

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Mary

This special feast day for RSHM and associates was greatly enriched in our Eastern American Area by a Zoom presentation on biblical women of hope by Luisa Almendra, RSHM, Chair of Jewish and Christian Biblical Studies at the Catholic University of Portugal.

Of the four biblical women of hope Luisa presented, the following excerpts focus on Mary of Nazareth:

Prophetic hope arises from the intertwining of a deep awareness of human fragility and infidelity with the hope and certainty that God is in history not as a judge but as salvation, the possibility of a new life.

This hope is expressed with lyrical beauty in Mary's Magnificat.

In this song, we see God through Mary's eyes. We know how Mary remembers the experience of God in her own life and how she reviews God's actions in the life and history of God with his people.

It is a song that does not spring from sudden enthusiasm. It emerges from the serene intimacy of Mary, who, at the annunciation, could ask questions but also knew how to remain silent in the face of what she did not understand. Therefore, when Mary raises her voice to sing, she says it is from her soul and spirit. It is with all her faculties that she addresses God. We will never hear Mary talk so much and talk like that again.

Mary's song takes place in two movements. In the first, Mary exalts God as Savior and Almighty and defines herself as a humble servant, a servant in whom



all those who have experienced God's mercy see themselves today. This first movement ends with the affirmation of the sanctity of the name of the only one who is holy.

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Signs of the Times

Worship, the Climate Crisis and the Creator God



What is the connection between worship and care for the earth? What is the connection between worshipping God and addressing climate change, the suffering caused by rising sea levels, and the frightening intensity of storms? Are we so unique that we don't need to account for our kinship with every breathing creature brought forth from the earth (as the second creation story in Genesis 2 tells us) and with all the inanimate elements, planets and stars? How shall we worship this Creator God who not only creates, but who holds in being, and promises fulfillment for every element under and in the heavens? Does worship of the Creator God have implications for our sense of responsibility within all creation?

It is taken for granted in the liturgical field that worship forms the community who participates in that worship. A pressing question, therefore, is whether our present worship practices are adequate to help build a consistent ethic of care for our planet in crisis? Who are the creative spirits who can put words into our mouths that ring true and deep, that name the pain, count the costs, and still hold out hope? In addition, within Christian liturgical Churches, who decides what gets put into denominational prayer books, eucharistic prayer texts, hymn texts, and worship environments? In other words, how do worship traditions change and evolve?

As a liturgical scholar with a profound interest in how liturgy develops, I have become involved in an international, interdenominational, Orthodox and Roman Catholic effort to address exactly the questions mentioned above. In March, Tomás Insua of the Laudato Si' Movement organized a conference in Assisi to address many of these questions.

One hundred twenty scholars, church leaders and activists, as well as one hundred online participants, gathered to discuss the possibility of shaping a worship celebration that honors the Creator God and that would align with the Churches' overall commitment to environmental responsibility. Participants included the present and immediate past Archbishops of Canterbury, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew; the president of the World Council of Churches, representatives of all the mainline Protestant Churches, and four Roman dicasteries, as well as systematic and liturgical scholars who have worked in this area of concern. At a time when ecumenical efforts in liturgical reform have been minimal, the energy to cooperate in such a project was palpable; it lit up the room with excitement.

The proposal under consideration is twofold: whether we could celebrate as a major solemnity or feast in our various churches the very idea of the Triune God as Creator. While God is spoken of as creator frequently enough in the liturgies as they now stand, there is not a specific feast that celebrates God as Creator. The Liturgical Year, now celebrated by so many churches, is centered on the mysteries of Christ (excepting Trinity Sunday and Pentecost). No specific effort has been made to celebrate the entire Trinity's role in Creation as part and parcel of God's redemptive love.

In addition, we are interested in raising consciousness of the dignity of all creation gifted to us by this selfsame Creating God. The church, by placing an emphasis on the uniqueness of human persons (as evidenced in the first creation account of Genesis 1), has inadvertently devalued the rest of creation to the extent that creation is often viewed as merely

instrumental to human needs, rather than as having its own intrinsic dignity given to it by our Creator God. Participants in the Assisi Conference argued that whatever we say about God as Creator (for example, each time we say the Creed), it is painfully obvious the Christian people have not been galvanized toward the kind of ecological conversion that the current environmental crisis requires. Something must change.

No liturgist would ever argue that the liturgy can do everything; but no liturgist worthy of her or his salt would question the contribution worship can make to the ethical commitments of the Churches. It will require a concerted effort by the Magisterium (like the encyclical *Laudato Si'*), the theological community working on creation theology and environmental ethics (like Elizabeth Johnson, Denis Edwards, and Ilia Delio), movements of popular piety (like Earthday celebrations and the Season of Creation) as well as the work of liturgical prayer writers, hymn writers, worship space designers, etc.

At the end of the Assisi Conference, there was near consensus that such a project was worthy of our attention and our commitment to bring a Feast of the Creator/Creation to fruition. No one was naïve about the implementation problems of ecumenical subsidiarity, on the one hand, and Roman and Orthodox centrality, on the other. However, the desire of the participants to have the churches witness to the world our responsibility for the very future of the planet and the important role worship plays in the Christian community's life was without question.

Catherine Vincie, RSHM

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Mary

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In the second movement, Mary states that this God, who looked at the humility of his servant is the God who disperses the proud, overthrows the powerful, exalts the humble, and fills the hungry with good things. Mary decenters her praise from what God did in her to focus on God's actions for the little ones of Israel. The God who did wonders in himself is the God who is present in the lives of all who wait and believe in him.

Luisa expanded her reflection on Mary to include all those close to Mary's heart:

Because we must read and pray the Word of God to learn to read and pray our lives...let us remember these biblical women (Miriam, Deborah, Anna, and Mary of Nazareth) and also remember and recognize so many sisters who lived and live with us. Today, as we look to the HEART OF MARY, let us celebrate our life and our testimony of RSHM as women who were and want to continue to be an efficacious sign of prophetic hope in the world.

The culmination of this very special day was Eucharistic Liturgy with Father John Vigilante presiding and a festive luncheon in the convent dining room beautifully prepared for the occasion.

Bea McMahon, RSHM

Madres Protagonistas

at Centro Corazón de María

In the fall of 2020, at the height of COVID-19, we recognized that single mothers with small children who came to us for assistance struggled with the everyday challenges of raising young children in isolation, in a new land and with few job prospects during the pandemic. We knew that we needed to help these women foster a sense of solidarity as well as basic parenting skills. And so, with help from a generous grant from Carolyn and David Holstein, “Madres Protagonistas” was born.

We had three goals: to provide a class to teach basic literacy while modeling skills and behaviors to mothers and their children; to teach an additional parenting class to educate young mothers about early childhood development and parenting skills; and, to offer a monthly stipend both as an incentive to commit to the classes and to ease the acute economic stress during winter months when work is scarce, especially during the pandemic. There was only one criterion for participation: to be a single parent with a child between the ages of two and four. The only way to implement the program in the beginning was through Zoom classes.

Fast forward to the spring of 2024. Madres Protagonistas is thriving as it completes its fourth year. We have built on its success by adding English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for mothers so they can be better equipped to find work and to better engage in their children’s education. The Holstein family has continued their generous support and we have received additional grants from the Long Island Community Foundation and Alpern Family Foundation, Inc.

Since the beginning, Madres Protagonistas has served 69 individuals - 33 mothers and 36 children. These single mothers are better prepared to overcome challenges as they make this new country their home. They learn about American culture and acquire English language skills while working and raising young children. Commenting on how the program has helped her, one participant said, “I used to get angry with my daughter, but now I look for ways to deal with her and be patient.” Another stated, “Participating in the program gave me the opportunity to spend time with my son, spend time sharing together.”

The program also provides families with an opportunity to socialize and make new friends. Mothers and children develop relationships that go beyond the 13 weeks of classes. They establish a support network that is integral to their feeling part of the community. Another member of the 2023-24 class said, “I didn’t feel alone being with other mothers.” They get to know other families before their children enter the Hampton Bays school system. This year, five children will be registered in the Pre-K and Kindergarten programs. As the instructors get to know the children in the Madres Protagonistas program, they can identify areas of concern. This past year alone, four children were referred for early intervention program services. Madres Protagonistas has enriched our lives as well as those of the mothers and children.

*Monica Schnee, Ed.M.
Member, Board of Directors
Centro Corazón de María*



Marymount New York Names New HEAD OF SCHOOL

In May 2024, Marymount School of New York's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to appoint Lorraine Riley as Marymount's fifteenth head of school, effective July 1, 2025. Ms. Riley is a Marymount alumna, Butler Scholar, senior administrator, and current parent who cares deeply for our school and understands firsthand how special our community is.

Mrs. Concepcion Alvar will continue as head of school for the 2024-2025 academic year and will serve as an invaluable mentor to Ms. Riley. She will build upon Mrs. Alvar's extraordinary legacy and carry forward the vision and values of our beloved school.

Ms. Riley's appointment is the culmination of a year-long, highly competitive international search process; evaluating hundreds of applications from experienced educators around the world. What a testament to Marymount that one of our very own rose to the top of a very talented candidate pool.

As director of admissions, fellow parent, and proud alumna, she brings deep pedagogical experience to this role, grounded in her Marymount education. Twenty-four years ago, Ms. Riley entered our school in Class IX through the Butler Scholarship program, and then went on to graduate from Georgetown University, magna cum laude, becoming the first person in her family to complete college. She also earned a master's degree in educational leadership from Columbia University. Recognizing the transformational impact of education firsthand, Ms. Riley found her calling in education and has dedicated her life to ensuring other students would have similar opportunities.

She began her career at Teach for America to improve educational equity in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. After years of serving as an English Language Arts (ELA) middle school teacher and literacy/ELA curriculum coordinator, she went on to lead the academic program in the KIPP Charter Network in New Orleans, a charter network of nine schools, spanning K-12. As director of curriculum and instruction, she strategized, designed, and scaled network-wide structures and systems to establish academic excellence, resulting in unprecedented performance improvement within its schools across all grade levels. In 2016, Ms. Riley returned home to Marymount as a member of the senior leadership team. She has held roles of increasing responsibility beginning in development, ultimately serving as director of development until being named director of admissions in 2022.

In accepting this appointment, Ms. Riley said:

"Marymount is my home, its community is my family, this work is my calling. As the second lay head in Marymount's storied history, it is the honor of my life to uphold and protect the mission



and vision of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. I am proud to continue the intrepid legacies of Mother Butler, Sister Kathleen Fagan, and Concepcion Alvar, who have modeled bold and compassionate leadership for the last century. I have been fundamentally shaped by their innovative spirit, strong work ethic, and unwavering love for our community. I am looking forward to partnering with the Board of Trustees, students, parents, alumnae, faculty, and staff, and lead Marymount into our next 100 years."

Marymount has a strong reputation for academic excellence grounded in our pursuit of the RSHM mission "that all may have life and have it to the full," and our families, alumnae, faculty, administrators, and students make our school a place that is like no other. We look forward to Ms. Riley's stewardship as she leads our beloved school into its next chapter.

*Jennifer Cyranski
Director, Communications & Events
Marymount New York*

Jubilee 2024

Jubilation was in the air on Saturday, April 20 for the celebration of Jubilees at Marymount Convent, Tarrytown. Presiding at the liturgy, Father John Vigilante set the tone, giving, as always, an illustration from his own experience. He spoke of the “chain of evidence” that he needed to secure when he was a U.S. Customs worker. He was responsible to deliver contraband from the border to the TSA, nothing added or subtracted. This symbolized the “chain” of gospel evidence faithfully carried by the Jubilarians throughout their religious life.

After the final blessing, Sister Bea McMahon delivered the toast to the Jubilarians:

75 YEARS

Cheers to Brigid Murphy who has shown that Cillian Murphy isn't the only one deserving an Oscar. Brigid, you have brought rich drama to the lives of countless little children.

Bonne fête to Margaret Morrissey! You have savored French, not just as a language, but as a rich culture which you have shared with many.

Kudos to de la Salle Murphy...we rally for our Sally who has a grand tally of life and love and laughter.



70 YEARS

Victoria Busch, Vicky, words ending in “y” have been central in your life: Patsy, Vicky, chaplaincy. Today we focus on HAPPY...may it fit not just this Jubilee Day, but all the days to come!

Gabrielle Corbally, we can never equal the wisdom and wit of the many stories you have shared. When we were lost in joy or mute in sorrow, we could always count on you to step up to the mic. May the One who is the Word continue to speak through you!

Florence Reilly, our Flo, the river of your life has flowed through places near and far. May it continue to enrich its surroundings and follow a sure path to the ocean of God's great love.



60 YEARS

Roz Blanchet directed by faith, delighted by sports, born to lead, may the clear vision and exuberant joy you have shared with so many sustain your experience of God “whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.”

Ann Miller. Lifeways, and love-ways, and peace-ways have been the highways and byways of your life. Welcoming the newcomer, driving the sick, sharing with those in need...you will surely one day hear the Lord say, “You did it to me.”

So we thank God for all the years we celebrate today – a total of 555 years of RSHM life for our jubilarians. Fabulous fives, radiant lives, may they shine for years to come like stars in the heavens and trustworthy beacons on earth.

The celebration continued at a festive luncheon shared with family and friends of the Jubilarians.



Bea McMahon, RSHM

MaryMUN XIV

One of the characteristics of the RSHM educational network is that it always seeks to promote new ways for its members to connect through different academic, spiritual and sports activities. As part of this objective on this occasion, Marymount Mexico had the privilege of hosting a very special event: MaryMUN XIV. Students from Marymount Cuernavaca, Barranquilla, and New York, as well as students from local schools, met on April 25th and 26th to participate and collaborate in this unique United Nations Model.

The MaryMUN XIV staff organized this event with great enthusiasm so that everyone could learn and enjoy their experience. Around 150 students actively participated as board members of each committee, as delegates, and/or staff. They all worked on six different panels: General Assembly, Security Council, World Bank, UN Women, Historic General Assembly and the Mexico House of Representatives. The discussion topics were diverse, from the deportation of illegal migrants, to peace and security in Africa, global trade development, women and girls in Gaza, the Korean War, and the ethical use of AI, among others.

A moment worth highlighting from MaryMUN XIV was when Sister Veronica Brand gave a message to the model participants. She was kind enough to record a video that was transmitted during the opening ceremony. Sister Veronica stressed that the model would give the students an important experience of being a global citizen. She pointed out that our world is in need of a transformation that can only be possible through education. For her, an essential part of this process is students participating in UN models. Sister Veronica asserted that today we are experiencing an interconnected global crisis that must be resolved in order to ensure a decent and better life for people in the future. “We must listen to the cry of our world and the cry of our people,” Sister Veronica insisted. She affirmed that the current global crisis requires multilateral solutions. She referred to the words of the current Secretary General, António Guterres, when he spoke about a UN 2.0, and the fact that 21st century challenges should be addressed by 21st century organizations and resolutions. She emphasized that this UN 2.0 requires the creativity, commitment, and courage of all young people. Finally, Sister Veronica encouraged our students to hope and believe that a better world is possible; a world where all may have life and have it to the fullest.

MaryMUN XIV was the perfect opportunity for our students to develop awareness of some of the most critical world issues that must be resolved promptly. Also, they were able to recognize the continuous hard work that the United Nations does to maintain peace in the world. It is well known that students who participate in United Nations models develop vital skills that will serve their entire lives. In addition, they also developed lifelong friendships and connections among their peers from Colombia, the United States, and Mexico. We hope this international RSHM event is repeated in more of our sister schools so that the true beneficiaries are our students.

Daniela Olivera Salgado, Marymount Cuernavaca



HIGHLIGHTS PUZZLE: Gifts from the Holy Spirit

The themed clues in this puzzle refer to gifts from the Holy Spirit. Answers are posted at:

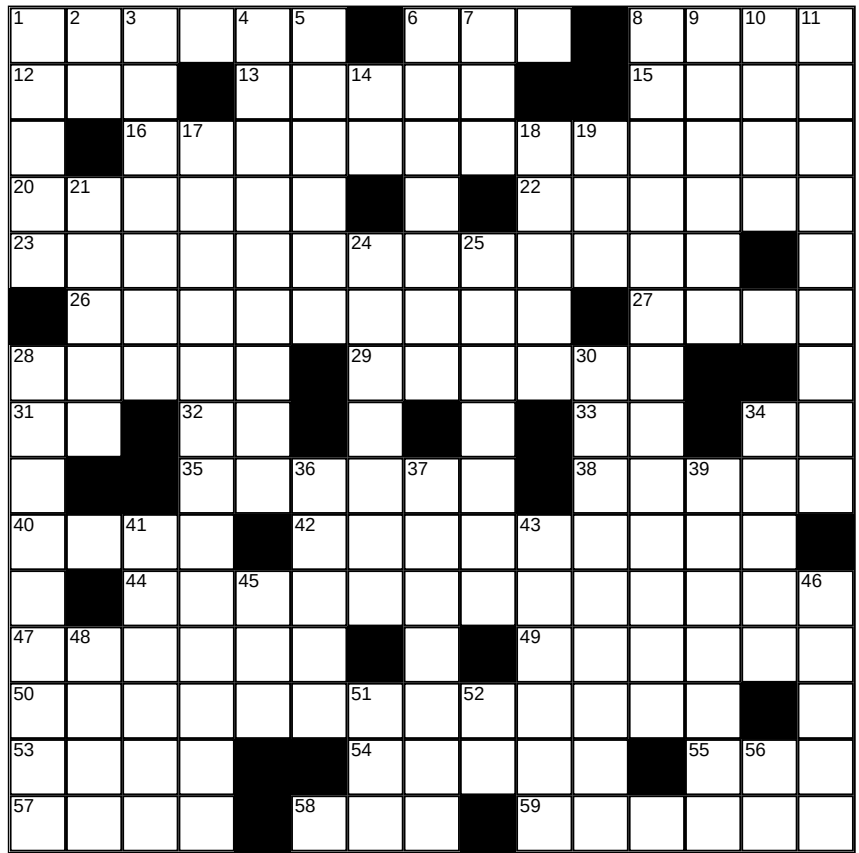
www.rshm-east.org/category/newsletter

Across

1. *It is also a book of the Old Testament
6. Poem of praise
8. United Nations Technical Report, abbr.
12. Holy Name University, abbr.
13. Playland site which has outlived Rockaway, NY
15. He fiddled while Rome burned
16. Fasting, so help me God
20. Heavyside Ana, brashly
22. A feeling
23. *It isn't being afraid of God but rather in awe of God
26. "It's a cheer!" quaintly
27. When all runs smoothly everything is in _____
28. Ad multos _____
29. Old Testament characters, briefly
31. South America, abbr.
32. Next to the Pres.
33. Note that follows sol
34. Public Works, abbr.
35. Space in Paris
38. Its pace won't win a race
40. Jersey doc
42. *It's more than just the facts
44. It adds one to the United States population
47. Virgin Islands boyfriend, briefly
49. _____ (one word contraction) the root of all evil
50. Do an internship as sergeant, briefly
53. Sound made by a horse's hoof
54. Big name in heavy equipment
55. _____ pro nobis
57. Sites for some rings
58. Clear semi-solid substance
59. Railroad tie-up, briefly

Down

1. A brief smell
2. At home
3. Keep up
4. Snakes near the University of Maine
5. Whitewater vessel belonging to me
6. Informal conversation with Yoko
7. Sequence of ruler from the same family, abbr.
8. *It can be turned to "standing under"
9. New England Indy, briefly
10. Very in Paris
11. Habitual angry facial expression
14. Printer's measure
17. Battles about vice presidents, informally
18. Mediterranean island country between Italy and Libya
19. Yale Symphony Orchestra, abbr.
21. American healthcare company
24. Opposite of "not enough"
25. Deliberately avoids
28. In role of a beginner
30. Sea Level Standard Electric Borer, briefly
34. *It may be expressed in devotional practices, but is more truly a matter of the heart
36. Pre-Kindergarten race, briefly



37. * It sounds like an official gathering such as the Vatican Council
39. Have the same opinion regarding
41. One who owes
43. American actress, Hedy _____
45. Musician's gift
46. High school joke, briefly
48. Having a Los Angeles location, abbr.
51. Lemon _____
52. Southeast, abbr.
56. Resident Asst.

Bea McMahon, RSHM

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Highlights

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THE SACRED
HEART OF MARY

