

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.

# rsh m soundings

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary  
English Speaking Provinces

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## HOUSE OF KINDNESS

by Edith Hart, RSHM

TARRYTOWN, NY It has been a little over a year since I moved into Marymount Convent and what stands out for me are the ways that kindness is made visible in the actions of all the folks in the house. It is a very big operation and has many moving parts. We are blessed with our Coordinator, Sr. Margaret Hoyne; the nursing, kitchen, business, housekeeping, and maintenance staffs; the Life Enrichment and Pastoral Care staffs, as well as the receptionists who welcome the countless friends and volunteers who bring joy and service of every kind to the house. We are all greatly blessed!

One cannot help but notice the kind interactions of all the people and their love and concern for each other in sometimes BIG but mostly small ways. It is the magnificent, radiant smile in return for a small but necessary service. It is the offering of time to be of assistance. It is the gentle, quiet awareness of the needs of others, the great hospitality, joy, laughter and deep concern for all the "each others."

We are blessed to celebrate the Eucharist in our home each day and it is this COMMUNION that exemplifies our lives lived in kindness, unity and hospitality in communion with GOD and with each other.♦



## GOING FORWARD FOR A BLESSING

by Martha Harkness

OSSINING, NY When I think of acts of kindness, I think of the warmth of the RSHM community that I have had the pleasure of serving over the past 12 years. I am grateful for the opportunity to worship with you. Perhaps you have wondered why I go to Mass every day. I go out of gratitude for the mercy, welcome, and kindness of God I receive there through the Liturgy of the Word, through the gathered community: the prayers, readings of Scriptures, and the homily. Yet the kindness does not stop there. While I cannot fully participate in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, I can participate by going forward and receiving a blessing. What joy! That simple act of kindness touches me deeply. The same hands that held

the blessed sacrament offer me a blessing from our kind God. That same kind God calls me to kindness toward all living-kind. I put it another way in this poem:

*Going forward day by day,  
I do not know the words to say, or  
The Eucharistic Prayers to pray.*

*But I know kindness in each face...  
I count my blessings, there I trace  
The patterns of God's wondrous  
grace.*

*And the blessing the priest gives—  
Eucharist becomes the way we live,  
Seeing from Christ's perspective.*

*As the Spirit conceives,  
as in God's Son we believe,  
God's love, we all receive—  
We go out to live.♦*

*This letter was sent to Sr. Brigid Driscoll when she was in hospice care at Marymount Convent, Tarrytown. We include it as an inspiring example of a legacy of kindness linking past and present leaders of RSHM foundations.*



MarymountManhattan

## Office of the President

October 23, 2018

Brigid Driscoll '54, RSHM, Ph.D.  
Marymount Convent

Dear Sister Brigid,

I want to let you know how much you mean to me and how much I love you. Since the first moment I met you, I knew you would be an influential person in my life—and I was right! I have felt a kinship with you not only because you are one of Marymount Manhattan's most distinguished alumna—and I say that knowing you will balk at the word "distinguished," even though it's true. Our true kinship is in our having both been Marymount presidents. You have understood from the beginning of my presidency exactly what it feels like to lead an institution of such import—an institution whose mission is to transform young lives. I have felt as if I am one of your successors, carrying on the work that you did so skillfully for two decades. For these reasons, I was so grateful when you agreed to participate in my inauguration ceremony three years ago in your "bumble bee" academic regalia. I cherish my memories of this milestone event.

That was a public display of our connection—of the passing of the torch. Our private connection has been more important and meaningful to me. You have generously picked up the phone to give me a confidential heads-up about situations that, as Marymount Manhattan's President, I needed to know about. Your advice on these occasions was always wise—and gently, delicately given. As a role model, you have shown me that leadership is as much about working behind the scenes in a careful and caring way as it is about standing up in front of a crowd. You have inspired me by your example.

Given your dedication to Bedford Hills\* and the education of our students there, it was no surprise to me when you were intent upon returning as a Math tutor. I know from speaking with the Bedford Hills women that you made Math, well, not fun, exactly, but let's say *approachable*. You were able to help your students overcome their fears and help them see that they could do the impossible. What a gift! What blessings you have bestowed on all of the students you have taught! I count myself among this fortunate group.

You have given each one of us whose lives you have touched the gift of your experience, your wisdom, your gentleness, and your faith. Please know that I am holding you, and will always hold you, in my heart.

With love and affection,

*Kerry*

Kerry Walk, Ph.D.  
President

*\*Marymount Manhattan College sponsors a degree-granting Program at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women.*



## THE WIDOW'S MITE

by Catherine Minhoto, RSHM

LOS ANGELES, CA Those who know me, know that the parish where I worship, Santa Teresita Church, is a place where my faith is nourished on a weekly basis. Santa Teresita is one of the poorest parishes in Los Angeles, located near the Ramona Gardens Projects, subsidized housing for low-income families, and plagued by gang violence and drug abuse.

Following the Spanish morning Eucharist, our little choir has coffee in the rectory, during which we briefly reflect on the next Sunday's readings, and discuss music that would enhance the liturgy. It was on such a Sunday that I experienced an act of kindness. I walked into the rectory's small dining room to see a room



Pictured from left: Sr. Regina Penin SAG, Alfredo Matamoros, Claudia Flores, Sr. Cathy Minhoto RSHM, Joaquin Lopez, Magdalena Barber.

filled with decorated cardboard baskets packed with canned food, beans, rice, and pasta for the needy of our community. I was so moved to see the incredible generosity of people who have so little, and I was reminded of the previous week's gospel of the widow who gave her "mite." Like the widow, these are

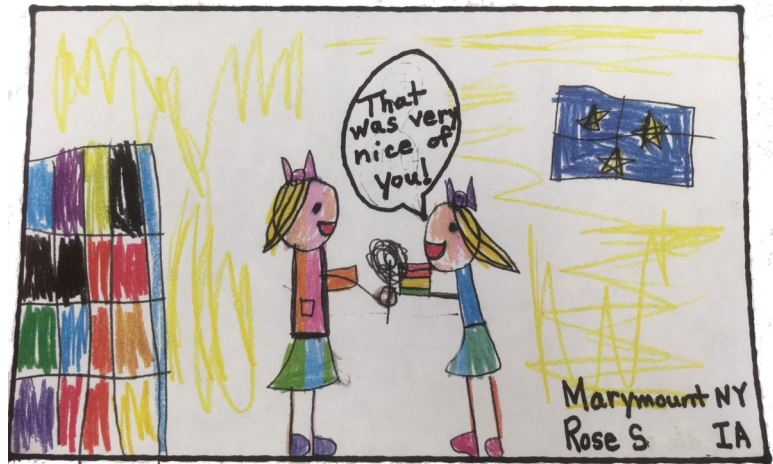
people who give out of their substance. This was a challenge for me—knowing that my giving has more to do with my abundance than my substance. The gospel is proclaimed to me by these wonderful, faith-filled people—poor and hungry people whom God has exalted and in whom God delights.♦

## LESSONS FROM MY STUDENTS

by Fran McGoldrick

NEW YORK, NY It is easy to lose sight of kindness when there is so much unrest, cynicism, and harsh rhetoric in the news and on social media. As a Nursery through Class II Religion Teacher, I am always mindful of sharing Jesus' message of caring for others through words and actions. This year, our school is focusing on fulfilling Goal #6 of the RSHM Mission, "That all may have life and have it to the full." Being a kind human being is essential to living this goal daily.

Each grade has been focusing on lessons about how to incorporate Goal #6 into their daily lives. Nursery, PreK and Kindergarten are concentrating on sharing, Class I is learning about "The Golden Rule", and Class II is studying the lives of saints. This led me to thinking about St. Thérèse of Lisieux and her message on the importance of small acts of kindness. The more we spoke about the goal, the more I realized



that I was witness to, and the recipient of, my students' small acts of kindness.

In Nursery, I was touched by the student who shared her special toy with another student. I am tickled each time a PK student says, "I adore you!" During a recent Shelter in Place Drill, I was moved when a Kindergarten student consoled another student who was frightened. I was in awe when twin sisters in Class I, and their brother from Nursery, ran a bake sale outside their building to collect money for

Hurricane Michael victims. Each morning, a Class II student stops by our faculty office to share a hug with everyone in the office. If any teachers are missing, she asks another teacher to share her hug and "Have a nice day!" message with them when they return.

I have an Instagram friend group, and we all work in a school. We close our threads with the hashtag, "Blessed." Being the recipient of, and witness to, my students' small acts of kindness affirms that I am truly #Blessed.♦



## WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

by Maureen Kelleher, RSHM

On Sunday, December 2, 2018 when alumnae gathered in Butler Commons at Fordham University for Founder's Day, Maureen Kelleher RSHM received the Mother Butler Leadership Award for her years of dedicated work with immigrants in Immokalee, Florida. The following accounts were at the heart of her address.

Jocelyn a 21 year old mother from EL Salvador entered the US with her 2 yr old daughter Juana. They passed the credible fear interview at the border and were allowed to stay in the US and report monthly to ICE while preparing her political asylum defense for the immigration court. She came to Legal Aid of Collier County for help. She explained she had fled El Salvador after she and her younger sister were attacked and almost raped by 3 gang members but neighbors came to their defense. She was marked for punishment by the drug gang. While she had been paying them the extortion fees weekly from her little business she had refused their offer to pay a reduced monthly fee if she would make her younger brother join the gang. When she and he continued to refuse, they beat him severely and broke his arm in July. So in August after she survived the attempted rape she and her brother, with little Juana, fled El Salvador to come to the US.

We will represent Jocelyn and many other women with similar stories but we know they will eventually



Alumnae of Mother Butler Memorial High School, Bronx, NY came to the Founder's Day gathering to hear their former English teacher, Sr. Maureen Kelleher (center).

be deported since under the law, they will be judged as victims of common law crime. They will not qualify as fitting into a protected category as fearing persecution on account of their religion, race, nationality, political opinion, or as members of a particular social group.

Not all of my cases will end in deportation. One victory early this year was for a woman who suffered long months of beatings from her partner a gang member. She left him in Honduras and returned to El Salvador to her family but he followed her there where he continued to threaten and abuse her. The immigration court found she had suffered persecution as a member of a particular social group. I defined her as a member of "El Salvadoran women unable to leave a domestic relationship with Maras 18 gang members."

However, I could not have won

this case later in 2018 since Attorney General Sessions issued his decision that such victims of domestic violence were not what he determined to qualify as members of a particular social group.

The solution for these, and so many others, lies in nations with the capacity like Canada, the US and Mexico to collaborate with honest stake holders in Honduras Guatemala and El Salvador to invest so as to make change in these countries. Some would argue since we consume some of these drugs and have interfered with their government over the years we face some responsibility. I only say that when my neighbor's house is on fire I can hardly say it is no concern of mine. The amount of violence and murder in these countries makes me see them as on fire.♦

## THE ANYWAY OF MOTHER TERESA

(Submitted by Sr. Ellen Marie Keane at the last Soundings meeting she attended)

People are often unreasonable  
and self-centered.  
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse  
you of ulterior motives.  
Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you.  
Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people  
may be jealous.  
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be  
forgotten tomorrow.  
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have  
and it may never be enough.  
Give your best anyway.

For you see, in the end, it is  
between you and God.  
It was never between you and  
them anyway.

NEXT ISSUE:  
AHA! MOMENTS

# INHERITING KINDNESS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

by Kathleen Connell, RSHM

TARRYTOWN, NY There have been so many examples of kindness in the RSHM congregation since its founding in 1849. One of my favorite religious who modeled this kindness was Mother St. Liguori MacMullen. She had a long and holy life (1853-1940) and passed on her kindness from generation to generation, serving as superior in Portugal and France for 63 years.

Appointed superior of the Braga community when only 24 years of age, M. St. Liguori was often found in the kitchen, helping the sisters prepare a meal, or teaching the classes of a sister who was ill. Especially if the young sisters went to Beziers to prepare for their final vows or if a postulant went to begin her novitiate, there was always work to be covered. With M. St. Liguori, however, one senses that she was not so concerned with the reputation of the school, as with the welfare of the students and the members of the community devoted to them.

Gailhac wrote to M. St. Liguori unambiguously and without fear that his words could be received as flattery:

*You are, you, like a reservoir of the graces of God. It is into your soul that God is pleased to pour these graces and it is up to you to communicate them to your daughters by your prayers, your example and your counsel.*  
(9/16/1884)

Mother Joseph Butler was fortunate to be sent to Braga the year after her first profession in 1880, and to be formed as a religious by this kind superior, in this graced community, for over twenty years. When Mother Butler asked if the RSHM in Braga could begin to offer preached retreats, not just to alumnae or to the students' mothers, but to lay women of all classes of society, only one member of the community supported Mother Butler's "radical idea" -- Mother St. Liguori. The first preached retreat for lay

women of all classes was so successful that the whole Braga community supported continuing the retreats for them during the summer when the students were on vacation.

M. de l'Eucharistie had been a young Portuguese sister in the Braga community with M. St. Liguori as superior and M. Joseph Butler. Later, when the Revolution of 1911 exiled all religious congregations from Portugal, M. de l'Eucharistie, then Representative of the General Superior in Portugal, Brazil and Spain, led many of the exiled RSHM across the border to Tuy, Spain. As time went on, she opened a school to accommodate their former students who wished to cross into Spain to continue their classes with the RSHM. M. de l'Eucharistie did not forget the needs of the lay women still in Portugal but deprived of spiritual help. When the students returned to Portugal to take their examinations, the Portuguese lay women were welcomed to Tuy for preached retreats and spiritual renewal.

When M. Joseph Butler was missioned to Tarrytown (1907), Marymount School opened with just six students. Trusting in providence,

Mother Joseph Butler asked for a four storied South Wing to be built to provide a chapel and a dining room, classrooms, a large lounge and bedrooms for the boarders on the two floors above. Already, Mother Butler was planning retreats for lay women of all classes who could come to the South Wing when the students returned home for the summer.

Retreats for lay women remained a high priority for Mother Butler until she died. She had been ahead of her time. She had been encouraged by M. St. Liguori and imitated by M. de l'Eucharistie in very difficult times. In 1898, the Cardinal Vannutelli congratulated Mother Joseph Butler for the retreat movement when he visited the community in Braga, and at the Chapter of 1919, Cardinal de Cabrieres praised, in particular, the work of retreats given at Marymount and in Tuy, and expressed his desire to know more about the method used in these retreats.

It was a small kindness, nurtured in "the reservoir of graces," inherited by Mother Joseph Butler and passed on to others in Tuy and Tarrytown. May the RSHM continue to fan into flame this spiritual kindness for all yearning to know and love God.♦



M. St. Ligouri with poor children in Braga, Portugal

# THE KIND HEART IS OPEN TO ALL

by Deborah Jamali RSHM

CHINHOYI, ZIMBABWE

"KINDNESS" comes across to me in the same way as the word "good." God is good and kind and Jesus came to show us what God is like. So Jesus is our great example of kindness. Maybe the word "kindness" is another name we can give Jesus because of his promotion of kindness towards all. "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full." In other texts Jesus says, he came for sinners, not for the righteous.

The teachings of Jesus have made me reflect on the way I give and receive kindness. I find this especially operative in community life. Our people cherish and admire the community where kindness and goodness are evident. I appreciate this kindness in my RSHM Community in Chinhoyi where we share time and space in accommodating and listening to each other. Sharing our talents, enjoying the food we prepare for each other and the giving and receiving of forgiveness, are all expressions of the goodness and kindness of our God.

Paul talks about kindness in Galatians Chapter 5. The kind heart accommodates all people, regardless of culture, black or white, finally professed or junior sisters. Kindness does not distinguish but builds to-



gether a fabric of love and peace where all feel they belong. This is the kindness which heals and frees us and which brings us closer to God and to each other. ♦



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