

May, 2014

Haiti Missions Lenten Project



You may recall that during Lent you were invited to make a donation to the Sisters of St. Joseph who would be sending the money to support 10 Haitian girls from primary through secondary school at Annunciation School in Haiti. The Sisters of St. Joseph are thankful to so many people who sent in donations for the Haiti Lenten Project. A check for \$2,123.25 was sent today. The Sisters wish to

express their gratitude especially to St. Michael School in Fernandina and St. Pius V Catholic School in Jacksonville for the generous collections that came from their schools.

“Hats On” Day!

St. James Catholic School, Miami, under the leadership of Sisters Stephanie Flynn and Kathleen Carr, held a special fundraising event for Jeremiah, one of their students who has leukemia. He has been in the hospital since February. His mother has never left his side. He is in need of a bone marrow transplant. St. James School declared a “Hats On” Day. The students gave donations for Jeremiah and were encouraged to wear a hat, since Jeremiah had lost his hair. At their special



Mass for Jeremiah, the scripture quote from the book of Jeremiah was read. That same day the students gathered in the school courtyard to FaceTime Jeremiah in the hospital, allowing him to see and hear them cheering him on. The school raised over \$6,000 in one week. Much interest and concern has been raised for this sick child and his poor mother. Donations continue. If you wish to assist, the school address is 601 NW 131 St., Miami, FL 33168.

Mission

*Seized by God's love, we work in collaboration with others to bring union and reconciliation to our world,
“That all may be one.” Jn. 17:21*

SSJ Exemplary Service

Berta Cabrera, Executive Director of SSJ Mercy Health Foundation, was recognized by the Cuban Woman's Club with the 2014 Floridana Award given to "women who have demonstrated exemplary service to the community."



Berta's words to the Sisters were, "It is an honor to let you know that the work we are doing in the community is being noticed and acknowledged."

You may also recall that at Easter time the Foundation board members put together 100 bags of needed items for the poor in St. John Bosco Parish, Miami. Berta received a Thank You note in which the Director of Religious Education states, "I am well aware that preparing such a big donation takes time, effort, and a huge amount of love and care for God and the poor."



Berta Cabrera

The Sisters of St. Joseph are grateful to have such generous and caring partners with whom to work!

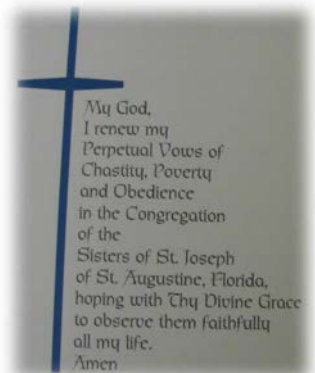
Just last week, good news came when Senator Rene Garcia called Berta to say that the State legislature approved a major appropriation for St. John Bosco Clinic. This gift would allow the clinic to keep the nurse practitioner hired to not only meet their capacity but to expand it!

Gratitude for the Journey



S. Cathy Bitzer and S. Carolyn

Sister Carolyn Tucker was unable to be present during the celebration of her Jubilee last October. It took 50 years to get to that special highlight in her religious life, and she was sick! But not forgotten....A special "surprise" awaited Sister the day after the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. The Motherhouse Sisters invited Sister to supper where her celebration would finally take place. A few friends, balloons, a Jubilee cake, and a memorable powerpoint presentation took Sister on her journey over the past 50 years of her religious life, remembering the rocky as well as the elated moments...with Gratitude for the Journey.



As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. John F. Kennedy

Volunteering — a Contemplative activity

The SSJ Volunteer luncheon, spearheaded by Jeanette Ghioto, Director of SSJ Mission Advancement, was held on May 1st, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. The Sisters continue to have volunteers that assist on a regular basis at the O'Reilly House Museum, the Archives, and Our Lady of Lourdes Convent. Volunteers also assist with maintenance needs and beautify the grounds. They also donate time and materials and assist in several administrative capacities. While we have more than fifty regular volunteers, not all were able to attend.

After a lovely luncheon, the volunteers gathered in the Motherhouse chapel for a special blessing and gift offered in the context of a Prayer to St. Joseph, prepared by Sister Carolyn Tucker.



Associates during prayer

Sister Jane reminded the group, "It is a good feeling when you can go home at the end of a work day with a pay check; it is necessary for on-going care and security.

But there is a feeling quite different, freeing and even contemplative about offering the gift of self freely, with no expectations of a financial return. From this activity comes a generous heart; good, kind and loving. There is simply a desire to assist and serve others, and in serving others we serve Christ himself."

SSJ Associate Gathering

The SSJ Associates, presently under the direction of Sisters Marie Therese and Barbara Cekosh, gathered for a Re-Commitment and Initial Commitment Day on April 26th at the Motherhouse. Approximately forty-five Associates gathered from several parts of the state to make their re-commitments and be present for the initial commitment of new SSJ Associate, Janice Snyder. Janice lives in Vero Beach and travels to Palm Beach for the monthly Associate gatherings. Her contemplative art was part of her journey that led her to the Sisters of St. Joseph.



Janice Snyder with her art work



Cynthia Sharpe, Janice, S. Florence Bryan



Associates and Sisters in dialogue

“The Spanish Missions” by Sister Christopher Marie, SSJ

“The Freezes”

When a migrant child says, “Yo tengo frio!” it isn’t just until he comes inside, into a warmed house or classroom. How does one gather the students for a class when a freeze has occurred, with the resulting lack of work for their family members and scant food to eat or clothing to keep warm?



The focus is on the feeding of the hungry, the clothing of the naked. The wagon is packed, scarcely leaving room for the team as it is readied for steps to disburse food, sweaters, and, yes, shoes! A fit is obtained for the latter by picking up the younger child, seating him/her on the wagon’s tailgate and trying on the shoes. The older children made their own selections. It was a blessed day when all could be fitted.

Government Food Supplies Programs initiated a procedure to make its foodstuffs available to the migrant farmworker during freezes if it could be attested by the farmer or by the jefe contracting with the farmer that the workers were in the area during/following the freeze. If the worker left the area in search of a job, leaving the family behind, they were ineligible. Friends provided either food or wherewithal for purchases to the team for distribution of food.

Quick distribution was essential and direct, given the circumstances. More subtle methods were employed to recognize more fully the dignity of the individual whenever possible, but either way, the people knew it was given in love to meet needs.

Help abounded as awareness grew in the public sector for our brothers and sisters in Christ who performed backbreaking tasks for the fresh vegetables easily available at the local food markets. There was no freezing of hearts! *To be continued in July with “The Christmas Parties and the White Bow”*

St. Michael’s School, Fernandina Beach



S. Josephine and S. Jane with students

Sisters Jane and Josephine Marie wish to express their gratitude for the opportunity to visit, to meet the children, and to receive a very special tour of St. Michael School in Fernandina Beach. The school has preserved the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph to the fullest! The staff and beautifully behaved students know that the history of their school is truly the history of the Sisters. The Sisters of St. Joseph continue to “be present” in the staff, the students and the single school culture that radiates in each person associated with the school.

Before leaving Fernandina, the Sisters visited the grave sites of the nineteen Sisters buried at Bosque Bello Cemetery. Sisters Celinie and Marie de Sales, who died ministering to the yellow fever victims, were among them. Prayers were offered.