

Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
Province of USA & Canada

Connections

It's a Fact!

Sister Ena Maguire

It's a fact! The Clunys in North America are aging! Does that mean it's time to line up the rocking chairs? Not exactly! Cluny Connections has been checking in on a few retired Sisters just to prove it. Many of you will remember Sister Ena Maguire who served as founding principal of Cluny School on the east coast and, for many years, of Sts. Peter and Paul School on the west coast. What do you do when you no longer manage a school? Sister Ena writes:

As I move through this ninth decade of life I am most grateful to be healthy and active. I see myself now in a support role rather than a shaker and mover and it is very good. The pace is slower. There is time to BE without having to watch the clock. I am a regular visitor to our parish Perpetual Adoration chapel.

When I retired from education I became involved in Saint Mary's Foundation, a small non-profit group, founded in Wilmington by Dr. and Mrs. Nabil El Sayad in 1998. (www.saintmarysfoundation.org) We support several local groups who work with the poor, especially families.

In 2004 we entered upon a collaborative relationship with Tzu Chi Buddhist Foundation of Taiwan (www.us.tzuchi.org). I was privileged to spend a week in Hualein, Taiwan, meeting Master Cheng Yen, founder of this group, who believes that love, compassion and kindness can change the world.

Saint Mary's biggest project is in Tijuana, state of Baja California, Mexico (about 130 miles from LA). Because the needs of the poor there are so great, we built a center in 2007 to provide day care to poor, abandoned senior citizens. Volunteers give them showers, clean clothes, nourishing food, physical therapy and it is an opportunity for



Sister Ena at Misión San Pablo, an orphanage for street children in Guadalajara.

socialization. Since we began this work there is an incredible improvement in their quality of life and their physical well-being. About 100 seniors attend the center.

Medical care for the poor is almost non-existent in Mexico. So St. Mary's outfitted an old ambulance to be a mobile medical unit. Regularly, an Outreach Health Fair is planned for Rosarito, Salvatierra and other adjacent communities. Doctors, employed and volunteer, nurses and helpers are on hand to organize and help the hundreds of people who come. Medications are supplied by St. Mary's. This is the only time many people see a doctor. Professionals from our local Southern California area often volunteer for these Outreach Programs.

The Foundation also assists a home for the abandoned elderly in Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. Franciscan Sisters run this home for about 70 seniors. They are truly grateful to

In this Issue

It's a Fact!

From the Editor's Desk

Coming soon
Cluny Facebook Page

Provincials Meet in Paris

In Memoriam
Sisters Elizabeth Butler and
Gisèle Ménos
Associate Terry Clay

Cluny Around the World
Cluny Down Under
New Zealand Province

Continued on Page 6



Cluny Connections
is a publication of the
Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
Province of USA & Canada

Editor: Regina Brunelle, SJC
lpbrunelle@gmail.com
St. Joseph Convent
126 Aberdeen Avenue
Hamilton, ON L8P 2P2 CANADA
Phone: (289) 389-8534

Layout: Marie Cooper, SJC
clunymarie@gmail.com
857 North Avenue West
Westfield, NJ 07090
Phone: (908) 728-0090

Relocating?
Want to subscribe a friend to
Cluny Connections?

Please use the form below (right)
Just send back your label from this
issue with your new address
attached to:

Cluny Connections
7 Restmere Terrace
Middletown, RI 02842
USA

Reminder: to receive *Cluny Connections*
via Email or to add a friend to the list,
please send name and address to:
clunydevelopment@hotmail.com
Thank you.

Coming Soon!



on Facebook
in
2012

From the Editor's Desk

Though somewhat belatedly, we wish you a happy and graced 2012. We are blessed to count you among our friends and benefactors. Thank you for your faithful support and encouragement.

Cluny Connections travels "down under" in this issue for news of our New Zealand province, so diverse both geographically and from the point of view of ministry. In her article on the meeting of Provincials in Paris, Sister Joan offers an update on the Congregation's Chapter 2012 preparations. Sister Ena's sharing of her life as a 'retired' Cluny is proof that aging has nothing to do with a rocking chair. Jane O'Friel's sharing of her experience of the Cluny charism through Associate membership seems to reflect that of many other members. In remembering our Sisters Elizabeth Butler and Gisèle Ménos and Associate

Terry Clay, we give thanks for their lives and invite you to do the same.

Just as this issue is going to press, we learned that Cluny friends in Trinidad had a successful fund raiser for the rebuilding of La Madeleine, a Cluny orphanage in Haiti totally destroyed by the 2010 earthquake. But the project faces two problems: the fact that the orphanage can't be rebuilt on the original spot because it is directly on the fault line and there isn't enough space on property the Sisters do own to build it on. So far, any land with a clear title found is outside the city. This presents a security problem for both children and sisters. It is said that when God closes a door She opens a window! So please beg for that window to open soon!

Happy reading!

Sister Regina Brunelle



Sister Ena at Misión San Pablo with a group of children. "Here is the church and here is the steeple. Look inside and see all the people!"

Address Change

Change __ Correct __ Add __ Remove __

Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State/Prov./Postal Code _____
Country _____
Email _____

Please email to:

clunydevelopment@hotmail.com

or send to:

Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny PO Box 66 Newport RI 02840-0066

Check/Credit Card Gift

Credit Card donation:

We invite you to donate through our secure web site donation page at:
www.clunyusandcanada.org/pages/share_donate.html

Donation by check:

Please make check payable to:
Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny

and send to:

Provincials Meet in Paris

Sister Joan Van der Zyden

Twelve Provincial Superiors from the Provinces of France/Switzerland, Spain, Ireland and Great Britain, Portugal, Reunion, West Indies, Antilles/Guyana, Seychelles/Tanzania, the South Pacific, Brazil, St. Pierre and Miquelon, and USA and Canada, along with the Generalate leadership team, met at the Mother House in Paris from September 22 to September 29. The common threads bringing these Provincials together are the issues of diminishing numbers, an aging membership and a lack of vocations. While each of these areas of the congregation is at a very different point along the continuum of diminishment, the lack of vocations in each area speaks to the need for future planning.

While the group was together, we looked at the signs of the times in our society, the church and the congregation.

We reflected on the reality of being an international missionary congregation with vocations in some areas of the congregation but not in other areas. What does it all mean for us as we move into the future discerning the Will of God and responding to the mission of Jesus?

Representing only part of the congregation, the group sent proposals to the General Chapter that will take place in the spring of 2012. The proposals invited the congregation as a whole to look at this topic as it will inevitably affect the whole congregation. The group also reiterated both love and concern for our elderly sisters as they make their final missionary journey. It was a week well spent. It called each of us to be women of faith as we live the mystery that is unfolding in both our daily lives and in our unseen future.



Provincials: Sisters Tia Ah Sam (Pacific) and Veronique Joseph (Antilles/Guyanna)

Cluny Charism Lives in Associates

American Associate Jane O’Friel

While embarking on a journey to support families and caregivers of people with disabilities, I was introduced to Sister Eugenia Brady. She was recommended to me as someone who might be willing to partner in developing a reflection day. With this introduction to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, I knew in my heart, my mind and my soul that I was connected to this religious order for another reason.

I was astonished to hear that the name of the Founder was Blessed Anne Marie Javouhey, as Ann Marie is my middle name. After reading *The Woman God Loved* by Glenn D. Kittler, I became more in touch with the charism of Blessed Anne Marie. Nearly ten years have passed since this first introduction. Since then, my spiritual life has been enriched by an ever deepening connection with the community. This December will be my seventh anniversary as an Associate and I am as enthusiastic as ever in a very special way. During this time I have been able to relate to Blessed Anne Marie in every aspect of my life.

While supporting Catholic and Religious Education for persons with Disabilities; raising two sons, Zachary 18 and Mark 16; supporting a husband through life’s challenges and sustaining a career in nursing actively, I was participating in Associate meetings and getting to know the Sisters locally and nationally. These many personal encounters have brought me to the forefront as a risk taker, following in the footsteps of Blessed Anne Marie in the present day. Associate membership has enhanced my spiritual life and deepened my relationship with God as I grew in my understanding of what it means to submit to the Holy Will of God.

My most recent experience has been living through the days surrounding the death of my husband, Brian. Where I had always been able to ‘resurrect’ him from his health challenges, this time the word resurrection took on a different meaning, one in which God was completely in the driver’s seat. Feeling helpless, I am still groping with this sudden loss, but I look to Blessed

Anne Marie as my guide and the source of my strength, courage and vision for yet another chapter in the life of Jane Ann Marie. I have been touched by the support and prayers of the Cluny community. This sense of community is invaluable and creates a unique relationship which encourages spiritual growth.

It is impossible to describe all the ways in which the Cluny charism has enriched my life. I strongly encourage others who have been thinking of embarking on this journey to join the network of Associates. Where there is openness and love, the Holy Will of God works in the most amazing ways! The Spirit of Blessed Anne Marie lives on, not only through the Sisters but also through the Associates and Affiliates of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny.

*My confidence in God
is my entire fortune;
do the same and you will have peace.*

(A. M. Javouhey, Letter No. 860, January 6, 1850)

In Memoriam



Sister Gisèle Ménos

As a student at St. Rose secondary school in Port au Prince, Haiti, Sister Gisèle knew Cluny well. When the time came to make a choice of how to spend her life, it seemed natural to her to join the congregation. As a Cluny, she served not only in Haiti, but also in California, France and Rhode Island for over 50 years. She had a great love of scripture, enjoying her studies at Providence College where she earned a Masters Degree.

Sister Gisèle was highly organized, and brought that gift to whatever she undertook. For many years, she was the Catechetical Leader at the parish of St. Peter's in Warwick, RI where she instituted a home-based program. Those who knew her said that it was the best program in the diocese.

During the 1990's she gathered a group of women to explore the life of our founder, Blessed Anne Marie, and one of them soon became a Cluny Associate.

But it was not "all work and no play" for Gisèle: she loved to be with people and she loved to party. She had a loud, infectious laugh that could be heard all around the house. Over the years, she kept in touch with many former students and their families dating back to her years at Cluny School in Newport, RI in the 1960s. Retired from full time ministry, she returned to Cluny where she made new friends. When illness restricted her mobility, she moved to Franklin Court Assisted Living Facility in Bristol, RI, where she was happy to reconnect with many of the Mercy Sisters she had known during her active years.

Her kindness and interest in those she touched over the years was demonstrated by the presence of so many at her wake and funeral and by their testimonies.

We miss our scripture scholar, our organizer, and fun-loving sister.



Sister Elizabeth Butler

August 1958. Newly professed, Sister Elizabeth Butler set out with all the missionary enthusiasm of the neophyte for North America. Her first assignment was Grade 2 at St. Joseph's Elementary School in Hamilton, Ontario. Her tiny stature and infectious giggle fitted in well with her young students!

Cluny School, Newport, RI., welcomed her in 1966. Again, she put her teaching skills to good use in the primary grades, her forte. Students remember her as a strict, but very good teacher. One mother insists that if her daughter's handwriting is at all legible today, it's thanks to Sister Elizabeth! She enjoyed the children, often sharing amusing stories about their antics with the community.

Health issues forced her to abandon teaching in 1978. Transferred to Providence, RI she ministered at St. Margaret's Home for Elderly Women, the Cathedral Rectory and St. John's Convent respectively until called to California in 1984. She discovered there the climate of her dreams! She loved the sunshine and her health decidedly improved.

For the last twenty-five years of her life Sister Elizabeth lived and worked in Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Wilmington. The elementary school, the parish religious education program and the community all benefited from her presence. At our Wilmington outreach center, Sister Elizabeth assisted with the banking, the distribution of food, and with the mobile dental clinic.

Everyday she did her "rounds" to the post office, bank, pharmacy and any interesting store in between. The Sisters always consulted her when they needed to buy something unusual and she rarely failed to locate what was wanted! People



Associate Terry Clay

On August 18, 2011 WV Cluny Associate Theresa Majsinger Clay was born to Eternal Life. Diagnosed with leukemia in July 2009, she courageously faced the ups and downs of treatment following a bone marrow transplant received at Ruby Memorial Hospital in Morgantown, WV in March the following year.

Terry was the kind of person born to lead and lead she did as a teacher-librarian, a Black Diamond Girl Scout Troop leader, President of St. Barbara Parish Council in Chapmanville, WV, the Diocesan Council and as a WV Cluny Associate where her skills as a librarian came in useful for her meticulous preparatory research for Associate meetings.

Radiating life and joy, she brought both into the lives of all she touched. Terry loved life and fun and travel.

She was a talented seamstress, a creative cross-stitcher and a great organizer. But perhaps what characterizes her best is her dedication and self-forgetfulness that enabled her to gather a community whether at school, Scouts or church. This was the essence of the quiet spirituality that so strongly influenced all she met. Her going has left an empty space in every sphere of her activity that will be very difficult to fill, but now new possibilities for life and exploration are open to her and for that, those who loved her praise the Lord!

Sister Elizabeth (Continued)

who got to know her as she walked along briskly called her "Sister Smiley" and saw her as a cheerful, happy person.

Her final illness came upon her quite suddenly. On Sunday, October 2, 2011, the angels took her Home. We miss her smiling presence!



Cluny Down Under Province of New Zealand

Sister Allison Macalister
Province Leader



A Southern Luzon family at home

The New Zealand Province consists of 37 sisters spread out over four different countries: Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Cook Islands and the Philippines. In all these countries our main thrust of apostolate has been education at all levels. We are still very involved in this important aspect of life as it is a vital need in the developing countries of the Pacific and Asia. However, we have also addressed specific needs in two countries.

Fiji

Our newest mission is in a rural area of Fiji known as Vanuakula. This is a very poor mission station where education is a struggle and the people live at the subsistence level. We accepted to be a presence here in 2004. Three sisters began the mission in a simple village house and began to observe the needs. It was soon evident that we should do something to help the education of the young and offer something to the women of the village. Today we have a Kindergarten run by local women and Sister Katarina Naivevu overseeing the whole project. To date she has managed to find funds to equip

the Kindergarten with qualified teachers from the village. Presently, there is need to educate more teachers and work towards building a proper building for the Kindergarten.

Another sister, Sister Alicia Mapa, has set up a sewing centre in the basement of the convent. She is teaching basic sewing skills to interested women to help them become self-sufficient. Her aim is to help the women learn how to make different things that can be sold in the local market.

Philippines

The Philippines Mission was opened in 1994 and was administered by the Generalate. In 1999 our Province was asked to take the responsibility of this mission and the Philippines was incorporated into the Province on January 1, 2000. Our main thrust here has been to upgrade the schools put in our charge. To date all three schools we are managing are fully renewed and equipped through the hard work of the Sisters and the generosity of many donors.

We work in the poorest Diocese of Pangasinan in Southern Luzon. There is great poverty in all forms in the places

where we work. For this reason we have set up several projects. We have two building projects called 'Anne Marie House of Hope' and 'Anne Marie Dwellings' respectively. The first is an attempt to provide a room for students who are either orphans or from destitute homes to have a place to stay while studying under scholarship in our schools.

The second is providing housing for destitute families. To date we have managed to do this for four families. A third project is a scholarship fund that enables orphans and poor children to have an education.

Other outreaches include Livelihood Projects that provide an income for families. To date we have established a self-earning sewing centre; a bakery; and several tricycles that are used as taxis.

All these projects rely on grants and donations that the Sisters receive. We are most grateful to all those generous people who support us in our mission and assure you that you are in our prayers daily. Anne Marie's Spirit is alive in these mission fields and we pray that our "little good" will help people to grow in dignity and love of God.



Sister Alicia's sewing class.



Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
7 Restmere Terrace
Middletown, RI 02842

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Newport RI 02840
Permit No. 170



Bringing Hope & Compassion

It's a Fact (Continued)

St. Mary's Foundation for its ongoing support, and especially for outfitting a state-of-the-art physical therapy room so vital to the well-being of the residents.

Guadalajara, in the state of Jalisco, has two major works which the St. Mary's Foundation also supports: Asilo San Vicente and Misión San Pablo. The first is a home for the elderly run by the Carmelite Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the second is an orphanage for street children (ages 5-15) run by Sisters of the Resurrected Christ. They were caring for 43 boys and 9 girls on our last visit in June, 2011. I am happy to be a little part of the good work facilitated by the St. Mary's Foundation.

At home in our San Pedro convent, I keep an eye on the larder and venture forth into the world of supermarkets to replenish it. This is a new experience for me, which has involved using a credit card. For years, I had resisted owning a credit card. I did not want that responsibility! What if I lost it? So, the first time I planned to use the card for food shopping, I brought along enough cash just in case. At the check-out I nervously swiped my card. The screen read, "Not approved." The checker said something about 'membership' but I did not really hear her. I assured her not to worry that I had brought cash along for just such a problem, so she sweetly took the cash and I left totally anchored in my distrust of credit cards. What was my embarrassment when, once home, I discovered I had been using my AAA membership card and not the credit card! Since then, I have come a long way, but I'm still very careful of that card!

Serving as a Eucharist Minister to the home bound and at Providence Little Company of Mary Hospital is another privilege I treasure. I enjoy visiting my home bound friends every week. San Pedro was a very active fishing village for centuries. A huge commercial fleet was docked here and I love hearing stories of those days from Croatians, Italians and Sicilians. The boats were frequently gone for a month or even two and returned to San Pedro to supply a thriving canning industry on Terminal Island. When I came to Wilmington in 1951 these companies employed hundreds of local people who commuted by ferry to Rattlesnake Island (TI's old name) to work in the canneries. These ferries are all gone now. Two huge bridges connect San Pedro, Terminal Island and Long Beach.

At the hospital, I see the gamut of life - from newborn babies to critical care patients and all the stages in between. Psalm 139 often comes to mind: "You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works!" When I observe the loving care of the staff and the marvels of modern medical technology I am confirmed in my belief that there are great numbers of good and intelligent people in our world in spite of the evil we see around us. Not least among the sick I see weekly are our own Cluny Sisters, Brigid and Laetitia, who are residents in our nearby Little Sisters of the Poor Home. We spent many of our active years together. I am happy to be with them down the home stretch.

So, I suppose it would be true to say I am 'actively retired.' As long as I am able, I hope to keep going and do whatever good I can.

Please remember the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in your will. Thank you.