

Lurana's Star

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF ATONEMENT
41 Old Highland Turnpike
Garrison, NY 10524
www.graymoor.org

EDITORS
Sister M. Eilish Sweeney S.A.
Sister Roberta Southwick S.A.
developmentoffice@graymoor.org

2017

SPRING/SUMMER

No. 2

Jubilee 2017

Graymoor, June 17th

Born of the Spirit...we are
sent to serve the Lord.

John 3:7-9

Sister Loretta Guevarra, S.A.

Sister Theresa Ann Clarizio, S.A.

Sister Joanne Macaulay, S.A.

Franciscans...
Missionaries...
Lovers of Creation...
Lovers of the Lord!



Sister Eilish Sweeney

Dear Friend,

Greeting, prayers and best wishes to you and to your family. The beauty of Spring is all around us and Summer is fast approaching. May

it be a time of peace, relaxation and of many blessings for each of us.

As we have said so many times before, we, the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement here at Graymoor, have so much for which to be grateful. During the month of June we joyfully celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of one of our retired but rather “active” Sisters, Sister Loretta Guevarra, and the Golden Jubilee of two “younger” members of our congregation, Sisters Theresa Ann Clarizio and Joanne Macaulay. These three Sisters gathered on Saturday, June 17 with community, family and friends to give thanks to God for the many blessings bestowed upon them during the past seventy-five and fifty years. We wish each of them the very best in their years ahead.

In the midst of our joyful moments of life we too, like all families, have to deal with the sad reality of death. During the month of March 2017 two of our fine missionaries of old died. Sister Mary Bride Spratt from County Cork, Ireland, died peacefully on March 3 at the age of 100. Sister touched many lives during her 60 years of active ministry throughout the United States and Canada as well as her 10 years in retirement here at Graymoor.

Sister Helen Ohlig, a gifted artist and musician, originally from Pilot Point and later from Hereford, Texas died at our Lurana Health Care Residence on March 16th. Sister was 94 and had served on various missions here on the East Coast, in California and in British Columbia, Canada.

On May 26th, Sister Susan Boyle, whom many of you remember from her years here in our Development Department, died in the Philippines after a short illness. May these three great missionaries Rest in Peace.

God bless you and thank you for your goodness to us, the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement. Know you are in our thoughts and prayers.

Gratefully,

Sister M. Eilish Sweeney

Diamond Jubilarian



Sister Loretta Guevarra, S.A.

Sister Loretta has been a member of our Congregation for the past 75 years. She still has a great deal of energy and, thank God, enjoys pretty good health.

These days we talk a great deal about immigration and the problems being faced by so many coming to the United States from other countries. In spite of their struggles, Sister Loretta's parents can be considered among the lucky ones. What a story! Read on.

“California. Los Angeles. 1924. That's where my story begins. I was the eldest of the youngest three in our family of nine children. Both my parents were immigrants from Mexico, and my eldest sister, Mary, was born there. She was brought into this country in a suitcase, and I'll tell you that story. My parents had a large ranch in Mexico, and they gave pieces of land to the poorer people working for them. The work-

ers helped each other build small homes for their families on our ranch, and my father treated them well. He built a little chapel in the center of the circle of their homes, and would go to a nearby town and transport a priest so the workers could have a Mass together on the weekends. He had plans to build them a school also, because he knew the government would not furnish a building. In fact, his initiative met with a lot of opposition from the government authorities and they began checking on him. When the workers tipped him off that the authorities were planning to come for him one night, without telling even the workers, he drilled holes in a wooden suitcase, filled it with a little mattress padding and one change of clothes, he and my mother put Mary in the suitcase and started walking through the night, sleeping through the day, to get across the border. They knew the authorities would look for a horse, so they decided to walk instead. They left everything behind and never looked back, never went back. In fact, they never talked to us about that experience. They seemed to try to forget all about it. Papa had seven brothers, and I never met any of them, because he was a wanted man in Mexico! Miraculously, they were able to board a train for Los Angeles. On arrival, it seemed as though the Santa Fe Railroad Company was 'in waiting' because Papa was offered a job right away and was given three box-cars to make a makeshift home for the family until they could get on their feet. Someone must have recognized his leadership abilities, because he taught railroad workers some new skills and improvised implements for railroading. In Los Angeles, Papa and Mama eventually settled in the Watts

Diamond Jubilarian

District, became American citizens, and never regretted it.

I always wanted to become a Sister. The Sister-catechists I first encountered were very kind, but I was not drawn to wearing high-buttoned shoes like them! When I met the Sisters of the Atonement, around the time I was fourteen, they invited me to accompany them to their classes so I could help teach prayers to the younger children. The rest is history. My mother refused to let me go to the convent at twelve years of age, but after helping our Sisters from ages fourteen to sixteen, it was okay. Everyone loved Sister Ancilla; she was talented, pretty and popular. But my favorite was no-frills and quite-blunt Sister Ann. Papa had a strict rule in our house: 'If you're going to say something, only speak the truth, but speak the truth!' Every night after supper he would ask each of us in turn, 'What good thing did you do today?' and then 'What bad thing did you do today?' Another rule that comes to mind, to insure we would be totally bilingual, we always had to speak only Spanish at home and only English outside our home. I remember once I was walking and talking with some friends on the street and Papa followed me, listening to me speaking in Spanish. He walked along for a while and then simply said, 'Aren't you forgetting something?' Sister Ann seemed to speak the truth.

My assignments began at St. Cecilia's in New York City. It was my first mission and I was young. I helped with the kindergarten and attended classes at Fordham University during the week, and on Saturdays helped with the begging we used

to do. I remember one time a monsignor observed me for a while and then asked, 'Sister shouldn't you be going to school?' I told him I was attending Fordham during the week, and he seemed satisfied with that. From there I went to Bingham Canyon, Utah, a one-street mining town. After that I was always the superior and founded many missions doing parish work and catechetics: Dragerton, Utah; Newport, Oregon; Bakersfield, California; Jatai, Brazil; Rio Verde, Brazil; Goiania, Brazil; and so on. After an assignment in the States and a short trip to Assisi, Italy, I returned to Rio Verde, Brazil. In January of 1989, I went to San Paulo to do ecumenical work with one of our Friars, Father Malcolm Martin, S.A. Medical issues eventually warranted a change of pace, and I continued for years in California. I am now in supposed 'retirement' at our Graymoor motherhouse, but the missionary in me is still very active on a daily basis. The ecumenical group I helped form in San Juan Bautista, California calls me on Skype just about every week. They ask: 'Sister, send us a recipe' (for how to set up a Christian Unity group with Christian ministers) and then they use that to go out and evangelize. At our motherhouse one of the Sisters has asked me to teach her Spanish, so I teach her phrases in the same manner I learned Portuguese when I first went to Brazil. Then, since I can no longer see well enough to read sheet-music, I've begun to practice playing the piano by ear. A few of us entertain in our Lurana Health Care Residence, and everyone seems to enjoy it--especially me! So, at 92 years of age, I am still a happy missionary in this wonderful Society of the Atonement. God bless you!"

Golden Jubilarian



Sister Teresa Ann Clarizio, S.A.

Our Golden Jubilarian, Sister Teresa Ann Clarizio, born in Binghamton, shares her interesting story of growing up in the Southern Tier of New York State.

“My story began in Binghamton, New York and St. Patrick’s Grammar and High School. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet who taught us in the ‘50’s and ‘60’s planted the seed of my Vocation. Then, after high school, 1960, I went to live in Athens, NY with the Dolan Family so I could attend the (then) Albany Business College.

This is where I met our Sisters who came to St. Patrick’s Parish in Athens in 1953. The Sisters were a great influence on me and my sister, Janet. I particularly remember Sisters Mary Patrick Burns,

Mary Euphrasia Disco, Mary Longtin, Rita McDonald, Frances Rooney, Lelia Rorai, Mary Bride Spratt and Mary Laetitia Toyoda.

You couldn’t help but love these Sisters; they were a great bunch, always on the up-beat. And it was easy to see they loved to be with the young people of our parish. They had us going all over on trips, and when this didn’t happen we were in the different sodalities--either for girls or boys, and sometimes together, but well-chaperoned!

When I finished my schooling and got a job in Athens, I remained with the Dolan Family which led to helping out in the parish rectory. My sister Janet and I would count the parish collection for Father James Vaughan so he could continue with his other parish duties.

Guess what I do today? I now count the collection in our own St. John’s Church here at Graymoor. Talk about history repeating itself!

I must have been blinded about my vocation in those days because it seems everyone knew I had one but me. I guess you could say I was living the good life and didn’t want anything else, to the point that I wouldn’t listen to the voice within and also to those outside voices.

Somewhere along the line I came to my senses, and here I am 50 years later. Did I make the right choice? I’ll let you answer that!”

Golden Jubilarian



Sister Joanne Macaulay, S.A.

Sister Joanne, another Golden Jubilarian, a native of Steveston, British Columbia, Canada, shares her family history and missionary endeavors.

“My story begins with the emigration of my Dad’s family from Glasgow, Scotland. Since my grandfather had died in a ship-building accident, my Dad’s Mom (‘wee Granny’) joined the Scottish Immigration Aid Society with her seven children and many relatives and friends. They settled first near Red Deer, Alberta so they could learn the skills needed to farm in Alberta before settling in Clandonald, 60 miles east of Edmonton.

My Mom’s parents were John Bowie (from Nova Scotia) and Ellen Carlson (with family roots in the State of Nebraska). My grandparents farmed in Claresholm, Alberta. Often in the summer we would travel to Alberta to visit our relatives.

My parents, John Angus and Helen

Macaulay, met in Calgary, Alberta after the Second World War. Since my father had been a soldier, my parents were able to move to Steveston, British Columbia and purchase a couple of acres of land for a farm. One of my favorite memories of those days was watching my brother Malcolm riding our pig in the pig pen. My Dad was hired by the Richmond School Board first as a janitor and eventually by going to night school became a boiler engineer. Since both my parents had experience with animals, growing and canning fruits and vegetables, they were able to supplement Dad’s income from his job to raise their seven children. My Mom used her Singer sewing machine to make our clothes.

My connection with the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement began in 1947. I was baptized by Father Dominic, S.A. at St. Joseph’s and when I was 5 years old I went to the Sisters’ kindergarten. I attended elementary school at St. Anthony’s in Marpole and then high school at Little Flower Academy. These schools were a distance from my home so I would travel by tram and then bus each day to school with my cousins and then my brothers.

Interestingly, it was in high school when we had vocation talks given by several Sisters that I felt the Holy Spirit whispering in my heart about becoming a Franciscan Sister of the Atonement. As I sat in the auditorium that day, a Sister of the Atonement (who I never discovered her name) spoke of the ministry of our Sisters with children on Cordova Street in Vancouver and in Edmonton, Alberta. Somehow, I knew then that I would become a Franciscan Sister of the Atonement.

Golden Jubilarian

After graduating from High School in 1965, I worked for a summer in one of the fish canneries in Steveston and then, eventually, I worked for two years in a Grain Clearance office as a receptionist/typist. During this time I kept in touch with the Sisters, and drove them each Wednesday from Steveston to Vancouver for a Catechist training course. I really enjoyed the course and the time with the Sisters.

In 1967 I completed my application process for entrance into the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement. It was Expo time in Montreal and Canada's 100th Anniversary of Confederation. It was during this time, and after a tearful good-bye to my parents and relatives, that I travelled to Graymoor.

At Graymoor I met the six other women who were beginning their Postulancy with me. I was the only one from Canada. Gradually we settled into Convent life. The first and second-year Novices were a great help to us. Now that I look back on those first months, I wonder at how gradually I adjusted to our maroon skirts and jackets, the silence at meals and finding my way around the breviary. Slowly we did adjust. Waiting for mail from home, saying good-bye to postulants who decided to leave, attending classes in religious life, spirituality and Atonement history were some of the events during the first year at Graymoor. I loved walking around the grounds and I would spend time watching the trees change with the different seasons. In the summer a couple of us worked at Vacation House, a camp for inner-city children in Boston. A couple of other missionary experiences during my Novitiate were

in Philadelphia and on the dish commission during Chapter in Washington. On June 13, 1970 I made my First Profession of Vows.

Life on the Mission helped me to expand my self-confidence and self-assurance. I taught three Religious Education classes, started an Atonement Club with several young girls and visited senior citizens. The second year that I was in Revelstoke, one of our Sisters, Sister Mary Elizabeth became seriously ill in Vancouver. I was sent to take her place in the Day Care. This was a mixed blessing because I was gaining ministry experience and confidence in parish life, but going to Vancouver I would be close to my family and working with young children again. In 1977 I professed my Final Vows. Over the years I was able to enrich my spiritual life through the retreats I would make with the Benedictines in Montreal and the Franciscans in Cochrane, Alberta.

In 1995, I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease called Granulomatosis with polyangitis. Over the years I have been hospitalized and received treatments that have kept the disease mostly in remission. I have had wonderful Doctors and practitioners who have supported my healing. My Sisters, that I have lived with both in Vancouver and Edmonton, have supported me, too.

Over the 50 years of my Religious Life my ministries include: Religious Education, Gardener, Day Care Supervisor, Treasurer, Administration, and Faith Minister. Each position had its own challenges and rewards creating a wonderful and fulfilling life."

In Memoriam



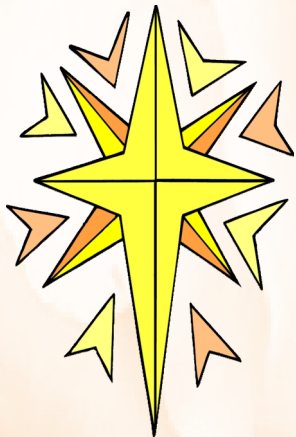
Sister Mary Bride Spratt, S.A.
November 22, 1916—March 3, 2017

*"The Lord bless you and keep you!
The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you!
The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace!"*
-Numbers 6:24 - 26



Sister Helen Ohlig, S.A.
January 23, 1923—March 16, 2017

*"We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ
by whom we have received the Atonement."*
-Romans 5:11



Sister Susan Boyle, S.A.
February 15, 1932—May 26, 2017

*"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God
And all these things will be given to you besides."*-Mt. 6:33

