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Peacemaking... Our Journey

You Had To Be There!

Sister Regina Holtz, FSP



Sister Regina and Timothy.

We have all had those experiences in our lives which, for any number of reasons, cannot be related to others in a way that will truly capture the impact which they had on us- and

so we say- "You had to be there!" My recent extended stay in the Heart of Africa, Uganda is certainly one of the times when I have to resort to the cliché, for you really do have to be there to begin to understand life in a small, dusty country town in East Uganda.

For two months I was privileged to volunteer my services at Saint Philomena Iganga Babies Home, while living with four of the Little Sisters of Saint Francis who minister there. As you might expect even in our country, when you are providing all care and services for 34 children ranging in age from a few months to five years, every day is busy, different and full of excitement. Now picture providing round the clock care for those children without the convenience of washing machines, Pampers, dishwashers, supermarkets, hot running water, ovens, microwaves or reliable electricity, and you begin to have a feel for the logistics involved in day to day life at Babies Home.



Peace

Every one of the children has a story of hardship since all have been orphaned or abandoned. One has to wonder how so much sadness could exist in such short

lifetimes as theirs. However, the emphasis at Babies Home is on nurturing the children and bringing them a more promising future.

So while I cannot fully share my immersion experience in Iganga, I can share a few recollections illustrated in the accompanying photos.

New shoes - it was a crowded van trip to town but on the feast of Saint Nicholas, eighteen of the children were each fitted with a new pair of shoes. Advance notice had been given to the only shoe store in town to prepare for their arrival!

Christmas Day - as seemingly every day in Uganda started out cool, but by the time we came out of church, it was clear that the 100 degree heat and humidity would be returning. We all gathered around the

Christmas tree for the distribution of gifts - one for each child! Decorations come in a rainbow of colors; balloons are used on the tree and are even hung in church as well.

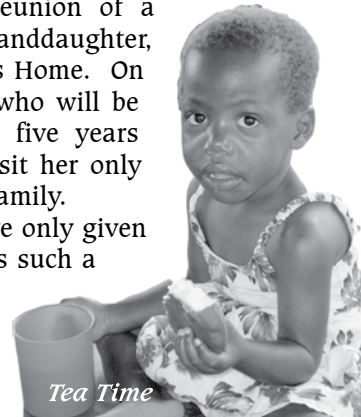


Little Sisters with Sister Regina.

Tea time - I believe the custom of serving tea at four p.m. every day may be a carry over from the days when Uganda was an English colony. The children take a break from play to drink hot tea with sugar. Sometimes there is even a biscuit or mandazzi to enjoy with the tea.

In the village - Sister Elizabeth, Director of Babies Home, makes every effort to locate relatives of the children and arrange trips to the villages for get acquainted visits. On one such trip to a distant village, the three of us volunteers at Babies Home witnessed the reunion of a grandmother and her four year granddaughter, whom we had brought from Babies Home. On another occasion, we took Peace, who will be leaving for boarding school after five years in Babies Home, to a village to visit her only known relatives- an uncle and his family.

With these bits of stories, I have only given a taste of the experience which was such a privilege and blessing for me. A great deal has been lost in my effort to translate the vitality, energy, and spirit of the children and staff into a newsletter piece- **YOU REALLY HAD TO BE THERE!**



Tea Time



On the way to town to buy new shoes.

Inside...

Resurrection - Promise of New Life	2
Franciscan Sister of Peace Receives Sapientia Et Doctrina Award.....	2
Franciscan Associate Group	3
Development Update	3
Franciscan "Sister to All" Celebrates 50 Years of Religious Life	4
Sister Constance Gaynor FSP Appointed Congregation Archivist	4
In Memorium	4



From the Congregation Minister

Resurrection - Promise Of New Life

Sister Jeanne Marie Gilligan FSP



The Resurrection is not merely an event that happened 2,000 years ago and will happen to us when our own bodies rise to new life. Rather, the Resurrection is something that buoys up every moment of life and every aspect of reality. God is always recreating life, infusing it with goodness, mercy, and love that have the power to heal all wounds, forgive all sin, and overcome death.

The readings of the Easter season strikingly reveal the depth of the love Christ had for His friends, those who had known Him, listened to Him, and believed in Him. For them the Resurrection was an intimate event - a calling by name, a gesture, a gradual awareness that something new was being born. To the women and men who committed themselves to him, he revealed that His mission on earth had been fulfilled. To those who shared in His ministry, He entrusted the sacred task to call all people into the new life within Him.

It is also striking how nobody recognized Jesus immediately. They thought He was the gardener, a stranger on the road, even a ghost. Until something familiar happened - the calling of a name, the sharing of a breakfast, the invitation to try for another catch at sea. His friends gradually realized He was there for them. Absence and presence suddenly touched each other. The old Jesus was gone; and they could no longer be with Him as before. Now the new Jesus, the risen Lord, was present. He was with them intimately, more intimately than ever. It was an empowering presence and a reassurance that He would remain with them and those who came after them. I believe that this aspect of the resurrection takes place every day if we have the eyes to see and the ears to hear.

What the Resurrection of Jesus promises us is that things can always be new again. It's never too late to start over, no sin is unforgivable, every form of death can be overcome. This is particularly pertinent in today's world when we hear daily of the atrocities of war, conflict, violence, devastation, and sins against humanity across the globe. The depth of suffering and distress in the world is overwhelming.

The Franciscan Sisters of Peace are constantly discerning how we can do our part to live as peacemakers and to bring peace into the lives of our suffering sisters and brothers. We are keenly aware that we are not alone in our efforts. The prayers and encouragement of our friends, families, and benefactors enable us to live our mission and to persist in our endeavors. We thank you for your goodness to us and remember you in our daily prayers.

Franciscan Sister Of Peace Receives Sapiientia Et Doctrina Award

On Saturday, October 20, 2007, Sister Kathryn King received Fordham University's School of Religion and Religious Education Sapiientia Et Doctrina Award for Service and Renewal of the Church. Sapiientia Et Doctrina is the Fordham motto - "Wisdom and Knowledge."

Sister Kathryn has made major contributions to her Franciscan community, Fordham University, and the many who received her Spiritual Direction, and the church. She was a program director at Mariandale Center, and subsequently developed a full-time spiritual direction and retreat ministry. She also co-supervised the

practicum in spiritual direction at Fordham's GRE for several years while she inaugurated a collaborative novitiate for a number of Franciscan communities of women in the New York metropolitan area.

Sister Kathryn is currently serving as pastoral associate at Saint Ignatius Loyola Parish in Manhattan.



Sister Kathryn King

Franciscan Associate Group

Kathy Burbage and Diana Orsini,
FSP Associates-Toms River, NJ

Last year two women from the Franciscan Sisters of Peace Associates group, in Elmwood Park, moved to the "Sunny Jersey Shore." It was their intent to commute to Elmwood Park once a month, so that they could stay connected with the community

Associate Kathy Burbage considered that perhaps another group could be formed, thus bringing in new members and expanding the number of associates to the community. With permission from the leadership and with the gracious help of Sister Joanne Picciurro, Sister Rose Marie Broadbent and Sister Alice Nagl, the Toms River group has come into existence. This is a women's group that, not only focuses on prayer, but also Franciscan spirituality and supports the group in their peacemaking mission. They also attend community meetings and celebrations of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace.

The Toms River group consists of ten women, including vowed religious and the associates. This is a large number considering their short existence, since February will mark their fourth meeting since September.

The Toms River group is the newest addition of Franciscan Associate groups in addition to those in North Jersey, south Westchester, and north Westchester Groups. If you would like more information or are interested in becoming an associate, call Judy Petersen at 914-761-6608 or the Congregation Center at 845-942-2527 extension 113.



First row: Judy Petersen, Diana Orsini, Sister Joanne Picciurro; Second row: Mary Ann Munson, Annette Ryan, Denise Jones, Sister Rose Marie Broadbent; Third row: Terri Benack, Anna Maria Knific, Kathy Burbage. Not shown: Sister Alice Nagel.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Lucy Sinacore – Development Director

Many thanks to those of you who gave to our Christmas Appeal. The net proceeds for 2007 were \$8,324.73, a \$2,203.12 decrease from our 2006 proceeds. We appreciate your generosity as your gifts help our sisters to continue in their ministries and help provide for the needs of our retired sisters.

We are currently in the process of selling our 2008 April Calendar Raffle. This also is a major fund raising activity each year and the proceeds provide for the needs of our sisters. The ACR net proceeds in 2007 were \$26,305.73, a \$2,917.71 decrease from 2006. I ask for your continued support of our sisters and their peacemaking mission.

Some other ways you can help the sisters are:

**Name them as beneficiary of
your insurance policy**

Transfer of stocks

We also have prayer enrollment cards for you to offer comfort to others. Please indicate on the enclosed envelope if you would like us to send you a few to keep on hand.

As costs continue to rise, so do our operating expenses. I know that all of us are feeling the pinch caused by the present state of our economy. However, I ask you to help our sisters, in whatever measure you can, to continue their work in their ministries of serving others. Our sisters are depending on you and me to help them bring the message of peace to all they meet. I ask that you be as generous as you can.

Your generosity is most appreciated, and all of your intentions are remembered in the daily prayers of the sisters.

May our Risen Lord bring you and your family many blessings this Easter Season.

WE REMEMBER prayerfully and in charity those who have gone to their eternal reward since our last newsletter:

Rev. Eugene Keane	Former Chaplain of Saint Joseph's Home and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Nazareth Life Center
Regina Henzi	Sister-in-law of Sister Mary Peter Henzi FSP
Marcella Moross	Aunt of Sister Marcella McHale FSP
Aileen Hurley	Cousin of Sister Kathleen O'Farrell FSP
Bernard Greene	Brother of Anne Byrne FSP Associate
Robert Laffan	Cousin of Sister Carolyn Nicolai FSP
Gertrude Brown	Aunt of Sister Helen Wacker

Franciscan "Sister To All" Celebrates 50 Years Of Religious Life

Sister Francine Kavanah, FSP, marked her 50th anniversary as a Franciscan Sister on October 16, 2007 at a Mass in Saint Anthony's Church in Yonkers, New York with a reception following at the Polonaise in Yonkers. Sister Francine achieved many accomplishments as an educator throughout her years of ministry. Following are excerpts from a reflection delivered by Sister Kathryn King FSP at the celebration:

"Giving witness to God's voice of both joy and peace has been a particular way of living for Sister Francine. She lives life fully with both joy and peace. Life for her means being 'Sister to all.' A sister values relationships, and that is Francine's deepest gift; a woman in relationship to God, her Congregation, her large, extended family, and to those with whom, and for whom, she has ministered both in the past and in the present.

Thirty years ago, I lived with Sister Francine in Hastings. Most days in both spring and fall, she would go out for a bike ride after school. She would be gone almost until dinner time. One day I asked her how come she was out so long. She answered, 'Oh, I'm not riding all that time ... I stop to talk to all the people I know along the way!' It was then that I realized that biking was an occasion for relationship and friendship for her.

Francine has a special gift for children and in particular, pre-

adolescents and adolescents. 'How do you manage them?' I would ask. Her response: 'I listen and treat each one with respect.' Francine's desire has always been to bring harmony into her relationships. Some years ago, Sister Francine was

the principal of a school in a parish with many factions.

It was a difficult assignment. Her style of taking her time, gathering all

the information, listening to all parties, treating everyone with respect and making decisions

that were carefully thought out and presented

with simplicity, clarity and inner authority, eventually

created an atmosphere of respectful acceptance among the various groups that were competing for control.

By her life of service as sister, her spirit of joy and her thirst for using her talents as a peacemaker, Sister Francine gives witness to God's deep personal love and its power to bring goodness into the world and into the lives of each of us."



Sister Francine Kavanah, FSP with Fr. Peter Madori

"Life for her means being 'Sister to all.' A sister values relationships, and that is Francine's deepest gift"

Sister Kathryn King FSP

BE REMEMBERED FOREVER...

By naming the Franciscan Sisters of Peace in your Will

For further information, contact:

Lucy Sinacore
Director of Development
Franciscan Sisters of Peace
20 Ridge Street
Haverstraw, NY 10927
(845) 942-2527 Ext. 107

Our legal title is Sisters of Saint Francis of Peace. The Sisters thank you for your continued support of their ministries.

Please indicate on the enclosed envelope if you will name the Franciscan Sisters of Peace in your will or already have named them in your will.

Peacemaking... Our Journey

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Sister Constance Gaynor FSP Appointed Congregation Archivist

In recent months, Sister Constance Gaynor was appointed as the archivist for the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. The Catholic Library Association and the Archivists of Women Religious Congregations have each presented workshops for new Archivists. Sister Constance has had the opportunity of attending these to learn about her new responsibilities and to meet with the persons assigned as archivists for other congregations.

The Franciscan Sisters of Peace have had their archives stored at Sacred Heart Convent in Yonkers, New York since the beginning of the new institute. Sister Laurenza Hickey had set up the archives and tended to them for a number of years in that setting. Sister Barnabus Hall took over this task upon Sister Laurenza's retirement.

The archives were moved to the Congregation center in Haverstraw, New York in November of 2007 and are currently "in process." The archives are meant to safely store the papers and documents pertaining to the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace and to make them available in the future to persons who may have a need or interest in researching part of that history.