevive, Dolores and Evyleen.

Now, between me and my older sister, we had most of these nuns but certainly not all of them. It really impressed me that they took some time out to come to the wake. When I hugged Sister Thomas and thanked her for coming, she gently squeezed my hand and whispered in my ear, ‘You are part of our family, dear.’ I will never forget that moment.”

Elizabeth Johnson, Sr. Marguerite’s niece

“Sister Marguerite was my mother’s sister and my godmother. My birthday is January 18 and hers was the 19th. She always told me that I was the best birthday present she ever got. I am sure she and Sister Thomas knew each other before Sacred Heart, but that is where they really became close friends.

“Outside of teaching, she loved singing and dancing. She loved to dance at family weddings. She also became a certified clown and would entertain nursing home patients. Her favorite thing, however, was to be with her family. She especially loved the little ones. On Nov. 9, 2014, she attended the baptism of my youngest granddaughter, Abigail Marguerite. Little did we know that would be her last family function. Nine days later she fell and broke her hip and the downward spiral began.

“She always remembered everyone’s birthday with a phone call and a handmade card, ‘A Marguerite Creation’ would be stamped on the back. She truly was our family treasure.”

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New Associates Make Commitment in Guatemala and New York



The Barbara Ford Center for Peace was the setting for Francisca Marcelina Vasquez Lopez's commitment ceremony.

By Ceil Harriendorf, SC, in Guatemala

Francisca Marcelina Vasquez Lopez can't recall when she first met the Sisters of Charity, but she does remember visiting the sister's convent in Novillero, Guatemala, with her mother when she was a little girl, and bringing flowers to Jesus.

When she grew up, she became a teacher and married. Shortly after the birth of her second child, Francisca's husband died. She was widowed for eight years when she met and married Julio Can. Julio, a teacher, is also a chef.

Now the mother of three sons, Carlos Emmanuel, age 17, Jordan, age 15, and Fernando Angel, age 5, Francisca doesn't hesitate when asked about her dreams for her children: Her response is, "I hope and pray they will grow up to be strong Christian men."

A strong Christian woman, faith is at the center of Francisca's life. In addition to teaching fourth-grade boys and girls, ranging in age from 9 to 12, she regularly offers prayer before class, and was recently asked to accept the position of School Board Secretary. She is also well known in her local parish, Our Lady of Guadalupe, where as a member of the Choir, she leads the Congregation in singing the Psalm responses and is active in the Church's Praise and Worship Ministry as well.

When Sisters Marie Tolle and Immaculata Burke invited Francisca to become an Associate, she hesitated. She thought she might not have enough time to fulfill the requirements of the Associate Program. However, after reading Elizabeth Ann Seton's biography, she felt called to strengthen her lifelong bond with the Sisters of Charity and, with Elizabeth as her model, to strengthen her lifelong relationship with God.

Wife, mother, widow, educator—a woman of faith and service. Elizabeth Ann Seton's story certainly resonates with Francisca, but what captured her imagination was Elizabeth's



Lisa Shay became an Associate of the Sisters of Charity at a ceremony held at Mount Saint Vincent Convent.

By Barbara Kennedy, Associate

On Saturday, October 25, Lisa Shay, a colonel in the US Army, made her initial commitment as an Associate. Her husband, Jeffrey Leach, and the three youngest of their six children (ages 21 to 6) were present, as were all who attended the Renewal Day. Through her work in her parish in Bangall, NY, Lisa first met and worked with Sisters of Charity and through Sr. Eileen Judge she first learned about the Associates.

Lisa was raised in Clinton Corners where she attended public schools, graduating from high school in 1985. She entered West Point that fall, and after graduation spent several years in various military assignments. Lisa returned to New York in 1998, did doctoral studies in electrical engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and then joined the faculty at West Point, where she now serves as Director of the Electrical Engineering Program. Lisa and her family live in Clinton Corners, NY, and are members of Immaculate Conception Parish in Bangall.

On December 13, 2013, the parish was notified that the Church was to be closed immediately because of its deteriorating physical condition. In less than a week Lisa and a group of fellow parishioners met with the Episcopal Vicar for their area, Auxiliary Bishop Lagonegro, and negotiated an agreement that permitted daily and weekend Masses to be offered at St. Mary's parish hall, located just down the road from the Church. On Saturday, December 21, Lisa and a team of parishioners worked from 6:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. setting up the liturgical space, and at 5:00 p.m. the first Mass was celebrated in the new location. On Christmas morning Bishop Lagonegro celebrated the 10:30 Mass.

In January 2014 Lisa contacted Sr. Jean Flannelly, seeking help in planning and conducting a renewal process for the parish. Meetings in January produced a plan, and throughout

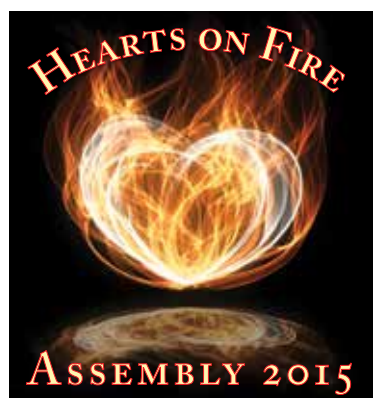
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GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2015

by Mary E. Mc Cormick, SC



The 2015 Assembly Steering Committee has been meeting since June 22, 2014. Left side from left: Sisters Jane Iannucelli, Margaret O'Brien, and Mary Ellen McGovern. Right side from right: Sr. Kathleen McCluskey, CSJ, Assembly Facilitator, Sisters Elizabeth Vermaelen and Elaine Owens, and Anne Gray, Steering Committee Secretary.



A major event that occurs every four years in the life of the Congregation and determines the direction its

members will take in the following months and years is called a General Assembly.

The General Assembly for 2015 will be convened April 7–12 at the Marriott Hotel in Tarrytown, NY, and will include, for the first time, both the Chapter of Affairs and the Chapter of Elections.

The General Assembly began in April, 2014, when Sisters chose delegates who will participate in both the pre-Assembly meetings and the Assembly itself. Sisters who are not delegates and SC Associates are invited to join in pre-Assembly work and attend the Assembly as nonvoting

observers. They also support the efforts of the delegates by prayer.

The current Steering Committee, elected by the delegates, “envision[s] a different kind of Assembly, less focused on business tasks and more on a communal discernment that will be deeply transformative.” (Letter from Steering Committee, August, 2014)

They chose the theme Hearts on Fire to describe where the energy for moving forward is located. The agenda will include input on the topics chosen by members of the Congregation in a series of focus groups held in early fall, 2014: Mission Now, Leadership and Governance, Membership and Community, and Finances.

The Chapter of Elections will follow during the same week. An Election Committee has been named by the Executive Council, and will work with the facilitator to fashion a voting process. Delegates will vote for the President and members of the Council who serve as our leadership team for the next four years.

A General Assembly is an important and grace-filled event in the life of the Congregation. Sisters of Charity look forward to the ways, sometimes surprising, that our provident God will lead into a new era of charity.

Sr. Nancy Kellar *Continued from page 7*

ground. As the native sister left me she said, “Push the mat up against the door when you close it, so the snakes don’t slip under.” When I reacted she comforted me by saying, “Dear, you don’t have to worry about the snakes on the ground, it’s the ones that swing from the trees that you need to watch.”

Sr. Regina’s conclusion

Pope Francis reminds Catholics to be missionaries, spreading the Good News of the Gospel with “joy, audacity, and unshakable optimism” (Evangelii Gaudium, #109). The Pope could well have had Sr. Nancy Kellar in mind! She says with gratitude, “I thank God for

the mission He gave me to preach the Good News of His saving grace and love around the world.”

Sister Nancy, an ambassador of Charity to thousands around the globe, recalls, “I was often inspired by the words of a song, ‘Whatever the pain, whatever the cost, let the whole world know of the glory of His love.’” In recent years, the physical cost of her travels has caught up with her, but her vibrant ministry of teaching continues with the Thursday and Saturdays of renewal still held in the House of Prayer in Scarsdale, which will celebrate its 40th anniversary in September 2015. Who knows what new adventures await this citizen of the

world whose favorite theme is “There is always more of the Holy Spirit.” Keep your suitcase packed, Sr. Nancy!



Sr. Nancy sports a gifted tee shirt during her visit to Uganda.

With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

Please visit our website at www.scny.org/news for complete biographies of our Sisters

Sister Dorothy Gallant, SC

Entered: 1955 + Date of Death: 11/30/14 + Age: 76

Sister Dorothy's tremendous love for people living in poverty was the essence of her life's work. She co-founded Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates in 1986 and through that ministry helped hundreds of people reclaim their lives.



Sister Marguerite Mahony, SC

Entered: 1949 + Date of Death: 1/27/15 + Age: 87

Sister Marguerite spent forty years in the ministry of elementary education, of which she said, "I had a real connection with both my students and their families." She also spent ten years at the House of Prayer. She was active in the clown ministry as Merry Melody.



Sister Audrey Boylan, SC (Sister Thomas Miriam)

Entered: 1950 + Date of Death: 12/2/14 + Age: 85

Sister Audrey's ministry of education spanned many levels, from elementary through university. She was a kind, compassionate, and concerned educator and administrator. Said her co-workers: "She is always there when we need her, and her door is always open for the faculty and children."



Sister Mary Jude Watson, SC

Entered: 1934 + Date of Death: 2/3/15 + Age: 99

Sister Jude loved her ministry in elementary education. The children and their parents found her to be an understanding and kind teacher, devoted to helping them learn and always strive to do their best. Sister loved long walks and the beauty of God's creation and all animals, especially dogs.



Sister Marie Daly, SC (Sister Mary Placida)

Entered: 1946 + Date of Death: 12/3/14 + Age: 87

Sister Marie was an educator and administrator par excellence. She was also a kind, compassionate, understanding, and loving person. She knew how to cultivate the gifts and talents of those around her and help them achieve their full potential. She was a blessing to all those with whom she lived and worked.



Sister Margaret Taylor, SC

Entered: 1950 + Date of Death: 2/4/15 + Age: 83

Sister Margaret was a pioneer in education, giving support to many new concepts. She touched the lives of thousands of students, parents, and teachers with her patience, concern and example. She will long be remembered for her kindness and compassion by all those whose lives she touched.



Sister Eileen Grubert, SC (Sister Thomas Marian)

Entered: 1944 + Date of Death: 1/6/15 + Age: 90

Sister Eileen was concerned, kind and compassionate educator. She enjoyed her work with both students and parents, and they found her a gentle person with a wonderful sense of humor. Her goodness carried over to all with whom she dealt, most especially to the sisters with whom she lived.



Sister Marian Margaret Sullivan, SC

Entered: 1941 + Date of Death: 1/19/15 + Age: 93

Sister Margaret was known for her love of learning, of books, and of all things Irish. Students remember her as very kind and helpful during their many visits to the library. Sister's generosity and compassion extended to the years she lived at the Convent of Mary the Queen and later at Kittay House.



Sister Kevin Marie MacDonald, SC

Entered: 1952 + Date of Death: 1/26/15 + Age: 86

Sister Kevin is remembered by all who knew her for her quiet and calm demeanor, her kindness and compassion, and her great abilities as a teacher. She loved all of the children she taught, and they loved and respected her for all that she accomplished with them.



Three Came North

Continued from page 5

dispensation. Community accounts indicate the presence of issues that caused hardship for herself and the community. Eventually she and some members of the community reconciled. Letters she later exchanged with Sister Elizabeth Boyle attest to her love for Mother Seton and her religious daughters.

Felicita Brady, about whom very little is known, also left the community. She had a troubled history, going back even to Mother Seton's time. She was bequeathed a large inheritance from a brother, and that seemed to have decided her. She withdrew from the community in 1846, and lived in Philadelphia near some family members. She asked to be buried in Emmitsburg, and her request was granted. She died in 1883; her gravestone in the old cemetery reads simply "M. Felicita Brady."

God calls, we invite. This was as true in the beginnings of the community as it is today. A prospective candidate needs a discerning heart, aided by the counsel of wise directors to help her make choices that allow a vocation to flourish. If she feels at some point that she must take another path, she will leave knowing that she "did her best, and left the rest to God."

Save the Date



Monday, May 4, 2015, 6–9 pm

SISTERS OF CHARITY

Spring Benefit

In support of the Sisters of Charity ministries to those living in poverty

Honoring

Brian Duffy

Partner, O'Connor Davies LLP

And

Sr. Miriam Kevin Phillips, SC

Former Director, St. Vincent's Hospital
School of Nursing

The Water Club

500 E 30th Street, NYC



For more information call:

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Elizabeth Seton Canonization

Continued from page 16



A group from the Sisters of Charity of New York traveled to Rome for the canonization of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in 1975.

was a patient at St. Joseph's Hospital in Yonkers. Many people were praying for a cure through Mother Seton's intercession, and one of the Sisters of Charity on St. Joseph's Hospital staff applied her relic to Mr. Kalin. He was miraculously cured. This was Mother Seton's third recognized miracle, and the foundation of the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph was considered her fourth miracle.

This foundation has expanded over the course of the past two hundred years. From its first meeting of six member groups in 1947, there are now twelve congregations that are part of The Sisters of Charity Federation. The purpose of the Federation is to facilitate collaboration in projects related to ministry and other areas of common concern. In reality, the growth and collaboration of the

Federation can also be considered one of Mother Seton's great accomplishments.

As we come up to the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of her canonization, let us continue to pray through the intercession of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton for our world and all of its people, our church, and the future of our planet. Elizabeth was certainly a woman of great faith; she believed in God's goodness and providence and was blessed with his grace. She struggled and rejoiced in the life to which God had called her. Let us ask her to help us endure the hardships and recognize the blessings in our own lives.

We do rejoice in our glorious daughter and are proud of the heritage she has given us. Let us celebrate this special anniversary of her canonization.

New Associate: Francisca Marcelina Continued from page 11



Sister Mary Ann Daly, left, Regional Coordinator, was in Guatemala for the ceremony when Francisca made her Associate commitment.

complete trust in God. "That's what I want," she says, "to serve God with total obedience, humility, and love."

On September 28, 2014, Francisca Marcelina Vasquez Lopez became an Associate of the Sisters of Charity. Gracias, Francisca, por su compromiso, por su servicio y por su amor. (Thank you, Francisca, for your commitment, your service, and your love.)

New Associate: Lisa Shay Continued from page 11

the year Sr. Jean conducted a series of workshops covering everything from training altar servers, lectors, and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist to evangelization and how to make a personal spiritual gifts inventory. A seven-session study of Isaiah in November and December concluded the year's renewal efforts.

During the Renewal Day, Lisa expressed her thanks to Sr. Mary Ann Daly for the time and effort she invested in personalizing Lisa's orientation to the Associate program and its expectations of a candidate. In her Associate contract Lisa pledged to intentionally apply the charism of charity in her life as Electrical Engineering Program Director at West Point by seeing each cadet and each member of the staff as an individual and exercising her authority through servant leadership, and at Immaculate Conception Parish by continuing to organize lay ministries in the northeast corner of the New York Archdiocese and by serving as lector, Eucharistic minister, and catechist in her parish.



"Bankrupt Players" Performance Benefits Sisters of Charity Missions

On November 19, 2014, a musical benefit filled with special guests from the financial industry who dabble in music careers, called "Bankrupt Talent," took place at Le Poisson Rouge in Greenwich Village. An annual tradition, this unique event fills the stage with attorneys, bankers, and financial advisors who all come together for a great cause. Each year a different charity is selected. The Sisters of Charity of New York were honored as the 2014 beneficiary of the musical event.

Steve Korf and Randa Karambelas, both of whom are currently affiliated with the legal disposition of Saint

Vincent's Medical Centers, hosted the benefit and were instrumental in selecting the Sisters of Charity as beneficiary. Their connection to the former Sisters of Charity institution enabled them to bring together many former employees, vendors, and St. Vincent's restructuring professionals to support the event. In their words, "All ticket sales and corporate donations will benefit the Sisters of Charity to support their numerous charitable efforts and their dedication for serving the underprivileged of New York." Sisters Carol Barnes and Miriam Kevin Phillips represented the Congregation at the concert and totally

enjoyed the evening. Contrary to the performers' moniker, the Sisters gave *Above left*: A host of talented attorneys, bankers, and financial advisors took to the stage for a concert benefitting the Sisters of Charity missions. *Above*: Steve Korf accompanied singer Randa Karambelas on the piano at the Bankrupt Players benefit concert. Most of the attendees and performers know the Sisters of Charity from St. Vincent's Hospital, NYC.

them two well-deserved thumbs up.

The Sisters of Charity congratulate the "Bankrupt Talent" performers for a great event and thank them for their spirit of generosity and concern for the underprivileged of New York.

Sacred Heart School principal and third grade teacher die days apart

Continued from page 10

Al Cardone, Class of 1972

"I am a Sacred Heart School graduate, Class of '72. I remember a lot about Sister Thomas. She was my first school principal and also my neighbor for 25 years on North Burgher Avenue, but what stands out is a lesson she gave our third-grade class when our teacher, Norma Kane, was out.

"She was teaching us how smart we can be if we really studied hard and did our work. Our brains could be smarter than any computer. She pointed out that 'They even have computers now that can fit in this very classroom' [LOL, imagine?] but she also pointed out that if a computer was even 10 stories high, it still wouldn't be smarter than the brains in our heads if we studied hard. She also warned us that computers get better every day and in 40 or 50 years could be small enough to carry around in our pockets and she might buy one if she gets to be 90 years old, and she laughed.

"I think of her every single time I see a new computer advancement. In fact, on Christmas morning, my wife Annie gave me a wrist watch computer that connects via Blue Tooth to my phone and my computer ... and of course, I thought of

that beautiful lady. Rest in peace, Sister Thomas, and thank you. I will always remember you."

Gregg Newman, Class of 1991

"To this day, I always feel honored that my class was her last graduating class in Sacred Heart. I currently live in Buffalo, N.Y., but my family is still on Staten Island. My mother, uncle, aunt, sisters, and cousins all attended Sacred Heart with Sister Thomas as principal.

"I was always amazed that she knew every student's name and she always showed great care and concern for her students. I always found it funny that she would refer to you by your first name; however, if you were in trouble, she would refer to you as "Miss" or "Mister." I remember some stern 'Mr. Newmans' during my time there.

"She had a great presence in the school. Walking around the hallways, in the schoolyard or when she came to visit in the classroom, you always felt her strong and caring presence. It is amazing to think about how many students, parents, and teachers that she has impacted over the years."

Elizabeth Ann Seton—Mother and Saint By Maryellen Blumlein, SC

There are three steps on the path to sainthood. First, a person of great virtue who has experienced the goodness and hardships of life is named a “servant of God.”

After this, the person’s life and writings are examined and the Pope recognizes them as “venerable.” Elizabeth Seton was declared venerable in 1959 by Pope John xxxiii.

Following this, two miracles that can be attributed to the candidate’s intercession must be recognized. Elizabeth Seton was

beatified on March 17, 1963 by Pope John xxxiii. On this occasion the Pope said of Elizabeth, “In a house that was very small, but with ample space for charity, she sowed a seed in America which by Divine Grace grew into a large tree.”

Two more miracles attributed to the candidate are necessary for canonization. A third miracle occurred through Elizabeth Seton’s intercession, and, since she founded a religious community, the fourth miracle was waived. Thus on September 14, 1975 Elizabeth Ann Seton was declared a saint by Pope Paul VI with the following words: “Elizabeth Ann Seton is a saint. Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton is an American. All of us say this with special joy, and with the intention of honoring the land and the nation from which she sprang forth as the first flower in the calendar of the saints. Elizabeth Ann Seton was wholly American! Rejoice for your glorious daughter. Be proud of her. And know how to preserve her fruitful heritage.”

James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore began the first

Elizabeth Seton is a saint!
Pope Paul VI, September 14, 1975



St. Peter's Square on the day of Elizabeth Seton's canonization

tentative steps toward Elizabeth’s canonization in 1882. It took fifty-four years however, for the Sacred Congregation of Rites to be satisfied that “no obstacle exists against taking steps relative to the Cause.” In 1947 it was decided that “much good for the cause [for canonization] of Mother Seton might be effected by a conference of the various communities of Sisters of Charity that trace their origin to the foundation made by Mother Seton at Emmitsburg in 1809.” The dates for the conference were October 28 and 29, the

place would be Saint Joseph Central House, Emmitsburg. The Daughters of Charity, Sisters of Charity of New York, Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Sisters of Charity of Halifax, Sisters of Charity of Convent Station, and Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill were all invited to send representatives to the meeting. Out of these days grew new relationships and plans for prayers and fasting that would lead to the recognition of the miracles necessary for Mother Seton’s beatification.

The two miracles accepted for Elizabeth Seton’s beatification were Sister Gertrude Korzendorfer, a Daughter of Charity who was cured of pancreatic cancer in 1935, and Ann Theresa O’Neill of Baltimore who was cured of acute lymphatic leukaemia at age 4 in 1952.

In October 1963 Carl Kalin, who worked as an engineer for Con Edison, was cured of meningoencephalitis, a usually fatal complication when the measles virus invades the brain. He

Continued, see page 14, top right