



St. Margaret's Quarterly

St. Margaret's Convent

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PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS

“And Jesus said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation...And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message’” (Mark 16:15, 20). This commission to the disciples of Jesus forms the basis of the Society of St. Margaret’s mission. Our mission statement reads, “The Society of St. Margaret is an Episcopal religious community of women seeking to find Jesus present in worship, in the common life, and in ministries which concentrate on responding to the needs of the times.”

The present age is certainly a time in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is needed desperately. Today’s young people especially are hungering for a spirituality that means something, rather than the airy, insubstantial theologies that abounded in the 1980’s and 1990’s. The new millennium brought with it a deeper longing for purpose, direction, and commitment to mission work that embodied the passion and ideals that our Lord taught two thousand years ago.

As this issue will attest, the Sisters of St. Margaret are actively engaging in this mission work, bringing the “good news” to places far and wide, in a multitude of ways. Sisters work here at the convent to embody Christian hospitality and generosity to retreatants and guests at our houses. They travel throughout the state and the country,



*The Convent in Spring,
as seen from Highland Street*

leading worship, doing spiritual direction, taking services, preaching, leading Quiet Days and private retreats, teaching about prayer, and informing the Church at large about the joys and also the difficulties of the Vowed Life. We

model for many their first glimpse of the Religious Life, as religious orders are still the “best kept secret of the Episcopal Church!”

We welcome you to consider inviting a Sister to your local parish.

If you are planning your Fall, Advent or Lenten programs, we are happy to discuss programs in which the sisters could participate. We are also available to speak to Sunday school classes, confirmation classes and youth groups. We are always happy to receive invitations to travel to new places, to participate in worship or preach, or to lead educational programs in places other than the Convent. If you would like to have a Sister come to your parish, please contact us at 617-445-8961 for more information. We look forward to speaking with you!

Grace, SSM

ST. MARGARET’S DAY 2005 AT THE BOSTON CONVENT: SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2005

The Sisters at the Boston Convent will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Society of St. Margaret with a service of Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. with luncheon following. Preacher: Brother Derek, SSF, former Minister Provincial of the American Province of the Society of St. Francis. Please let us know if you are coming so that we may make adequate preparations.

THE ANNUAL OFFERING

The Sisters wish to thank Sally Rose for her years of faithful and generous service to the Society as Treasurer of the Annual Offering. We are pleased to welcome Rosemary Sullivan and give thanks for her willingness to serve in this capacity.

Carolyn, SSM and Adele Marie, SSM

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Sr. Carolyn has represented the community in various ways and places since Christmastide. She was in residence at St. Clement's in Honolulu, Hawaii along with Sr. Sarah from February 11 to the 19. She worked with the congregation, teaching them to sing Psalms, gave a retreat for the women of the parish, saw individuals for spiritual direction and worked with Brother Robert, OHC and Sr. Sarah in offerings on prayer.

She conducted the second annual weekend "Spirituality 102" for the Diocese of Rochester, NY from February 25 through 27, and preached at St. Paul's Church during Sunday services.

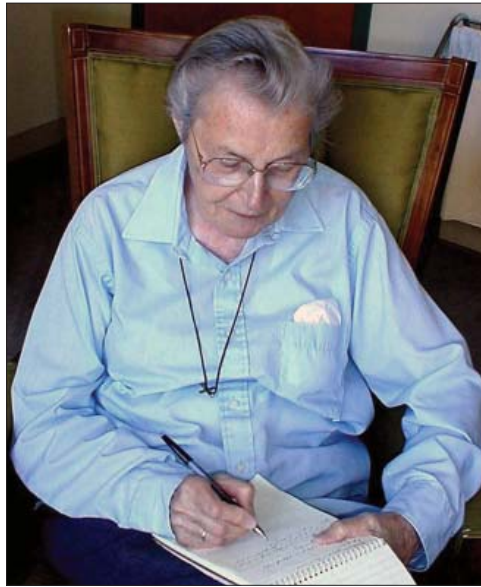
Sr. Carolyn was a guest preacher at the Memorial Church of Harvard on March 23, during their Holy Week observance. She spoke on prayer on March 9 at Christ Church in Quincy at the invitation of the WMBQ Consortium, a group of five parishes that participate in a program held each week during Lent.

She was in residence at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest from April 3 to the 7. She led a Quiet Day, preached at two services, gave classes on spirituality, and met with students and faculty.

Sr. Carolyn was one of four panelists for the second annual President's Symposium at Episcopal Divinity School on April 23. She joined the Very Reverend Dr. Paul F.M. Zahl, the Reverend Dr. Matthew Myer Boulton, and the Reverend Hal Obayashi in exploring the topic, "What is Salvation?"

She also led a Quiet Day on the life and death of Dietrich Bonhoeffer at the Boston Convent on May 9.

Sr. Adele Marie and Sr. Christine spoke on prayer at St. Andrew's Church, New Bedford, on February 20.



Sr. Mary Michael writing her meditations

Sr. Mary Michael has finished writing her meditations for July 2006 for Forward Day by Day. She is at present working on the Bible Reading Fellowship's Good News Daily, which is a bulletin insert that provides close to a thousand churches with daily devotional reflections on the week's Scripture readings. She is writing the meditations for the second week in Lent and for Proper 19 for next year. You can subscribe by contacting them at PO Box 380, Winter Park, Florida, 32709, 1-800-749-4331 or by going to their web site www.biblereading.org.

Sr. Marjorie Raphael was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree on May 19 by Episcopal Divinity School for her "offering of compassionate ministry and mission to and for women and children in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. From 1955 - 1963, and again from 1978-1994, Sister Marjorie Raphael served as Sister-in-Charge of the Convent and liaison for Holy Trinity Cathedral where a number of programs were started for women and children. Under her direction, the Convent also founded the Foyer Notre Dame, a home for aged, indigent women. In the wake of the devastation to this country in recent history, Sister Marjorie Raphael continues to act as a liaison for the Haitian House whose mission is to provide

adequate shelter, food, clothing, and medicine for people young and old left orphaned and homeless."

Sr. Sarah has developed a program that will show you how to make and pray with your own set of prayer beads. The morning is spent on the Anglican Rosary. In the afternoon, you have the opportunity to create your own personal prayer beads. The program includes the cost of all findings, fishing line, all beads for the Anglican Rosary, and ten beads towards the free form set. She has done this program as part of the Framingham State College retreat, held at SSJE; as an evening program for the women at Christ Church, Plymouth, on January 12; as a day long program for youth and adults at the Bertram Conference Center in Duxbury on February 26 and for the Junior High Youth Group at the Church of the Redeemer in Chestnut Hill on April 10. This program is also planned for the Boston Convent on Saturday October 22, 2005. Contact Sr. Sarah by phone or e-mail sarah@ssmbos.com if you would like further information or have questions. The suggested donation for the day is \$30. Luncheon is included. Please register for this event by October 15 so we can be sure that we have adequate supplies.



Sr. Sarah working on prayer beads

HAITI NEWS

I want to say thank you to all of you for your generosity. You have really expressed your love and concern for us. We do appreciate your kindness. You allowed us to preach the gospel by words and deeds. Because of your generosity we are able to reach out to the needs of the very young and the very old and the in between as much as we can humanly do.

Most of our sponsored children are doing well in school in spite of the political situation. They are very brave and the parents are very trusting. It was quiet for a little while although some areas are never quiet. Last night we heard a lot of shootings with heavy arms. Today while I was in the convent's yard, I had to run inside. It was scary. They stopped and repeated three times. Then it was quiet, so I came back to the Foyer. Please continue to pray for us. One never knows where one might be when they start shooting.

The elderly at Foyer Notre Dame fortunately are not aware how serious the situation is. They pray for peace every day and enjoy each other. Actually they are great at interceding for others. You are very much part of their daily prayers. We are still living at Foyer Notre Dame. Sr. Beatrice and I usually go to the convent during the day when possible and come back to FND early afternoon. We need to be there to be available to the people who need us, check our e-mail, send messages, do the laundry and some cleaning. It is very difficult going back and forth. It is also costly. We are still living camping style since the repair work at FND is not finished. But we are fortunate, a lot of people who are displaced like us do not have a place like the Foyer to go.

As you pray for us, we are praying for you and wishing you a good Lent and a Blessed and Joyful Easter.

Marie Margaret, SSM



Sr. Marjorie Raphael, Sr. Marie Therese (back row) Sr. Beatrice, Sr. Marie Margaret (front row)

ASSOCIATES VISITS

On March 1, 2005, I left Logan Airport in a snowstorm and on March 11, 2005, I returned to Logan Airport in a snowstorm. Does this describe our Massachusetts winter for 2005?

Flying south, I was anticipating some very spring like weather – in fact I was contemplating taking a summer habit. Well, the only warmth I found was in the wonderful hospitality of our Associates. The weather was more like New England!

I am very grateful to everyone who provided me with a bed. Without that these trips wouldn't be possible. I was able to visit with ten Associates in Virginia and seven in North Carolina. I was even able to introduce the Rev. Roger & Lydia Robillard to the Rev. Canon Charles & Judy Poindexter. Charlotte Partrick also accompanied me to the Charlotte suburb of Matthews to visit the Rev. Wes & Helen Konrad. I always feel very happy to introduce Associates who are in proximity to each other.

I was also able to speak about St. Margaret's and the religious life. I am thankful to the Rev. Dr. Howard Kempself, Jr., Edith Ristau, the Rev. Philip Byrum, and Millicent Chandler, who arranged for me to share with their par-

ishes. Little by little we are spreading the word about the religious life.

As I reflect on the warm hospitality that was shown to me everywhere, once again I thank God for all our Associates and for their generosity in offering me this opportunity to visit with them.

Ann, SSM

SR. MARJORIE RAPHAEL'S TRAVELS

On Thursday, February 17, Sr. Claire Marie and I boarded a plane for Lexington, Kentucky. The Diocese of Lexington has a companion relationship with the Diocese of Haiti. The Bishop of Haiti urged the Diocese of Kentucky to make the new Episcopal University of Haiti (UNEPH) the special focus of their partnership. We went to represent UNEPH (Sr. Marjorie Raphael is on the Board of Directors of UNEPH) and to sell Haitian crafts.

The sermon at the opening Eucharist was given by Nan Cobbey, Associate Editor of *Episcopal Life*. Nan was a volunteer journalist in Haiti for two years in the 1980's, working for the diocesan paper. At this gathering, she was invited to express her "passionate enthusiasm" for Haiti and the Haitian people. Her lively report on Haiti in *Episcopal Life* after the departure of former president Aristide no doubt will win her journalistic honors. Her sermon, which covered her own call to be a volunteer in Haiti, will inspire at least some Lexingtonians to heights of courage and participation in the work of the church there. Sr. Claire Marie's table of crafts was strategically placed and added color to the Exhibit Hall, while she added dollars to her shop money that goes to Haiti.

At the panel on Friday afternoon, Sr. Claire Marie told of the work of the Sisters in Haiti and of her call from God to be a Sister. She spoke of what St. Vincent's School for the Handicapped meant to her from the age of five, and

how she in turn wanted to give her life in service to others.

After reviewing the history of the Society of St. Margaret at St. Agnes House in Lexington from 1975 to 1992, I brought in a few words about the University. "Some will say, Haiti is desperate for food, water, sanitation, a roof over their heads. Isn't a University a luxury for them?" I countered, "Is it a luxury for you? In today's world, credible education is a must for the future. The Internet has arrived there also. Haiti must compete to keep alive. The Church must cherish the energy and intelligence of young minds and give them hope and guidance."

A visit to St. Agnes House was a high point for us. We left Lexington grateful for the privilege of sharing with them these two days of their life as a Diocese.

From Wednesday, April 27 to Friday April 29, Sister Beatrice and I participated in the annual meeting of Episcopal Partnership for Global Mission held at the Redemptorist Retreat Center in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. The Standing Committee on World Mission overlapped with this meeting (April 28th to May 1st), a coinciding in the same place that purposefully happens every third year, allowing for a rich sharing between the National Church and the voluntary agencies. The book prepared in 2003 by the Standing Committee, "Companions in Transformation," was a powerful catalyst in raising the question, "Who gets transformed?" Both, of course. The whole group was divided into two to study in some depth the tsunami crisis and the AIDs crisis, looking at what has been done and what can be done.

Almost directly following this meeting was a gathering of "Haiti Connection" in Miami Beach, Florida, from May 1 to 3. This network is made up of persons from parishes and dioceses



The Haitian Flag

in USA that link with parishes and institutions in Haiti in order to, together, build a better life for the Haitian people through the faith of the church. The "Haiti Connection" aims to eliminate duplication and to encourage the sharing of good ideas and achievements. Sister Marie Margaret and I participated in this meeting.

Of the 150+ participants, more than twenty five were from Haiti, both clergy and leading lay people. All felt that the greatest benefit of any enterprise is the friendships formed, that relationship is the pearl of great price. The energy, enthusiasm, and relatedness of those present was palpable, and seemed to open a new door of hope in a land plagued with fear, hunger, natural and political disaster, and ecological catastrophe. Partner's witnessed to having their lives changed and turned around when they visited Haiti, usually in a rural parish outside the war-torn capital. The Haitians cope with hunger, paucity of water, and of electricity, etc. all with a vibrant trust in a God who cares and loves. Haiti is rich in ways that America is poor.

A new birthing house is saving lives of mothers and babies by providing better care in an area far from a hospital; a new business school will lead young men and women to self-support; and a new four year nursing school will give a nursing degree recognized at home and abroad.

Many of our Associates, American and Haitian, were among the participants.

We were very much at one with the mission energy, very much in keeping with our mission statement, "Seeking to find Jesus present in prayer, in worship, in the common life, and in ministries which concentrate on responding to the needs of the time." This could well have served as the mission statement of the "Haiti Connection".

Marjorie Raphael, SSM

SR VIRGINIA MARGARET, S.S.M. JAN. 12, 1907 - APRIL 20, 2005

Sister Virginia Margaret (nee Virginia Brown) was born on January 12, 1907 in Oklahoma City. She was an only child and moved to Texas when she was twelve years old. Her father worked in New York City as well. When she was very young her father made a trip to New York and contracted influenza and died. Not only was there bereavement, but also the fact that he was robbed of all his papers and money. His widow and young daughter were left literally penniless. They moved in with a relative temporarily until her mother could go back to school for a marketable skill, and then she educated her daughter in fields of her choice, education, language (English and Spanish) and social work.

Virginia's interest in the marginalized led her to work in New York City doing social work among African Americans in an Episcopal church known for its effective program. Through this contact she felt called to move from the Methodist Church of her childhood to Confirmation in the Episcopal Church. This, and her interest in and identifying with the suffering and the marginalized, led her to find God calling her to the Religious Life in the Society of St. Margaret. She was received into the Society on December 19, 1947 and made her life vows on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1952. Still, as a Novice, she would occasionally say,

"In our Methodist Missions we do thus and so"! Ecumenism at its best!

She lived a long (98 years) and fruitful life despite persistent poor health. She spent many years in Haiti where she was in charge of Foyer Notre Dame, our home for indigent and aged persons, at that time, all women. Her love and meticulous concern for their every need, and her arranging for parties and outings for the ladies, gave full expression to her deep and gentle love of others and her ability to enter into cross-cultural living.



Sr. Virginia in Haiti

She was particularly insightful in participating in the annual "Live-In" week at Kenscoff, Haiti, where young women inquiring about entering the Society of St. Margaret in Haiti could learn and experience something of that life.

Her gift of language, beautiful English, accomplished Spanish, and years of speaking and translating into French and into Creole made her a valuable liturgist in the daily reciting of Psalms and singing of hymns. In her later years, in Utica, N.Y., she was useful in translating in court cases involving Haitian migrant workers and in public schools where newly arrived Haitian children

and parents needed to be understood. In May of 1999, she entered the Lutheran Home in Clinton, NY, where she was provided with exceptional care by the compassionate staff.

Sister Virginia never forgot that she was a Texan, and she never forgot that Christian and Religious Life is defined by the quality of love of Jesus and love of neighbor. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Marjorie Raphael, SSM

PATHWAYS TO MINISTRY

In mid-April I had the privilege of taking part in the Pathways to Ministry program sponsored by the St. Michael and All Angels parish in Dallas. Br. Curtis and Br. Kevin from SSJE were the keynote speakers, and they, along with several priests and me, gave presentations and helped facilitate discussion among high school students interested in ordained ministry. The students were interesting, serious about discerning their vocation in the church, and generally a lot of fun, too. Along with the serious discussions, I had the opportunity to relearn the bunny hop (who knew those awful white-gloved junior high dance lessons would come in handy?) and to play noodle hockey (think field hockey on a basketball court with a ball and Styro-foam noodles).

The Pathways to Ministry program seeks to address the current problem of an aging clergy population in the Episcopal Church. We are heavy on older priests as a result of declining numbers of ordinations and on the increased average age at ordination (47 in 2003). Of 6100 active parish priests, only 460 are under 40, and only 71 are under 30. (Source: The State of the Clergy 2003, Church Pension Group, July 2003, cited in "The Case for Young Vocations and Pathways to Ministry") Given that there are more retirements than ordi-

nations, the problem will only grow. Furthermore, the church needs young clergy to light the fires to keep it alive, to ask the hard questions each new generation poses, and to address its issues. A truly healthy church is multi-generational. We need young people to come forward, and we need to encourage parishes to recognize younger vocations to ordained ministry and to the religious life as well.

The conference is three days of students reflecting together. There are workshops on discernment, pastoral care, chaplaincy, parish priesthood, college and seminary, and life as a young priest. We also had a panel discussion called "Burning Questions" in which we addressed anonymous questions from the students.

They also have a six week summer parish immersion internship for college juniors and seniors and a ten month internship for recent college graduates. Internships include a curriculum on ministry, meetings with a parish committee, and individual projects. Pathways also offers program alumni follow-up assistance with the discernment process and financial aid.

If you know any young people who might be interested in any of these programs, please do get them and their parish priest further information. It could make a big difference both to them and to the future of our church. For additional information about the Pathways to Ministry program, please contact:

Richard Todd Foster
 Director of Pathways to Ministry
 Saint Michael and All Angels
 8011 Douglas Avenue
 Dallas, TX 75225
 (214) 363-5471 ext. 267
 tfoster@saintmichael.org
 www.saintmichael.org/pathways.

Sarah, SSM

AN INVITATION TO EXPLORE: OCTOBER 7 - 9, 2005

The Sisters of St. Margaret will once again be offering a weekend for inquirers to come and experience our life and work. The weekend last year was well attended and a great success. This will be a great opportunity for anyone interested in learning more about the religious life to come and be our guest, to explore what our life is really like and to be able to ask questions, to visit with the sisters, and to see us "in action" - at work, at play, in prayer and in worship.

If you are a woman, lay or ordained, looking for a community in which to live out your faith in an intensive way, and are between the ages of 21 and 45, we invite you to join us for this fun and informative event. The weekend is offered at no cost and includes room and board. Guests are responsible for their own transportation to and from the convent. Space is limited, so apply now. For more information and an application, visit our web site www.ssmbos.com, or e-mail us at info@ssmbos.com or call us at 617-445-8961. We look forward to meeting you!!

OUR SISTERS IN NURSING HOMES

Sr. Rosemary can be contacted at:
Sr. Rosemary Benchley, SSM
Katherine Luther Home
108 Utica Road
Clinton, NY 13323-1548

Sr. Joan can be contacted at:
Sr. Joan Margaret, SSM
(Elizabeth Burke)
Sherrill House
135 South Huntington
Boston MA 02130

The Society of St. Margaret

St. Margaret's House
47 Jordan Road
New Hartford NY 13413-1211
(315) 724 - 2324
E-mail: SsmsistersCNY@aol.com
Website: www.ssmcn.org

St. Margaret's Convent
17 Highland Park Street
Boston MA 02119-1436
(617) 445 - 8961
E-mail: ssmconvent@ssmbos.com

St. Margaret's Convent
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Telephone: 011+509+222+2011
E-mail: marieyvettessm@starband.net

Neale House
50 Fulton Street
New York NY 10038-1800
(212) 619 - 2672
E-mail : Sisters@trinitywallstreet.org

St. Margaret's, South Duxbury
71 Washington Street
P. O. Box C
Duxbury MA 02331-0605
(781) 934 - 9477

MailingAddress:
St. Margaret's Convent, P-au-P
c/o Agape Flights
7990 15th Street East
Sarasota FL 34243

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