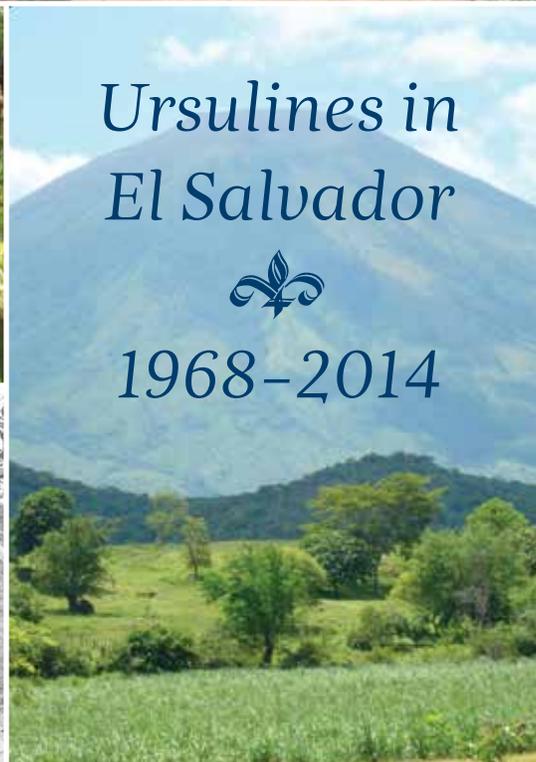




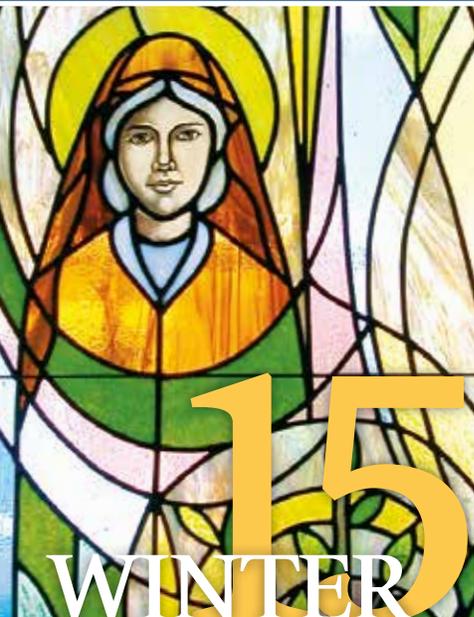
URSULINE SISTERS News

CONTEMPLATION ✦ JUSTICE ✦ COMPASSION



*Ursulines in
El Salvador
✦
1968-2014*





Celebrating missionary service in Salvador



*First Ursuline missionaries Sisters
Janet Kearns and Alice Brickman*

The Cleveland Latin American Mission team recently marked its 50th anniversary in El Salvador. For 46 of those years, from 1968 until this past July, the Cleveland Ursulines were a continuous missionary presence there. This issue of *Ursuline Sisters News* pays tribute to those women and to the enduring bond they forged with the Salvadoran people. Within these pages they share pieces of their journeys through recollections and reflections. While all have pursued other calls, some beyond the congregation, all agree this singular experience has bonded them forever to each other, to the Ursuline community and to the people of El Salvador.

But how did this 46-year history come to be? Responding to the call of Pope John XXIII to missionary work, the Cleveland Diocese established a presence in El Salvador in 1964 with a few diocesan priests, followed by three Dominican sisters. At the request of Archbishop Edward F. Hoban, then general superior Sister Annunciata Witz promised two Ursulines for service.

Sisters Alice Brickman and Janet Kearns were chosen from more than 60 interested sisters. In January 1968 the pair learned they had been selected. They spent the next few months beginning Spanish study with Sister Veronica Cipar, then in Mexico learning the Latin culture. Finally, on December 3, 1968, the pair arrived in La Union, El Salvador. And the Ursuline missionary presence was inaugurated.

Throughout the ensuing years 12 Ursulines would follow in their footsteps. These included Sisters Martha Owen, Dorothy Kazel, Therese Mary Osborne, Maria Berlec, Ruth Urbanski, Catherine Ann DeVito, Geraldine Hable, Sheila Marie Tobbe, Roberta Goebel, Lisa Marie Belz, Mary Lou Tadsen, and Rose Elizabeth Terrell. With their lay and religious teammates they lived in La Union, Chirilagua, La Libertad, Zaragoza and Chiltiupan, taught reading and writing, planned liturgies, directed choirs, prepared children and adults for reception of the sacraments, trained catechists and ministered to the sick and dying.

The Ursulines' service in El Salvador was a blessed time. The sisters hold joyous memories of El Salvador and her people. Likewise, they carry the tears of the Salvadoran people's suffering, and of the events of December 2, 1980, when Sister Dorothy Kazel, teammate Jean Dononvan, and Maryknoll Sisters Ita Ford and Maura Clarke were brutally killed by Salvadoran national guardsmen.

The deaths of the churchwomen, like the deaths of Archbishop Oscar Romero months before and the six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter years later, were heart-wrenching blows, but they served to strengthen the bond between the missionaries and the Salvadoran people. All had suffered the pain of death and loss during a brutal and bloody civil war.

While the return of Sister Rose Elizabeth likely signals the end of the Ursulines' presence in Central America, there can be no doubt that their mission — God's mission for them — has been achieved. Through each of these 14 women, God's love and goodness touched the Salvadoran people, and through these people of remarkable faith and joy, the missionaries have been changed forever. All bear the heartprint of a sacred and graced 46-year history!

The *Ursuline Sisters News* is published three times a year for friends and supporters of the Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland.

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Remembering Dorothy, friend and missionary



Sister Martha Owen served in El Salvador with Sister Dorothy from 1974 until returning home in 1979. The following is a reflection on Dorothy and her death, and a special request.

By Sister Martha Owen

Dorothy's energetic Alleluia spirit was a force to be reckoned with. It was active when we were studying Spanish in Costa Rica, living in one moldy room during Hurricane Fifi. Dorothy would fearlessly carry on a conversation half in English and half in Spanish as we walked to class, with two or three giggling children attached to her swinging hands.



Sisters Dorothy and Martha

Dorothy and I went for a walk on a warm, sunlit afternoon during a team retreat. After having lived and worked together five years we had to decide which one of us would stay in El Salvador and which would return home. Since the stakes were so high and neither of us wanted to leave, the emotions ran deep. Each of us presented our thoughts as we walked along, and it became clear to me that I should be the one to leave. As I pondered my life-changing decision I never imagined how it would also be life-changing for Dorothy, but in another way.

Later, in a tape recording to Dorothy after my return home, I complained about the mundane task of cleaning the "clean" cupboards at the convent. I remembered our work in Salvador – taking dying, dehydrated babies to the hospital, giving food to families who would cook it over a wood fire while standing barefoot on a dirt floor, or being stopped and harassed by the security forces at gun point. The ever-vibrant Dorothy attempted to console me in her response, noting that she and Jean had also just cleaned out the cockroach-infested cupboards of the La Libertad parish kitchen. Her comments helped me survive reentry.

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Jean Donovan and Sister Dorothy Kazel



Team members (l-r standing) Father Paul Schindler, Sister Martha, Father Dave Fallon, Jean Donovan, Sister Dorothy, Sister Chris Rody and (seated) Rosemary Smith and Father Ken Myers

SISTER ALICE BRICKMAN

MISSION MEMORY:

Gift of empowerment



El Castano was the formation center for male catechists in our parishes. After completing courses, the catechists returned to their respective cantones or communities to minister to the people.

At a monthly catechist gathering, a campesino named Santos gave a report of his endeavors with the people in his canton. He stated simply, "Father, I haven't done much, but many of the men now can write their names." Though Santos felt this accomplishment was nothing profound, it had deeply significant results.

While visiting that canton I met Fermin, one of Santos' students who learned to write his name. I was looking at the radiant face of an adult who proudly said to me, "Now I'm able to vote!"

This incident may seem trite or insignificant, but the impact was great. Santos had taught an illiterate man to write, giving him a sense of human dignity and worth. Fermin now had a personal identity; he was someone. And he had the ability to exercise his right to vote as a citizen, a right he had never known before. Through the outreach of Santos and this act of empowerment, Fermin's life was transformed forever.

Sister Alice served 1968-1974 in the city of Chirilagua. She now ministers in the congregation's development office.

Sister Alice (2nd from the right) poses with members of the team, including Janet Kearns, 3rd from the left.



THERESE OSBORNE

MISSION MEMORY:

Salvador marked my life

I'm grateful for the privilege of getting to know the people of El Salvador. My journey began in 1977 when I visited Sister Dorothy Kazel in La Union. Dorothy encouraged me to join the Cleveland mission team, and so from 1979 I served on the team in Chirilagua until serious illness interrupted my missionary work in 1984.

Since 1988, I have worked as a lay missionary directly with the local church in several Salvadoran dioceses and parishes. But those first five years in El Salvador, as a member of the Cleveland Latin American Mission, dramatically marked my life. I learned a sound missionary strategy from co-workers: never do anything for people that they can do for themselves; or, to quote the philosopher Lao Tsu (700 B.C.):

Go to the people.
Walk beside them.
Live with them.
Learn from them.
Love them.
Start with what they know.
Build with what they have.
But with the best leaders
When the job is done, the task
accomplished,
The people will all say,
"We have done this ourselves."

Therese Osborne is a lay missionary based in Dublin, Ireland. She was a member of the Cleveland Latin American Mission from 1979 to 1984.



Macaria Mestanza and Therese Osborne

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Dorothy and I kept up a constant stream of communications. She let me know of the deteriorating situation in the country, what was happening to my villages, to the team, and to my friends. In October of 1979, three months after I left, a special letter arrived that gave me a task to do in the event that "something happened." I read the letter thinking the precaution was a good idea, but one that would never be needed. I saved the letter in my treasure chest.

The following year, a few days before Dorothy's violent death, I called to wish her a happy Thanksgiving. She sounded uncharacteristically weary and distressed about the escalating violence in the country. Then, the horror of the Salvadoran people became my personal horror and that of individuals worldwide, as her brutalized body and those of the other churchwomen were pulled from the shallow roadside grave in full view of the news media's cameras.

Upon my return to St. Malachi Convent from the Kazel home, where I had been since hearing that Dorothy was missing, I immediately sought out my treasure chest of letters to find the one I had to reread. Her request to "please explain it for me" took on new meaning. (See excerpt below.) Yes, our Alleluia woman was a force to be reckoned with ... even in death.

Sister Martha now serves as Curriculum Coordinator at Urban Community School, Cleveland.

We talked quite a bit today about what happens if something begins. And most of us feel we would want to stay here. We wouldn't want to just run out on the people. Anyway, Al [Winters] thinks people we love should understand how we feel — in case something happens ... If a day comes when others will have to understand, please explain it for me.

— Excerpted from Sister Dorothy's October 3, 1979 letter to Sister Martha



Sister Dorothy Kazel



This monument marks the spot where the bodies of Sister Dorothy and her companions were discovered in a shallow grave. The chapel was built as a more permanent tribute in 1993.



Maryknoll Sister Ita Ford



Maryknoll Sister Maura Clarke



Jean Donovan



The chapel decorated for the 50th anniversary celebration and Mass remembering the four churchwomen.

Missionary service continues to direct life, ministry choices



Geri Hable Mulligan served on the Mission Team from 1985-1993. That experience, she says, is an ongoing influence in her life, as she continues to minister, now as a married woman, within and among the Latino community within the United States.

By Geri Hable Mulligan

This past November I received an unexpected call from Zaragoza, El Salvador. My goddaughter, Brenda, invited my husband and me to her wedding asking us to be the “godparents of the rings.” When I noted she was so young, she replied, “Madrina (Godmother), I am 23.” I realized then it had been 21 years since I left El Salvador. Reflecting on the experience, I realized how much those eight years changed my life and influenced all I have done since.

As I arrived in New Jersey to direct the Hispanic Development Center, we discovered a detention center for asylum seekers within 20 miles of our home and only 18 miles from the Statue of Liberty. How could this be the ‘welcome’ asylum seekers fleeing death and torture were receiving here? It was a stark contrast to the welcome we had received from the people of Chile and El Salvador. With others, we formed two groups: First Friends to match visitors with detainees who wanted a visitor, and the Interfaith Refugee Action Team – Elizabeth (IRATE) to advocate for the release of asylum seekers charged with nothing more than wanting freedom from death threats.



Geri ministers among the children.

In 2008, we moved to Tennessee for my job at the university directing the Center for Literacy Studies. Still remembering my time with the people of El Salvador and noting the needs of Latino immigrants arriving in Knoxville, we gathered a few friends and formed Tennessee Immigrant Empowerment Solutions, Inc. (TIES). We incorporated the organization with the help of the UT Law Clinic. We developed curriculum, distributed flyers, found a willing Catholic school as a location, recruited volunteer teachers and began classes to help applicants for U.S. citizenship. Since 2010, there have been 21 cycles of 10 classes each in five different cities in East Tennessee. We also organized bi-lingual jail ministry to provide worship services in the jail during the time when undocumented Latinos were being arrested for traffic violations. Currently TIES is trying to fund a program dealing with the employment problems of immigrants who, despite professional training in their home countries, are unable to find work here.

Twenty-one years later the people of El Salvador continue to inspire me to action and direct my ministries. I am grateful to the Ursuline Community for inviting me and providing the resources that allowed me to serve in El Salvador. It was and is all gift.

SISTER MARIA BERLEC

MISSION MEMORY:

The lessons of El Salvador



The idea of pouring out one’s life for the poor tugs at my heart. I went to El Salvador thinking I was responding to God’s call and that

of the Church of Cleveland to serve. When I got there, it was actually the poor who served me. Their gifts to me were immeasurable.

I learned from their example how to share, how to be peaceful and joyful in the midst of hardship, and how to forgive. Their gracious ways impact me to this day. They taught me about faith against the backdrop of a civil war. They taught me about waiting and hope. I learned firsthand about the global dimensions of the Church. We truly all are God’s children. My experience in El Salvador forever changed me as a person. My understanding of life is broader and simpler because I met God in the people of El Salvador.

Sister Maria Berlec served in Chirilagua from 1980 until 1985. She currently teaches at Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School.

Sisters Maria and Cathy DeVito



SISTER MARY LOU TADSEN

MISSION MEMORY:

Grace, courage under hardship



Throughout the five years I ministered in El Salvador, I was continually impressed by the people's grace and courage under great hardship. What follows is one example.

One night at 2 a.m., I was awakened by a call of "Madre!" Villagers had carried a wounded Juan Antonio, our parish coordinator, up from the floor of the valley where they lived. (The climb upward was so steep and long that I needed to travel by horse when I brought Eucharist there.)

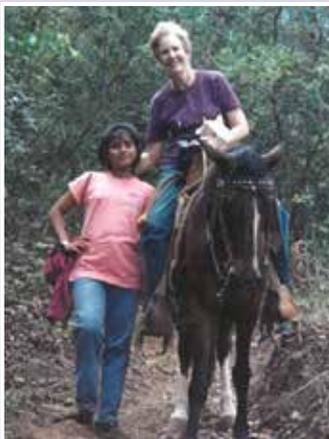
Thieves had mistakenly believed that a man who lived in that valley had payroll money in his hut. They shot and killed him and, when his brother came running, murdered him, too. The third brother, Juan Antonio, was then shot as well.

I drove him in my pick-up truck to our parish rectory. The priest transported him the rest of the way to the hospital which was two hours away.

A few days later, when I visited with Juan Antonio at the hospital, he was not vengeful or self-pitying but cheerful and eager to continue his ministry (despite the two bullets in his head deemed by doctors better left untreated).

As far as I know, the murders of Juan Antonio's brothers were never brought to justice.

Sister Mary Lou served in La Libertad 1997-2003. She currently assists the elderly through Home Instead Senior Care.



Sister Mary Lou making her rounds on horseback

Encountering God in El Salvador's 'saints'

By Sister Sheila Marie Tobbe



In my years of ministering as a member of the Cleveland Latin American Mission Team in El Salvador (1990-1996), and now serving on the Board of COAR Children's Village in El Salvador, I have been privileged to work alongside people I've come to know as saints, people of many complexions and cultures, people who live in the most adverse of circumstances of life but still know how to reach out in love and care for others, people who know how to be the leaven of the kingdom and the salt of the earth.

One of the most intense experiences of my time in El Salvador, and one that I share often with the faithful people of Cleveland who sponsored the Mission there, is how the Salvadoran people protected us missionaries during the war and were willing to risk their own lives for us because they were so grateful we stayed after the deaths of our four women martyrs there. A profound awareness that I came to in the midst of the chaos of war is that "Violence can kill my body but it can't kill my soul surrounded by such a community of love."

The souls of these communities of love still enliven me. They are my life-giving salt and leaven, the salt and leaven of the Spirit of God alive among us. In this mutual experience of sharing faith and hope amidst desperate, life-threatening situations, I encountered God alive and well and thriving, and experienced many graces of personal conversion.

Hence, one of the greatest privileges of my time in El Salvador was accompanying our visitors on pilgrimages to the sites of the many martyrdoms in that land of prophets and faith witnesses who ministered unto death.

In each of these places, there is profound silence: these sacred spaces proclaim an intensity of faith, an awareness of the dangers of love, and an invitation to a hope not rooted in this world's values.

As we face daily news items in our own milieu about painful and violent situations that need the transforming power of compassion, contemplation, and justice, may the Spirit of God who guided the many Salvadoran martyrs, martyrs of our own times, enliven our faith, intensify our hope, and challenge us to limitless love. Amen.

Sister Sheila Marie currently serves in adult literacy tutoring, as a spiritual companion to college students and in spiritual outreach to the homeless in Cleveland.



Sister Sheila Marie relaxes with a friend.



Ursuline President Sister Susan Durkin makes the presentation of the Sister Dorothy Kazel Alleluia Award to Bishop Richard Lennon and Father Steve Vellenga, head of the diocesan Mission Office. The award paid tribute to all Mission Team members, past and present.

Their sisters still: Joyous reunions in a new El Salvador

By Sister Lisa Marie Belz

For eight days in early July, a motley crew of Cleveland Ursulines banded up with Sisters of Charity Irene Mraz and Chris Rody for a pilgrimage-reunion, praying and laughing together as we traveled around El Salvador as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the Cleveland Mission there. Sister Alice Brickman was our pioneer from the team's early days; Sisters Martha Owen and Chris Rody served in El Salvador just as the civil war was beginning. Sisters Ruth Urbanski and Irene Mraz served in the '80s during the height of the war, while Sister Bobbie (Roberta) Goebel served in the '90s, in the postwar years of reconstruction. I had served most recently, from 1995-2001, when the country faced fresh devastation from two major natural disasters: Hurricane Mitch in 1998, which had killed 120 people in our parish of Chirilagua alone, and a 7.8 earthquake in 2001 which undid many post-Mitch rebuilding projects.



Sister Lisa Marie and friend Transito



Sister Lisa Marie enjoyed reuniting with Sixta and Alicia during the anniversary trip to El Salvador in July.

Sister Rose Elizabeth Terrell, who was completing nearly 11 years of service on the mission team, was our thoughtful companion and guide the whole time. From the moment we left El Salvador's airport July 8, Rose whisked us around the country. We prayed together at sacred places, such as the chapel in San Pedro Nonualco that marks the spot where Dorothy and her companions gave their lives, and Archbishop Oscar Romero's tomb in the San Salvador cathedral. As we traveled from one location to the next, we soon

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SISTER CATHY DEVITO

MISSIONARY MEMORY:

Courage, love prevail



Serving in El Salvador in the 1980s and experiencing life alongside the Salvadoran people was the beginning of an ongoing

lesson: when principles, dignity and life itself are threatened, courage and love prove stronger than fear. Over the years, I've made choices that I don't think I would have been able to make if it wasn't for the example and witness of people living out Gospel values no matter the consequences.

My understanding of mission has evolved and shifted from being defined mostly by geographical criteria, to mission as situational based on right relationships. I am forever grateful to the Cleveland Ursulines and the Salvadoran people who nurtured my vocation to cross-cultural ministry. Their witness of faith and communal trust is a model for mission in today's world.

Sister Cathy DeVito served on the diocesan mission team in Zaragoza 1984-1990, coordinating the sacramental programs. Today, as a Maryknoll sister, she is engaged in missionary service in Bolivia.



SISTER ROBERTA GOEBEL

MISSION MEMORY:

The spirit of the people



While memories of my time in El Salvador are as vivid as ever in my heart, it is difficult to express the gift, beauty, and grace of the experience

in a few words. So many special stories flood my memories.

I can picture two young children, shoeless yet exuberant, searching the ground in the market for discarded scraps of food for the family's evening soup.

Many times I would see mothers walking tirelessly to the river's edge to wash the family dishes, clothes and even their small children. Always, despite their hard life, they emanated that quiet joy and gentle spirit typical of the Salvadoran people.

I'll never forget my spirited teen choir. It is easy to picture them piling into the shabby pickup truck headed to some small village to celebrate liturgy.

How blessed I am to have witnessed the faith and joy of God at work among the beautiful people of El Salvador. Gracias!

Sister Roberta ministered in El Salvador 1992-1998. She currently serves as principal of St. Anthony of Padua School, Parma.

Sister Roberta assisted this family with food and medical care for the baby.



Continued from page 7

realized that, in many respects, we were in a new El Salvador, an El Salvador unknown to us, a country now with cell towers and electric lines throughout the land, smoothly-paved roads, and even air-conditioned mini-vans! We were delighted to see how much the country had progressed since our years in mission. In fact, the places we served were barely recognizable, with carefully landscaped plazas adorned with tropical shrubbery, bordered by new two and three story buildings coated in colorful pastels.

Yet, for all of El Salvador's many changes, it was also clear that some things remain the same. With much excitement, we recognized the faces of the dear people whom we once served, even as they, too, with equal excitement, recognized us, welcoming us with typical Salvadoran warmth, joy, and affection. Indeed, they received us as if we were Stateside relatives returning home after a long time away. Even after all these years, we are their sisters still.

Sister Lisa Marie served in Chirilagua 1995-2001. She currently serves on the faculty of Ursuline College, teaching graduate and undergraduate theology.



- 1 - Sisters Irene Mraz, Martha, Cathy and Rose Elizabeth
- 2 - Sisters Martha and Alice
- 3 - Gathered around the altar built by Ursuline Sister Diane Pinchot and Salvadoran craftsmen are (l-r) Sisters Rose Elizabeth, Lisa Marie, Alice, Roberta, Ruth, Irene and Martha.
- 4 - Sisters Alice, Ruth and Rose Elizabeth boarded a truck to do some touring.
- 5 - The travelers: (standing) Sisters Ruth, Roberta, Alice, Irene, Chris, Lisa Marie and (sitting) Martha and Rose Elizabeth

Planting seeds of hope, faith and gratitude

By Sister Rose Elizabeth Terrell



Sister Rose Elizabeth (right) with friends at one of her many farewell celebrations.

Archbishop Oscar Romeo once said, “We plant seeds. We lay foundations. Our work is never complete.”

That is how I would describe my work in El Salvador. I was missioned there to bring the love, compassion and goodness of Jesus to the people that I met and grew to love there. What seeds did I plant and what foundations did I lay?

In our college scholarship program, I planted seeds to help young people who never would have been able to reach their career goals. Ronny never thought he could succeed at a university. He had no self-confidence and didn't want to accept a scholarship, but we saw his potential. Today he is a confident university graduate teaching children.

I was organizing my Salvador pictures and found some of Rafael. In his mud house there was neither electricity nor water. But he was upbeat and happy every night when he visited me. He always left saying, “Sleep with the angels, Hermana.” Beautiful.

We had groups of visitors lay cement floors in houses so that the families would not have to live in mud for the rainy season. Trinidad, whose house we were working on, stood behind a bush and sang a song of thanks to the group doing the work. Such simplicity and gratitude.

Thirty farmers were learning new ways to plant and to diversify their crops. They were so excited to show me their crop of cucumbers and tomatoes. We stood and ate some right there in the field. Delicious!

The crochet group produces lovely purses, beaded bracelets, and dressy scarves, along with afghans, and baby blankets. Various parishes in Cleveland sell the items. The women use the money to buy food and school supplies for their children, and to pay their bills. Irma built a chicken coop with money she saved. She was so proud.

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SISTER RUTH URBANSKI

MISSION MEMORY:

Lessons learned in El Salvador



I served in El Salvador in the mid '80s during the war. It was a scary time, yet an experience I would not trade for anything. The people and my time there taught me things I would otherwise never have learned.

Now when I watch the news and see what is happening in other countries, it doesn't seem so far away, and it feels very real. The world is somehow smaller because despite the differences in how we look and speak and the places we live, we are all still sisters and brothers.

I no longer take running water, showers and flush toilets as the norm. Nor do I take for granted electricity and all the conveniences it provides us 24/7. It even took me some time to readjust to my liberties of voting and free speech, and to being able to drive down the street without being stopped at gunpoint, searched and detained for hours at a time.

Most of all, I learned about the beauty of the human spirit in the midst of poverty, oppression and war. The people of El Salvador were most welcoming and kind. They were very patient in trying to understand our Spanish, and generous in helping us in whatever way they could when we traveled to their homes and town to visit, offer Mass and give classes. They taught me to accept death as a part of life, rather than believing that money and technology can protect us from sickness and death. The Salvadorans' faith and love and inner beauty showed me God's presence in every person and demonstrated how love can indeed help us rise above all the trials we face in life. And, I do not want to forget our own families, friends and community who supported us as we struggled to bring God's message to a people in need.

Sister Ruth Urbanski served in Chirilagua 1983-86. Today she ministers as a home care hospice nurse for Hospice of the Western Reserve in the neighborhoods of Cleveland.



Ursulines called to fullness of life

Sister Jeanne Campbell



Sister Jeanne Campbell (formerly Sister M. Helen Francis) was a gentle and unassuming woman who lived quietly and faithfully for 62 years as an Ursuline sister. The former educator and community service minister died July 22, at Regina Health Center. She was 82.

The Notre Dame Academy graduate entered the Ursuline Sisters from St. Columbkille Parish, Cleveland, September 8, 1951, and professed final vows August 12, 1957. She earned her undergraduate degree from St. John College and a master's from John Carroll University.

Sister Jeanne was an elementary school teacher 22 years. She served at St. William School (Euclid) and followed with tenures at St. Mary, St. Malachi, St. Joseph and St. Jerome, all in Cleveland, and St. Therese (Garfield Heights), St. Mary (Mentor), Christ the King (East Cleveland), and St. Joseph (Avon Lake). She later served as a teacher aide at St. Robert Bellarmine School (Euclid). Her career beyond the classroom included assignments in the registrar's office at Ursuline College, assisting in the Diocesan Archives, and serving in the library at Beaumont School.

She is survived by a sister-in-law Phyllis Campbell of The Villages, Florida, and nephews Kevin and Brian, of Florida and New Jersey, respectively.

Sister Maurita McNeeley



Hospitalized for more than two weeks in critical condition, Sister Maurita was determined to return home to her sisters and friends at Regina Health Center, especially to her life-long friend Sister Margaret Whittaker. With her customary grit, determination and good humor she made it home. The next day, September 28,

Sister Maurita died peacefully at the Richfield facility, surrounded by a nephew, Sister Margaret, other Ursuline sisters and friends. She was 87.

Following graduation from Ursuline Academy of the Sacred Heart, the former Grace McNeeley entered the Ursuline congregation from Christ the King Parish September 8, 1945, and professed final vows in August 1951. Sister Maurita earned her undergraduate degree

attending Saturday classes at St. John College, while also engaging in full-time teaching during the week.

Her 43-year education career included tenures at St. Mary (Collinwood), St. Catharine (Cleveland), St. William (Euclid), St. Mary Magdalene (Willoughby), Immaculate Conception (Willoughby), St. Therese (Garfield Heights) and St. Mary (Mentor) schools. In 1990 she retired from teaching and for 12 years assisted in the office of the motherhouse treasurer. Since 2003 she was engaged in the ministry of prayer and service and in the life of the community.

Sister Maurita will be remembered for her friendliness, her zest for living and her ever-youthful spirit. She was a faith-filled woman, a committed religious, a dedicated teacher and colleague, a loyal friend, and loving aunt.

Sister Catherine Marie Skufca



Sister Catherine Marie Skufca began and ended her 51-year career in education at Cleveland's St. Jerome School, where she served a total of 17 years. The veteran educator died December 12 at Regina Health Center, where she had resided since April 2013. Sister Catherine Marie was 85.

Following graduation from Villa Angela Academy, the former Mary Angela Skufca entered the Ursuline community from St. Mary Parish (Collinwood) in September 1947 and professed final vows in 1953. Sister Catherine Marie earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in education at the former St. John College.

In addition to St. Jerome School, she also enjoyed tenures at St. Francis de Sales and St. Charles Borromeo schools (Parma), St. Timothy (Garfield Heights), St. Mary (Mentor), St. William (Euclid), Christ the King (East Cleveland), and St. Clare (Lyndhurst) schools. She retired to the motherhouse in 2000 and, when health concerns surfaced, moved to the Saint Angela Center. Throughout her retirement years she was engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence.

Sister Catherine Marie is survived by a brother, Frank Skufca, and sisters-in-law Idamae and Jean.

Memorial donations may be made to the Ursuline Sisters at www.ursulinesisters.org.



Joan and Ed Conrad

Joan and Ed Conrad to receive Merici Award

Joan and Ed Conrad will receive the 2015 Merici Award at this year's Ursuline Derby Day event, Saturday, May 2. The award was established in 2007 to recognize faithful supporters of the Ursulines and their Mission.

Throughout their married lives, Joan and Ed Conrad have dealt in religious goods and, for the past 45 years, in the sale of tires and automotive supplies. But Ed's relationship with the Ursuline Sisters predates tires, religious goods and even Joan! He is a proud product of Ursuline education at St. Patrick's School on Bridge Avenue. His association with the sisters has remained strong through the years, as has the couple's support of the Ursuline community.

Joan says it is the Ursuline Mission that fuels their continued support of the sisters. "Ed and I admire the sisters and the work they do to serve everyone ... the elderly, the poor, the sick, everyone. There is a special place in our hearts for the Ursuline Sisters."

Born and raised on Cleveland's West Side, Joan and Ed met at a high school dance, fell in love and decided to marry. At that time Joan, who had been working as a secretary for the FBI, decided to help out at Ed's family business, Conrad's Church Goods and Religious Articles. The couple married in 1951.

Ed always knew he wanted to own his own business and work in retail as his father had. After selling the Catholic bookstore in the '60s, Ed and Joan considered many different options, finally setting his sights on tires. He opened the first Conrad's store in 1969; 45 years later the

business has grown to 35 stores! Ed says with certainty that the business will keep on growing. His philosophy has proven true. "If you hire, train, motivate and retain good people, you can't help but be successful."

Ed and Joan, now retired, have four children – Edward III, Mary Jo, Sharon, and Robert, the company's familiar spokesperson. All of them sit on the company's board of directors. Ed says he is comfortable relinquishing control of the business because he knows the children and employees care about the company and its success just as much he does.

Retirement has afforded the couple time to spend with their children and nine grandchildren. And, after a lifetime spent as west siders, Ed and Joan recently relocated to South Franklin Circle in Chagrin Falls.

Commenting on the upcoming award, Ursuline president Sister Susan Durkin notes, "Joan and Ed Conrad embody many of the qualities of St. Angela Merici in their personal and professional lives. Their approach to business and philanthropy flows from a philosophy grounded in respect and in the desire to improve the lives of others. Their attentiveness and response to need is truly worth celebrating. We are blessed to be counted among their friends, and are so pleased to honor Joan and Ed with the Merici Award."

Can you help?

The 6th Annual Derby Day is May 2, 2015. We are putting together baskets and auction items and would welcome some assistance. If you can help with any of the following items please contact Barbara Badalamenti (440-449-1200, Ext 197). Thank you!

6th Annual!
URSULINE
DERBY DAY

- Restaurant Gift Cards
- Visa Cards
- Frequent Flyer Miles
- Bottles of Wine
- Large Baskets

Annual Fund Update

We have generated \$310,000 of our \$350,000 Annual Fund goal. Thank you for your generosity.



Ursuline Academy of Cleveland

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Health care, too, was critical. In the parish clinic the doctor cared for over 400 people every month. We bought an ultrasound machine. I watched as the doctor gave a woman a picture of the baby girl growing inside her. Milagro was so happy to be able to show her husband the picture.

I had funds to build chapels in two remote areas where the people had strong faith, but no place to worship. Men in the community helped with the construction. Groups of Cleveland visitors helped lay cement footers and painted the chapels. The people are so proud to praise God at Mass in these beautiful chapels.

I saw hope for a better life in the faces of our scholarship students attending universities and in the eyes of mothers and children receiving excellent health care in our parish clinic. I saw faith in the people who filled our church every Sunday and faithfulness in their coping with daily struggles. I experienced their love every day.

Do I miss Rafael, Ronnie, Milagro, Trinidad and all my Salvadoran neighbors and friends? Yes. But I bring

them back to Cleveland in my mind and heart, and am humbled by their hospitality, generosity, and kindness to me. It was a life-changing, transforming experience for me. I am grateful to the Ursulines for allowing me to serve in El Salvador for 11 years.

Sister Rose Elizabeth serves as the Coordinator of Community Outreach at Urban Community School, Cleveland.



Sister Rose Elizabeth visits with children coming from the mill with corn for making tortillas.