

Bylines

Ursulines of the Eastern Province

Autumn 2008

In This Issue

With this issue we take a look at Ursulines and education. For many of us, our relationship with Ursulines came about in the classroom, whether grade school, high school, or college. Since those days, what in American society hasn't changed? The two stories about Ursuline educators present an angle on the answer to that question as it affects education.

Notice that Sister Peggy Kelleher's graduate students come from every continent. It's a side of globalization one might not have considered. American colleges and universities have generally been a choice made by thousands of students from overseas. Peggy is a first-hand participant in the interchange of contemporary Catholic theological and religious thought.

Meanwhile, in Wilmington, DE, Ursuline Academy lay educators, sisters, parents, and graduates are building a school of opportunity for underserved girls in the creation of Serviam Girls Academy, a contemporary outreach in the tradition of Ursuline education.

A news item fit for the first page is the announcement that the new editor of *Bylines*, beginning with the Spring 2009 issue, is Jane Perkinson, an alumna of the College of New Rochelle and first lay editor of *Bylines*.

Other stories in this issue show the many facets of Ursuline life to keep you up-to-date on your friends and former teachers.

Ursuline Educator Liturgy Scholar

A member of the faculty in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at the Catholic University of America (CUA) since 1986, Sr. Margaret Mary Kelleher, Peggy as she is known, brings her inherited Irish sense of humor and appreciation of story-telling to teaching. Her students are both graduate students doing advanced studies and undergraduates finding their way to a mature understanding of religion.

Several years ago she created a new undergraduate course entitled "Sickness, Death, and Christian Ritual" that includes a study of the rite of anointing the sick, the Order of Christian Funerals, and a unit on burial practices. The study of these rites usually leads to students' telling stories about their actual experience in a variety of contexts. One assignment requires each student to visit a cemetery and do a report on several tombstones. While students initially think of this as a somewhat bizarre project, they usually end up appreciating it. Last year's class included several students from the School of Architecture who were simultaneously involved in a seminar that required them to design a cemetery. They invited Peggy to attend the class in which they presented their designs.

Peggy's interest in liturgical studies goes back to her time in the Ursuline novitiate in Beacon, N.Y. Vatican II had recently ended and the novitiate had a fine library. Peggy spent her free time reading the journal *Worship*, along with a variety of other biblical and theological sources. (Cont. on p.2)



Sr. Margaret Mary Kelleher, O.S.U.

Photo Courtesy of The College of New Rochelle

Ursuline Educator (Continued from p.1) Her interest was nurtured during her years as religious education coordinator at St. Helena's parish in the Bronx. There, liturgical expression and sacramental practice were key elements in her role of cultivating the faith of young Catholics in the 1970s. There she developed a passion to know more of the theology developed over centuries and expressed in liturgical services, the sacraments, and other expressions of faith within the church. This led her to pursue a Ph.D. at CUA.

Her doctoral students at CUA are a diverse group of men and women, lay and clerical, from all over the world. They have included Roman Catholics, Muslims, Mennonites, Episcopalians, Orthodox, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Evangelicals, and one Pentecostal minister. They have come from various parts of the U.S. and from Africa, Australia, Brazil, China, India, and other countries. She has been a reader of numerous doctoral dissertations that explored such diverse topics as intercommunion, the intersection of the liturgical and rural life movements in the U.S., an inculturation model of the marriage rite in the Philippines, Tejano religion, and ethnicity in San Antonio.

Peggy is part of the worshipping community at St. Camillus parish in Silver Spring, MD. The ethnic diversity of the parish - as of the U.S. church - is reflected in some religious rituals that are part of the worshipping community. At the 10:30 Mass each Sunday, the assembly sings in multiple languages. One of the ritual options for Good Friday involves hundreds of people enacting the Stations of the Cross with drama and song. The procession moves prayerfully through the surrounding neighborhood (with police escort to stop the traffic) and stops at various places where young people from the community enact each station.

For eight years (1992-2000) she served on the bishops' advisory committee of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), enabling her to bring her research expertise to the practical tasks of liturgical ritual. With her knowledge of the history and theology of liturgy in the Roman Catholic Church, she contributed to the task of joining ritual action and language with the spiritual life of contemporary believers.

Peggy has given papers at professional societies such as the North American Academy of Liturgy and the Catholic Theological Society of America. She has delivered major addresses to national and regional groups and given talks in parishes. Her articles, book chapters, and book reviews in a variety of publications explore the rituals of the church, their meaning, attentiveness to how they are performed and how they enrich one's spiritual life.

A favorite pastime is reflective walks around a lake in a local park. The setting provides beauty and relaxation in all seasons. Periodically she comes upon a majestic great blue heron or a beautiful white egret. Such gifts from the lake are great reminders to her of the sacramentality of all creation.

News and Notes

On September 26, **Sr. Mary Beth Read** was honored at an evening dinner and celebration of her 16-year service as principal of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula in the Bronx. The event was held at Marina del Rey. Gifts for the Sr. Mary Beth Read Scholarship Fund were presented to her on the occasion as an ongoing remembrance of her dedicated service.

The changing of the guard at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula has brought **Father John Vigilanti** as president. Father Vigilanti taught religion to seniors from 1986 to 1994 and he has regularly been part of special occasions. He has taught at Fordham, the College of Mount St. Vincent, and Iona College. He holds a doctorate in educational supervision and administration from Fordham.

Dr. Joseph Fusco succeeds Sr. Mary Beth Read, serving as Interim Principal for 2008-2009 at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. He served as principal of Bergen Catholic High School in New Jersey from 1994 to 2006, and for six years was principal of John A. Coleman Catholic High School in Hurley, NY. He holds a doctorate in education administration from New York University.

ANNOUNCEMENT

With the spring 2009 issue of *Bylines* the new editor will be Jane Perkinson, an Ursuline Associate and alumna of CNR with an Editorial Board consisting of Doug Hearle, Irene Mahoney, OSU, Bridget Puzon, OSU and Martha Reddington.

Ursuline Bylines

Interim Editors: Michele Foran & Bridget Puzon, OSU

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SERVIAM GIRLS ACADEMY OPENS

The excitement of a new school year affects every student. But the excitement of a new school is special for all those involved, students and their families, teachers, and administrators. Serviam Girls Academy in Wilmington, Delaware opened its doors to 34 middle-school girls in September 2008. These fifth and sixth graders are the pioneer classes that will move up over the years to the eighth grade, preparing themselves for college-preparatory high schools after Serviam.

The opening is the realization of a dream shared by Ursulines, lay educators, parents, and alumnae of Ursuline Academy. Serviam (I will serve) has symbolized ideals of service in Ursuline schools throughout the world. These founders envisioned a tuition-free school to prepare girls from low-income families of all faiths with a faith-centered education, geared to academic achievement, first in college-preparatory high schools, and then colleges. There are no official connections with the Ursulines or with Ursuline Academy, but there are parallel ideals and purposes.



Staff Photo

Sr. Mildred Haight, OSU and some of the students from the first class at the Serviam Girls Academy

The basic academic program, participation in sports, and other programs such as music and drama, will fill the school day that begins at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast, followed by assembly and classes from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and concludes with activities and sports until 6 p.m. A similar middle school in Wilmington, Nativity Prep for boys, opened in 2003, and Anne Weber, president of Serviam, credits that initiative by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales with providing a favorable impression and a model. Both Serviam and Nativity are part of the Nativity-Miguel Network of Schools, consisting of more than 60 schools nationwide.

MEMORIAL AWARD ESTABLISHED IN MEMORY OF SR. CATHERINE MARIE JORDAN, OSU



Top row: Jaime Guzman, Randy Aquino; front row: Dominique Thompson, Briana Baez, scholarship recipients. Right: Award Administrator, Karen Byrnes,

In June four graduates from St. Philip Neri were awarded scholarships of \$500 each for tuition at the Catholic high school of their choice. The award was launched through the efforts of friends of Sr. Catherine Marie, students, parents, parishioners and former St. Philip Neri teachers.

The award administrator, Karen Byrnes, evoked memories of Catherine Marie's 17 years of dedicated service as principal of SPN. The award recalls how Catherine Marie brought enthusiasm, respect and belief to the lives of each of her students and instilled in them a faith-based wisdom that would stay with them for a lifetime.

Karen Byrnes stated, "I am sure that Sr. Catherine would approve continuing her legacy in assisting 'her children'. Sr. Catherine will never be forgotten!"

They Took a Chance and Won!

In May, the Ursulines introduced, what was for many of you, a different type of appeal: a May Bouquet Calendar offering 31 chances to win a cash prize each day in May. Originally launched by Sr. Madeline Welch and Sr. Kathleen Finnerty, former provincial and director of development respectively, several years ago, the calendar was initially distributed by individual Ursulines. Many of you may remember receiving them from your Ursuline friends. This past year we decided to share the fun with all of our supporters and friends across the country. Because of your enthusiasm and generous donations, it was a great success.

We had a few “double” winners—a first time experience for us.

The Ursuline Sunflower Express thoroughly enjoyed pulling the names of the winners from the drum each day. We look forward to the suspense and pleasure of next year’s drawing. For now, we’d like to share with you the names of those who won prizes in the May Bouquet drawing.

A hearty thank you to all of you who participated.



May 2008 THE WINNERS CIRCLE							1	2	3
							Joan Ericsson	Judith Perez	Kathleen Kearns
4 Lee Dillon	5 Paul Fonseca	6 Maureen Boyan	7 Jeanne Tolle Devlin	8 Mary Trewitt	9 Joan Ericsson	10 Denise Sheelar			
11 Mary Ann Dolan	12 Ellen Harrington	13 Margaret & Joe Antalec	14 Henry A. Muller	15 Tom Parsons	16 Timothy Fetzter	17 Dr. Barbara Ann Becher			
18 Ann Borstelmann Miele	19 Kay & Richard Falvey	20 Marilyn Martin	21 Mary Ellen Schepp McLoughlin	22 Angela Cadigan Mooney	23 Mary Ann Dolan	24 Elizabeth McEvoy			
25 Kathryn Daum	26 Ellen Kiernan Fauerbach	27 Mary Nolan Wakeford	28 Madeline Manning	29 Bernadette & John Powers	30 Agnes & John McElean	31 Eleanor & Robert Rockhill			



Photo: T. Eppridge

Sr. Ann Dumas, OSU., took her first vows as a member of the Order of St. Ursula on September 6th at the Province Center chapel.

NEWS AND NOTES *continued*

Sr. Terry Eppridge’s painting “Contro Luce” was awarded second prize in oils in a juried show for members of the Art Society of Old Greenwich. It was on exhibit in the Flinn Gallery at the Greenwich Public Library in Connecticut. Terry sells her artwork through TEGraphics (www.tegraphic.com).

Sr. Margaret Mary Kelleher, along with a number of members of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy, contributed to *A Commentary on the General Instructions of the Roman Missal*, published by Liturgical Press. Peggy wrote the commentary on the “Preamble.” The Commentary was released at the January 2008 meetings in Savannah of the Catholic Academy of Liturgy and the North American Academy of Liturgy.

The Times-Picayune of New Orleans featured an account of how a medal given to New York Giants President John Mara by Sr. Kathleen Finnerty, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, contributed to a championship touchdown by Eli Manning. Mara reached in his pocket in the final minute of Super Bowl XLII. “I had a little medal this nun sent me. She sent me a great letter a couple of days ago with this medal of the Blessed Virgin, and she said, ‘I guarantee you this will bring you luck.’ I did (Cont. on p. 5)

URSULINES BREAK GROUND FOR AFFORDABLE SENIOR RESIDENCE

July 2, 2008 was a red-letter occasion for the Ursulines and for the Bronx. For months leading up to this day, the planning for an affordable senior residence in the Bronx involved the Ursulines of the Bedford Park community and the Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation (FBHC). On this occasion the groundbreaking and unveiling of the cornerstone for Serviam Gardens, as the residences for seniors will be called, moved the plan forward.

The Ursulines and FBHC were joined in the events by Enterprise, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

The sisters' commitment to the neighborhood will continue through both the Academy of Mount St. Ursula and Serviam



Left to right: Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly, Mother Cecilia Wang and Sr. Pascal Conforti unveiling the cornerstone during Serviam Gardens groundbreaking ceremony.

Gardens. The housing for seniors will be built on a leased portion of the 10-acre property where the Bedford Park community and the Academy of Mount St. Ursula have been a significant presence and influence since 1892.



(OCV Architects)

Mother Cecilia Wang, Ursuline Prioress General, was on hand for the event. Sr. Dorothy Ann Kelly, provincial, and Sr. Pascal Conforti, prioress of the Bedford Park Community, and members of that community also took part in the historic groundbreaking and unveiling of the cornerstone. When completed, Serviam Gardens will consist of 240 units of low-income housing for seniors.

Architect's rendering of Serviam Gardens.

Oaklander, Coogan & Vitto Architects, P.C.

NEWS AND NOTES *continued*

reach in for that. Did they actually show that on TV?" Mara's children had attended the school in New York where Kathleen had been principal.

Her account is that "I don't think I guaranteed a victory. I think I wrote that the Giants could use a little divine intervention. But Our Lady provided miracles before." The underdog NY Giants beat the Boston Patriots in that game.

ORIGINAL MOSAIC DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO SERVE



Photo: Anna Ramos

In June, Academy of Mount St. Ursula art teacher, Professor Gary Horn, presented an original masterpiece mosaic of Christ the Teacher in honor of the Ursulines. Several Ursulines from the Bedford Park Community and faculty and staff of the Mount gathered in the Chapel for the official unveiling. This beautiful work of art was dedicated to all those who have faithfully given service to the students at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula for over 150 years.

The mosaic will be displayed in a prominent location at the Mount, befitting its beauty and meaning.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)

Pictured (left to right) Sisters Ann Duggan, Anne Curry, Maria Rosa Deiso, Mary Ellen Smith, Mary Beth Read, Mr. Gary Horn, Alice Marie Giordano, '52 and Barbara Calamari.

NEWS AND NOTES *continued*

Sr. Mary Virginia Orna, a former Fulbright Fellow in Israel and senior scientist in residence at the College of New Rochelle, is the recipient of the 2008 Henry Hill Award, presented by the ACS (American Chemical Society) Division of Professional Relations to honor outstanding achievement in the area of professional relations. She is internationally known for her analyses of colorants and dyes used in medieval paints and documents, and she often serves as a consultant for museums and art collectors.

Light and Life, the magazine of Weston Jesuit School of Theology, featured an article by Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P., professor of theology at Boston College, in which he recalls "Events Dramatic and Violent . . ." during the 1970s in Cambridge, MA. He briefly recounts the peace activities in the Cambridge/Boston area, and in particular the Catholic Mass in Harvard Yard at which **Sr. Bridget Puzon**, then a graduate student, was the scripture reader. The Mass in that venue was the dramatic event in his title.



Photo: T. Eppridge

In Braintree, MA, approximately 170 **Ursulines from the four provinces** of the United States gathered to discuss, respond, and through prayerful discernment, to focus on the future: whether to design a structure that creates a single entity for a unified approach to common challenges and changes. The gathering above was a significant step toward the decision that will be made after a consultation of all the U.S. Ursulines by Ursuline Mother General Cecilia Wang and the General Council.



Sr. Bridget Haase, OSU

WOMEN COME TOGETHER IN A RETREAT

On Saturday, October 4, a one-day retreat for women entitled "Surprised by God: Everyday Discoveries," was led by Bridget Haase, O.S.U. at the Province Center in New Rochelle. Besides presentations by Bridget Haase, the day included quiet time for prayer, small group conversations, and interchange with the large group of approximately fifty women.

Bridget Haase currently serves as Coordinator of the Spirituality and Wellness Center at The Boston Home, a long-term care facility for people with chronic degenerative neurological diseases. She has written *Well Lived, Stories of Wisdom and Wonder*, a book of inspiring stories about the people and places where she has served, such as Darfur, Senegal, and Appalachia. Her Web site features her ministries and her writings, www.wisdomwonder.com.

The retreat focused on the presence of God in daily life and its ordinary occupations. Ideas and stories are appealing, and Bridget contributed to the impetus to recognize God and experience the peace and joy of that recognition in the everyday.

For more information about the Angela Spirituality Group that sponsored this retreat, e-mail the Office of Advancement at ursruepr@aol.com.

IN MEMORIAM

Sister Maura MacKessy

Sister Maura MacKessy died at age 82 on May 30, 2008 at Andrus on Hudson. Born in the Bronx she entered the Ursulines in 1945.

Her ministry was education, and she taught in a variety of schools of the province: St. Jerome's, St. Angela Merici, and St. Philip Neri, parochial schools in the Bronx, and Blessed Sacrament School in New Rochelle. In Malone, NY, she was administrative assistant in the District School Religious Education office. She later served in Wilmington, and in 1993 she retired to the Marian Residence and later moved to Andrus.

Her funeral Mass was offered at the Ursuline Convent chapel in Wilmington, and she is buried in All Saints Cemetery there.

Sister de Sales Murphy

Known for her genial and generous care of her students, Mary de Sales, a member of the Bedford Park community, began her teaching at Our Lady of Mercy School from 1941 to 1952. She was principal at St. Jerome's School for one year before her tertianship and at St. Philip Neri as principal for seven years. From 1962 to 1989, she served in various capacities, treasurer, teacher, and bursar, at the Academy of Mount St. Ursula. From 1989 to 2004, she was treasurer of the community.

Sister Mary de Sales Murphy, a dedicated educator, spent a lifetime teaching the young. She died at the age of 90, on July 4, 2008 at the Bedford Park community in New Rochelle. Mass of the Resurrection was offered at the Ursuline Province Center Chapel on July 8, and she is buried at St. Raymond's Cemetery.

Visit the Ursuline Web Site: www.osueast.org

Bylines

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MASS OF THANKSGIVING CELEBRATED



Fr. John Vigilante, Presider, and Mary Hearle, Reader, during the Mass of Thanksgiving for friends and benefactors on June 14 in the Province Center chapel.

Photo: Michele Foran



PROVINCE MISSION STATEMENT

We, Ursulines of the Eastern Province of the United States, are women religious in an international community, united by the vision and spirit of our foundress, St. Angela Merici.

Impelled by deep personal love for Jesus Christ, Angela sought in a life of prayer and action to bring people from all segments of society to a deeper love of God and one another.

We follow Angela in the service of this twofold love. While we continue to proclaim the Gospel in our traditional work of education, we welcome the call of the Spirit to new ministries.

In response to the needs of our times, we commit ourselves, in both our life and our work, to solidarity with the poor; to the pursuit of justice for all, especially women; and to collaboration with the laity.

As a community that values both tradition and progress, we move into the future with courage and with trust in God.