

RSHM SOUNDINGS is a quarterly publication of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Eastern and Western American and Northern European Provinces, and Zambezi Region. Waves sent out, reflected back, reveal an inner reality not always evident on the surface. Thus SOUNDINGS probes RSHM life in expanding circles of ministry and community. You, our readers, are part of our life. We invite your comments and suggestions so that your thoughts may be reflected in these pages.

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Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary  
English Speaking Provinces

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## A LIFETIME OF LESSONS

by Susan M. Kumnick, MC'75

### BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA

Thanks to innumerable and continuous lessons learned from members of the RSHM Institute, my life has been more interesting, more challenging, and more global.

Favorite childhood encounters with the RSHM include visits with my aunt, Mother Theodore "Teddy" Brysh, first at Marymount Fifth Avenue, later at Marymount Quebec, and every spring, at the Marymount Alumnae Family Day in Tarrytown.

**First Life Lesson:** *RSHM internationality - a world of opportunities far beyond the limits of hometown and family.*

During the Vietnam War, Vatican Council II, and Woodstock, Sunday discussions at my grandmother's table frequently revolved around radical changes in the world, including evening news stories about some RSHM sisters who were protesting in the streets. She couldn't understand why the sisters, including my aunt, left the safety of their schools to live and work with the poor and oppressed in inner cities like Harlem. **Second Life Lesson:** *Following Christ's model of servant leadership so important to Father Gailhac, we members of the SHM Extended Family must leave our comfort zones, open our hearts, and reach out to those in need.*

Before graduating from Marymount College Tarrytown in 1975,



Susan Kumnick visiting her aunt, Mother Theodore Brysh

where Sisters Ellen Marie Keane, Brigid Driscoll, Hélène Louise Zimmermann, and Catherine Daly, among others, became teachers and friends, I signed a one-year contract with Colegio Marymount in Barranquilla, Colombia. There, alongside Sister Johanna, the school's charismatic and fondly remembered director until June of 2009, we experienced a roller coaster of emotions with the closing of the boarding school, receiving the first boys and becoming co-ed, transferring from RSHM ownership and administration to that of lay leadership under a local board of trustees, purchasing "The Promised Land" property for sports facilities and the future new school, and, in 2007, being welcomed into the net-

work of RSHM schools. **Third Life Lesson:** *Challenges are opportunities, not obstacles. Do the work that needs to be done, placing it in God's hands, and remembering that things are done in God's time, not ours.*

Mother St. Jean envisioned a school for wealthy girls to support Father Gailhac's mission to improve conditions for marginalized women and orphans in Béziers. The Marymount Barranquilla community has continued the mission of educating economically disadvantaged girls and young women from preschool through high school in the Mother Butler Educational Foundation, founded in 1961 by Mother Vianney, and given its location and character by Mother Annunciata. As director of Marymount Barranquilla and the

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# MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

by Aine Kern

SAN DIEGO, CA The voice of a teenager floats over hundreds of heads crowded in front of the San Diego City and County Administration Building, calling for the protesters to clear a path for all young students to filter towards the front of the masses. Clinging to my friends' hands, we shuffled to the clearing in a chain, smiling at the surrounding teachers and parents cheering for us. Soon we were amid a sea of buoyant teenage activists from all walks of life clutching posters and flags. The March For Our Lives, organized by teenagers, would be led by them nationwide.

Ten days before the national march, walkouts to honor the victims of Parkland were held at schools all across the country, even in middle schools. At my small southern California high school, I gave a speech along with a couple of my classmates. Even as I spoke to the crowd of my peers, my hands and voice shook; I was breathless, but I had to prove to them that what they stood for was valid and honorable and brave.

The march meant more to me than a call for legislators to enact stricter gun control. It meant age does not dictate ability; just because we are young does not mean we must remain ignorant and passive. It meant bringing attention to any abuse of power and our growing intolerance of oppression. It meant that maybe I didn't have to worry so much about where my little sister was on our school campus at any given point of the day in case a threat arose, because these people, hundreds of thousands of them, had come together in determined solidarity to protect me, my siblings, my teachers, my friends, and all my classmates.

Victories are hard-earned in this matter of gun control. It seems that restrictive measures only come after the worst case scenarios have already occurred. I marched in San

Diego to advocate policies that will save me and those I love from becoming characters in a "this should never have happened" news story, to protest the slow-moving progress of lawmakers and politicians, and to play a part in the making of history.

I have found heroes in this movement, such as Emma González, and I have found pride in my generation. To create a movement that inspired marches in over eight hundred cities in the United States alone is no small feat. The bravery displayed in people my age around the nation is incredibly inspiring and motivational; the children of America are not mere spectators—they are activists and game-changers, role models and leaders.

For the rest of my life, in times when my courage may falter, I'll recall this march and all the self knowledge and courage I learned from it. ♦



Aine Kern, far right, and friends at the San Diego march

NEXT ISSUE:

DO YOU HEAR  
WHAT I HEAR?

# LESSONS OF A LIFETIME

by Maura Gaines

*This eulogy for Ellen Campbell, formerly Sr. Vincent, RSHM, Dean of Marymount College, Tarrytown NY, 1963-65, was written by Maura Gaines, formerly Sr. Maura, RSHM.*



NEW YORK, NY If we ask ourselves: Who is your friend? Your inspiration? A soulmate? our answer continues as long as we remember. Friends become immortal as we learn from their lives and apply the learning to our own. There is a lesson to be learned by each of us in our own way from the life of Ellen M. Campbell.

Here is a woman of true and simple dignity. She had a depth of spirit and compassion for everyone without being blind to the world as it is lived by others. Ellen took an inside-out approach to living—always improving on what is inside while living on the outside. Those she encountered every day were her brothers and sisters, embraced as family. Offering support where and when it was needed, her tendency was to do something good for someone who would never know it.

Ellen saw the good in every person and she took the time to tell them so. Oftentimes it was a follow-up note of encouragement and wisdom. Her pen was the tongue of her great mind. Her unvarnished words could also be a rebuke or rebuttal. Ignoring Ellen was like ignoring Niagara Falls!

An outstanding educational leader and enlightened teacher, Ellen didn't preach or lecture—she inspired. Her commitment to learn-

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## I'LL NEVER FORGET . . .

It was a beautiful day in August at our family's summer camp in Maine. I was about 10 years old and my brothers had taken me out in our rowboat to show me the best places for catching fish. My father was standing on the dock as we neared land. I was feeling so grown up! I stood up to reach for his hand. He reached with one hand to help me climb up and with the other he gave me a whack on the backside, saying **YOU NEVER STAND UP IN A MOVING BOAT!** I let out such a scream that the whole camp came running to see what was happening. I never forgot that lesson, and have had many opportunities to pass it on to the generations that followed.  
*Mary Alter, RSHM*

I remember that at one time I had to make an important decision. It was as if 'Two roads diverged in a yellow wood.' I knew that choosing one would negate the possibility of the other. I sought counseling. After a few sessions one choice became clear to me. I chose it and have not regretted it. What I learned was a deep respect for a good counselor. I don't recall the advice, but the careful listening that opened the way for clarity.  
*Virginia Dorgan, RSHM*

In these days of uncertainty, of national chaos and international concern, I suddenly remembered a time when I was happier, calmer, more optimistic. Mulling it over, I finally realized that was a time when I had greater faith in the Lord and less concern about my own control of my life. Time to reach back for that faith.  
*Pat Ann Healy, SHM Extended Family*

I think life's enduring lesson has been to be kind, gentle, and patient with individuals, no matter what the circumstances.  
*Bianca Haglich, RSHM*

I guess I've learned lots of lessons over my long life. But when I think about these lessons, what comes immediately to mind is an event that caused me much pain, and that was leaving Marymount Rome in 1984. From the time I arrived in Rome in 1970, I felt that this was the place for me, the place where I'd live and die. But it was not to be. I left Rome after fourteen years for a year's sabbatical at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. I came to realize that 'change' was a good thing, that the change to Berkeley brought newness, many wonderful people and experiences into my life. In fact, during my thirteen years in Berkeley (a sabbatical morphed into a ministry!), I remember telling others how good change in one's life can be. There were a few other changes after my years at JSTB and, although sad to leave one place for another, I knew the change would once again bring growth and newness.  
*Michaeline O'Dwyer, RSHM*

The most important lessons in my life were learned at home in childhood and I have never forgotten them: to be honest and fair, and to live in the presence of God and the Blessed Mother.  
*Canice Walsh, RSHM*

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**EDITORS:** Cecilia Brizuela  
Irene Cody, RSHM  
Bea McMahon, RSHM  
Pierre Dullaghan, RSHM  
Ellen Marie Keane, RSHM  
Margaret Treacy, RSHM  
Monica Walsh, RSHM  
Mary Alice Young, RSHM

**ART EDITOR:** Edith Hart, RSHM  
**LAYOUT:** Bianca Haglich, RSHM

[www.rsham.org](http://www.rsham.org); [www.rsham-nep.org](http://www.rsham-nep.org);  
[province@rshmeap.org](mailto:province@rshameap.org)

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As I reflect on my years as an RSHM, I am grateful for the people who have enriched my life—my parents and relatives, the RSHM who I have lived with and learned from—the teachers who have challenged my mind and been good friends over these many years. I am grateful for the opportunities that the RSHM have provided me in ministry as a teacher, a College administrator, a coordinator of Marymount Convent and a Provincial Councillor. Now retired but still active, I hope to continue to be of service to others to the best of my ability and to value my friendships.  
*Margaret Ellen Flannelly, RSHM*

Learning the English language and a new culture were amazing lessons in my life. More recently, weaving became a new language for me: understanding the loom and its parts, the color and texture of yarns, and the making of a warp. I have also learned much from the people at the Weaving Center who share their projects with me. These are never-to-be-forgotten graces for me.  
*Margarita Cardenas, RSHM*

Lessons that I consider basic, and I am still striving to learn, are first to listen and not think you know it all; secondly, to live in the present, not to be immersed in the past in thought or in conversation.  
*Christine Marian, RSHM*

My lesson of a lifetime began after sixteen years of teaching. My spiritual landscape would change forever. I entered the ARC (Apostolic Religious Communities) Program in Rome. Part of the experience consisted of a trip to the Holy Land. There all the theology, scripture, and personal development courses came together as I walked in the steps of Jesus. After that, I was ready to return to passing on the faith to God's little holy ones.  
*De la Salle Murphy, RSHM*



## LESSONS LEARNED / LESSONS TAUGHT

by Kathleen Murphy, RSHM

BELO HORIZONTE, BRAZIL In 1964, when I was 20 years old, I went to my first classroom in Park Terrace. Mother Veronica was superior and I learned that she had a lot of faith in the gifts and talents of the community. I taught algebra...which I loved and I also taught fifth grade geography in the afternoons and learned how to pronounce the names of the States and a few other things. At the end of that year, Gerard School closed and Marcella and I went to Rosedale to the new St. Pius X School. I taught reading, writing etc. to first grade and I'm amazed every time I get a message from one of those little First Graders, now grandparents, saying that they remember me with love. What a gift! But I've learned that life is made up of moments. A simple comment to a child, to a parent, remains with them throughout life.

As the years went by, I taught

many subjects, on many grade levels. Geography was fun and I often taught rivers, mountains, and other physical features with silly songs or rhymes. Little did I think, as I taught, that I would cross those rivers and learn to love the people who live by them, for example, the people of the Zambezi between Zambia and Zimbabwe. I also learned the hard lesson of how challenging borders can be when crossing those rivers.

Now I live by the great Amazon River in Brazil. It is no longer a fact of geography. It is a river of life through this great country filled with warm, welcoming people. I'm reminded of our beautiful Vocation booklet "Like a River." We often look at it here in the Novitiate. But I've learned that the life we lead as religious is one like scooping up water and pouring it into another container or on to the garden. As we pass on what we've learned, others continue

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## THE BEAUTY OF EXPRESSION

by Audrey Rushton, RSHM

MONTEBELLO, CA This year I am enjoying a new ministry. I am teaching Spanish to Father Kuriakose Mambrakatt, a priest from Southern India. He needs to learn Spanish because about seventy five percent of the people in St. Patrick's Parish, where Father ministers, are Hispanic. We meet three times a week for two hours each day. Often the classes include English pronunciation as well. Everyone in the Indian schools must learn English from an early age, but it is difficult to master the rhythm of a language. If we both can afford a little extra time, I learn about the life and customs of India from Father. It is obvious that he loves his own country and knows its history well.

There are several priests from India who are ministering in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Califor-



nia at the present time. They volunteer to come here with the condition that most of their pay will be sent back to India to help support their charities in the North of the country where there is much poverty. The priests receive only a small stipend for their monthly personal expenses.

For years, Father Kuriakose worked with the youth in the North. When the Caste System was abolished by Congress, he and another

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## DEDICATION

by Jacqueline Murphy, RSHM

ARLINGTON, VA Marymount University recently completed a new building named the Ballston Center which is a dedicated academic center including a gallery for displays of many types. To honor Sr. Irene Cody, RSHM, the Board and its donors decided to dedicate this area as the "Cody Gallery". It is placed in a highly accessible area at the front entrance on Glebe Road. Accessibility to the community is important as the University continues to serve the local Arlington community. The Cody Gallery itself provides a grand display site for the works and interests not only of the students and faculty, and widely acclaimed artists, but also of local artists whose works need to be shared and recognized.

Irene was asked to extend invitations to her family, friends, and a broad range of her contacts both on and off campus. During the mini-tour on the day she arrived, as always, Irene's "meeting and greeting" was a personal and heartfelt sharing with all whom she met.

I believe the words on the dedication plaque are most representative of Irene's many years here and the impact of her life and example.

*"... In recognition of Sr. Irene Cody, RSHM, who served here in numerous capacities for nearly forty years; most notable, her work to create and lead programs and services to international students, has greatly enriched the Marymount Community while impacting the lives of countless students. Marymount University and our Board of Trustees are incredibly grateful for Irene's dedicated service...(Dedicated the seventh day of March 2018)"*

Irene's response was typically brief and humble. Her joy in the open, accessible space that would make beautiful works of art available to visitors symbolizes for her the great joy of her life which has been offering welcome and hospitality at Marymount.♦

## THEN AND NOW

by Eileen Baust Panetta

BROOKLYN, NY During the 1960's and 70's, colleges and universities across the US faced a classic dilemma: become active in the increasingly urgent Vietnam debate and risk being labeled knee-jerk liberals or remain aloof and earn the "ivory tower" label, removed from the social and moral realities of the era. Marymount College in Tarrytown, like many other institutions of learning, was drawn into this storm.

In May of 1970, following the US invasion of Cambodia and the fatal shooting of four Kent State students by the National Guard, Marymount's 1100 students, led by student activists Gerri Ennis, Chris Gilmartin, Sue Zeno, and others voted overwhelmingly to join a national student strike. The College Senate, the College's 22-member legislative body, comprised of administrator, faculty, and students, endorsed the students' position.

There was an urgency, an electricity in the air. Even those who were uncertain about the decision to strike felt it.

President John Meng issued guidelines, explaining that the College itself was not on strike, that students and faculty were free to participate in strike activities—including alternative classes on US foreign policy and war realities—with special projects and outside speakers representing all sides of the debate; but that faculty members who joined in must offer alternative class meetings or assignments to any student who requested such options. In fact, about 65% of classes continued to meet on a regular basis, 25% were held on a revised schedule, mostly in the evening, and the rest (about 10%) were cancelled.

The College faced a serious challenge. Six Marymount students filed suit against the College for participating in the strike and denying them their contractual right, as specified in the catalogue, to regularly scheduled classes. The suit did not



get a formal court hearing; after three hours of negotiations in the White Plains courtroom between representatives of the College and the plaintiffs' lawyer, the College agreed to resume its regular schedule for the last five days of the semester and relegate protest activities to the evenings. The students involved were very disappointed at the outcome, and protests on campus continued up to and at graduation.

Dr. Meng's statement, quoted in the New York Times (May 26, 1970), probably reflects the prevailing student/faculty sentiment after the settlement: "Most students just wanted to start a rational discussion about something they knew was wrong. They were a wonderful group and I was proud of the way they acted.... A strike means you quit work, but they were working harder than ever, and learning."

As a faculty member at the time, I remember being grateful for the opportunity, however brief, to face directly the 900-pound gorilla in the room, the increasingly problematic war. (Apologies to that wonderful animal for the metaphor.) I felt myself a student among students, trying to grapple with the futile devastation.

The outcome of the strike at Marymount was disheartening to many, but the momentum of protest and challenge could not be sidetracked, and the US eventually with-

drew from Vietnam in August of 1973. Student protests were recognized as a major factor in the decision.

Of course I am reminded anew, during the student protests over gun violence in Parkland, Florida, and around the country, that the situation was then and is now a student battleground; their lives are on the line. Their brothers and friends were drafted and body-bagged at Kent State and South East Asia, and now their schoolmates are being slaughtered and their lives threatened in their own classrooms and school corridors. The students' passion, their anger, their refusal to do business as usual are with us again, fifty years later. And, remembering Marymount's admittedly truncated protests, I'm reminded that, even if individual efforts seem to fail or flame out, the momentum these efforts sustain eventually brings more and more daylight to unacceptable situations and creates change. I'm grateful to be alive to share again in that desperately needed hope.♦

### LESSONS LEARNED cont. from pg.4

to be refreshed and to pass it along in new, amazing ways. Teaching is like watering a garden. The water may be scarce at times, but we search and carry it to the plants which bring beauty and nourishment to others. There are storms which batter the garden and destroy what we've planted, but the most unlikely plants thrive and continue to give renewed life and greater depth of learning to the next generation. I certainly can say that, "by my students I've been taught".... And no less today as the new generation of RSHM come through the Novitiate. We teach, we learn, we are enriched, blessed. I've even learned that languages are not "the last word". Love overcomes all obstacles. Thanks be to God!♦

**EULOGY** cont. from pg. 2

ing embraced the adult learner, students of English as a second language, and college learners at home and abroad. Her local public school and parish church, to overseas programs in London, Paris and Rome—all were beneficiaries of her dedication and creativity.

Even through pain and extraordinary physical efforts, Ellen pursued her love of the Humanities and the Arts. Her deep faith and spirituality were informed and shared through the lens of the gospel. She was an exceptionally good person.

Each of us who knew Ellen has her own special memories and private thoughts. She heard melodies instead of notes. I'm sure she would love all of us to join her in singing a favorite song "When the Saints Come Marching In" which she wanted in her funeral liturgy. We dutifully obeyed her last wishes and danced behind the casket—our eyes filled with tears, our hearts with admiration. Ellen led us in her own way with love and good humor. Her lessons of a lifetime will live on forever. May we be worthy of them!♦

**EXPRESSION** cont. from pg.4

priest worked with teenagers to convince them that they were no longer "untouchables." It was dangerous work because one of the religious groups in the country refused to give up the caste system. This group shot and killed the priest working with Father Kuriakose. Father continued working with the young people, but was told that he had to have police protection.

Both Father and I are crossing the thresholds of very different cultures, one very ancient; the other relatively new in comparison. It has been a learning experience for us both and we are enjoying it.♦

**LIFETIME** cont. from pg. 1

Mother Butler Educational Foundation since 2009, and, as a founding member of the Coordinating Committee of the Global Network of RSHM Schools, I am privileged to visit our international schools and marvel at the scope of the RSHM vision. **Fourth Life Lesson: SHM Extended Family members and graduates of schools founded by the RSHM stand on the shoulders of those remarkable women who led the way before us. It's now OUR mission to continue the work of the RSHM in a world that so desperately needs their spirit, traditions, help, and hope.**♦

**CONTRIBUTORS**

- Maura Gaines, formerly Sr. Maura Gaines, RSHM, lives with her husband Gerry Goldberg in New York City.
- Aine Kern, a great niece of Sr. Ellen Marie Keane, RSHM, is a student from San Diego, CA who will begin studies at Fordham University in September, 2018.
- Sue Kumnik is Director Marymount International School in Barranquilla, Colombia, and a niece of Sr. Theodore Brysh, RSHM (RIP).
- Jacqueline Murphy, RSHM, recently retired, lives at Marymount University, Arlington.
- Kathleen Murphy, RSHM, is a member of the Formation Community at the RSHM Novitiate in Belo Horizonte, Brazil.
- Eileen Panetta, formerly Sr. Angela Baust, RSHM, retired from teaching, is living in Brooklyn, NY, studying archaeology.
- Audrey Rushton, RSHM, is retired at Casa Guadalupe in Montebello, CA, and is a volunteer tutor of the Spanish language.
- Additional brief entries by RSHM: Mary Alter, Margarita Cardenas, Virginia Dorgan, Margaret Ellen Flannelly, Bianca Haglich, Christine Marian, De la Salle Murphy, Michaeline O'Dwyer, Canice Walsh, and Pat Ann Healy, SHM Extended Family

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Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary  
50 Wilson Park Drive  
Tarrytown, New York 10591



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