



The Lange Letter

Oblate Sisters of Providence



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Mother Mary {Elizabeth} Lange Guild News

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Cardinal Meets With Pope Benedict XVI



(Photo Courtesy of the L'Osservatore Romano)

Cardinal William H. Keeler meets with Pope Benedict XVI
July 1, 2005 at the Vatican

Cardinal Keeler, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Baltimore met during the summer with Pope Benedict XVI. The meeting ostensibly was to extend a personal invitation to his Holiness to visit Baltimore for the rededication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary scheduled to take place in 2006.

Mother Lange devotees and cause watchers were delighted that, as reported by the *Catholic Review* (July 7, 2005), the Cardinal also discussed the progress of the sainthood cause of Mother Mary Lange...

M-m-m-m—maybe, just maybe!

20 Ways You Can Help the Lange Guild and Promote the Cause of Mother Mary Lange

Want to know how you can help promote the canonization of Mother Lange? The Guild has outlined 20 ways you can assist. This list covers a wide array of options to suit the time and interest of most friends of the cause; however, it is by no means exhaustive, and we encourage you to be creative in the ways *you can help* the Mother Lange Guild.

Adapted by Catherine Hines

1. Be *proud* to be a member!
2. Keep your contact information up-to-date by contacting the Guild via phone at 410-242-6861 or via email at srmmel@aol.com, or rmmel@oblatesisters.com.
3. Celebrate Mother Lange's Life with her daughters during Black History Month, especially the anniversary of her death Feb. 3rd. The annual novena of masses for your intentions will be celebrated beginning January 25th and ending February 2nd.
4. Visit the Mother Lange Guild Promotional Site and the Oblate Sisters of Providence Convent.
5. **READ** *The Lange Letter*.
6. When you have finished with your copy of *The Lange Letter*, pass it on to a friend.
7. Shop for **Christmas gifts** and **other occasions** in the **Guild Office** and **Motherhouse Gift Shop**.
8. Pass along Lange materials to friends, teachers, colleagues and libraries.
9. Get five or six or more friends together and plan a pilgrimage to walk in Mother Lange's footsteps.
10. Call the office and learn how you can volunteer.
11. Say the prayer for the beatification of Mother Mary Lange daily.
12. Invite three friends to join the Mother Lange Guild. (\$15.00 annual individual membership.)
13. Start a chapter of the Mother Lange Guild in your church or social group.
14. Learn about Mother Lange's history by visiting the Reginald Lewis Museum and/or Blacks in Wax Museum in Baltimore.
15. Donate your estate to the Mother Mary Lange Guild.
16. Learn about and support the various ministries of the Oblate Sisters of Providence.
17. Share the blessings of Mother Lange.
18. Submit an article to your local paper or church bulletin on the gifts of Mother Lange.
19. Share your knowledge with a youth group. (Encourage vocations).
20. In Mother Lange's words, "Do all you can for the glory and honor of God."

Mother Lange Keeps on Keeping On

History affirms that Elizabeth Lange, of Haitian ancestry, with the assistance of Marie Balas (later, Sister Frances), conducted in Baltimore, a school in her own home for ten years (1818 – 1829) for children of Saint Domingue refugees. Later, Elizabeth (Sister Mary) and Marie co-



(Photo Courtesy of the Catholic Review)

Sr. Rita Michelle Proctor, O.S.P. principal of Mother Mary Lange School, with Fr. Orchik, pastor of Shrine of the Little Flower, and Fr. Kiesel pastor of St. Dominic's, cut the ribbon at the dedication of the school Sept. 6, 2005

founded with Father James Hector Joubert, S.S. and two other women, Roseanne Bogue (Sister Rose) and Almaide Duchemin (Sister Theresa) who then became the Oblate Sisters of Providence (1829). This group would consecrate themselves by religious vows to fortify Lange's vision of peace and justice through Catholic education. "Founded primarily for children of color, the community would not refuse their ministrations to children of any nationality." (Lannon, Maria. Response to Love.

p. 7). They would broaden their focus to include children who, as Fr. Joubert pointed out, would become "the leading portion of the human race whose education would benefit society at large." (Lannon, p.5). Thus St. Frances Academy came into being. The Academy, the first continuously operating Catholic high school for African American youth in the country, survives today to provide quality education.

Katrina Response

More than 1126 miles from the onslaught of hurricane Katrina, the Mother Lange Guild joined the Oblate Sisters of Providence in an immediate response. We paused, prayed and gave.

In the spirit of Mother Lange, the Guild awarded a financial grant toward books assisting two students from New Orleans accepted at St. Frances Academy, the oldest continuing educational facility for children of color in the U. S. founded in 1828 by Mother Mary Lange.

As God provides, the Lange Guild continues Mother Mary's legacy of educating youth even as we work diligently toward the ultimate goal—the canonization of the one who started it all. Mother Lange, undaunted by slavery, racism and religious intolerance provided educational opportunities for black youth more than thirty years before the Civil War and the Emancipation of slaves.

A plaque designates St. Frances' building as a historical landmark.

For almost two hundred years, the Oblate Sisters of Providence have continued the legacy of Mother Mary Lange—serving youth, the aged and the poor primarily through education.

The 2005 – 2006 school year has seen a new beginning. The Mother Mary Lange Elementary School, Baltimore, welcomed 290 students on the first day of a brand new venture. It was formed by merging three Catholic schools assuring the continuation of a Catholic educational presence in Northeast Baltimore. Sister Rita Michelle, OSP, Principal of the new venture, said she wanted to "unify the school under Mother Mary Lange." Sister invited children and parents "to know the value of education and realize that they have the power to make choices and use the talents God has given them."



(Photo Courtesy of the Catholic Review)

Sr. Rita Michelle Proctor, O.S.P. principal of Mother Mary Lange School, Baltimore, welcomes students on the first day of school Aug. 29, 2005.

HELP WANTED

THE CAREER OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME

Permanent position serving those who need you in education and social services. Rich rewards of giving to others and profit-sharing in the love they return. Lifetime job security. Full benefits of living in America's oldest religious community of women of color founded by Haitian/ Cuban refugee Elizabeth Lange. The Order, founded to minister to youth, through education also meets the needs of the aged and the poor. You would live among others who share the joy, peace and challenge of doing God's work.

Must be 18 years or older. Work experience or college background helpful. If you think God is calling you for this important work, call (410) 242 -8500. Ask for Sr. Stephen.

