



# The Lange Letter

Oblate Sisters of Providence



December 2005

Mother Mary {Elizabeth} Lange Guild News

Issue No. 43

## 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 [srmml@aol.com](mailto:srmml@aol.com), or [rmmel@oblatesisters.com](mailto: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-founded with Father James Hector Joubert, S.S. and two



(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

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.



# *O When the Saints Go Marching In!*

*November- Black Catholic Month*

*Native and African North Americans Claimed by God... Wait on the Church...*



**Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha**  
c. 1656-1680



**Venerable Pierre Toussaint**  
c. 1776 – 1853



**Mary Lange, OSP**  
c. 1784 – 1882



**Henriette DeLille, SSF**  
c. 1812 - 1862

Sister Thea Bowman, a twentieth century “saint” as well as others of Native and African American ancestry, could easily be added to this list of God’s very special people. The church in the United States boasts many souls renowned for their holiness--their unique gifts of dedication to God, perseverance in virtuous living, and extraordinary generosity in service to the people of God. The roster of North American saints has grown significantly by the hand of Blessed (Pope) John XXIII and Pope John Paul II: Neumann, Guerin, Drexel, Cabrini, Seton and others.

Across the boarder, Juan Diego is held up as a model to be emulated. African Americans, indeed all North Americans, look forward to the day when persons of color are officially and publicly proclaimed to be with God in heaven. Thus, during November’s Black Catholic Recognition Month, every parish serving African Americans points to members of their parish and says with pride and gratitude, “God, indeed, is no respecter of persons. Here we witness living testimony of twenty-first century saints--the effect of God’s grace upon souls who do the will of God.”

## **Information Communication Change**

Catherine Hines no longer serves as Development Officer for the Mother Mary Lange Guild. In future correspondence, please address all communication to Sister Mary Virginie Fish, OSP.

### **IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP UP TO DATE?**

Check your expiration date. Guild membership expires June 30th of the year enrolled. Why belong?

- YOU JOIN a *circle of prayer*--You are praying for and receiving from others the spiritual benefits of being united in prayer.
- YOUR NEEDS are presented to God through Mother Mary Lange.
- YOU HELP *promote the cause for canonization of Servant of God Mary Lange.*

Membership fees:

Annual Individual \$15/ Perpetual Individual \$100  
Annual Family \$25/ Perpetual Family \$200  
Annual Organization \$50/ Annual Student Group \$25

### **OOPS! Pardon our omission!**

The following donors were omitted from the *Thank You List* recognizing the 2004 “Stay at Home Ball” contributors:

**Sister Augustine Greene, OSP**

**Bob Brown**

May they receive very special blessings.

## **IN CELEBRATION OF LIFE AND DEATH**

124th Anniversary of Mother Mary Lange  
"Crossing the Great Divide."

February 3, 2006 is the 124th anniversary of the death of Mother Mary Lange. Once again the annual novena of Masses will be celebrated in thanksgiving for her heroic life and the Good News she shared through a life of virtue and love. Mother Lange devotees pray for one another as they seek favors through her intercession.

You are called to mark your calendars and join this powerful circle of prayer. The novena of thanksgiving and intercession begins Wednesday, January 25, 2006 and ends Thursday, February 2nd. Miracles abound; claim yours! Give testimony in writing when God answers!!! What’s the secret? Faith and trust (Mt. 7:7-11)!

The annual service celebrating Mother Lange will be held February 3rd at Mt. Providence Convent, 701 Gun Road, Baltimore at 7:00 p.m. The speaker for the occasion will be Dr. Diana Hayes, historian, theologian, lecturer, author and professor serving the Catholic Theological Union, and Georgetown University, both of Washington, DC. God’s grace of inspiration and hope is opened to all. Admission: Free Will Offering.



## ***Favors asked, favors received:***

*With faith, no explanation is necessary.*

*Without faith, no explanation is possible.*

**Foot Healed-** Mother Lange: I would like to thank you for your intercessory prayer. You helped heal my foot. [Now], I can walk and climb stairs without pain and a swollen foot. **A.S.; NJ**

**Loan Obtained-** *To Whom It May Concern: I prayed faithfully everyday to Mother Mary Lange for help to fix up my house. My credit was horrible and I couldn't get help from anywhere. Soon after I started the prayer, I signed loan papers to have my home remodeled. This may not seem like a miracle to you, but obtaining a loan was a miracle to me. Thanks to Mother Lange.* **C.D.; PA**

**House Sold-** We have a contract for our house, thanks to Mother Lange...I prayed to her and asked my sister to do the same. To our surprise (even though they had to wait for a new roof) the buyers said that they were still 100% interested. Once again Mother Lange answered my prayers. She will always be a part of my daily life. **M.A.; FL**

**Serious Injury Averted-** *Dear Guild: I pray daily through the intercession of Mother Lange. I was in a car accident. It was a miracle I had only [minor injuries]. I will continue to pray for the beatification of Mother Lange. Enclosed is \$50.00.* **C.B.; PA**

**Tumor—Benign-** Mother Mary Lange Guild: Mammogram and ultra-sound tests indicated a lump on my daughter's breast. [Six months later] repeated test results showed no lump. However, my daughter could feel something. She requested a middle biopsy. The results indicated a benign fatty tissue tumor. Throughout this time I prayed daily to Mother Lange. I feel that a miracle happened as a result...We are thankful Mother Lange hears prayers. **C.D.; PA**

**Extended Quality of Life-** *Dear Friends in Christ: Mrs. H., a parishioner's devotion to Mother Mary Lange and the Oblate Sisters of Providence (and two cherished aunts: Sr. De Sales and Sr. Stella Marie) encouraged unflinching devotion and hope in pursuit of a miracle.---Before the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa, parishioners prayed for Mrs. H. who suffered chronic health problems. A cure was not to be, but we did get a "wonder". For over a year her health improved. Mrs. H. used this unexpected year of grace to win souls for Christ. She inspired all with her brightness, exuding happiness and charity. Her passing was an exemplary "holy death". We see the loving heart of Mother Lange's intercession in her gift of extended life.* **Msgr. J.J.W.; NC**

**Successful Surgery-** Dear Sister/ Guild: I had a successful replacement surgery. I recovered so well, I was able to attend Church services (with a walker). I was amazed to see how my health improved. I've returned to work and engage in babysitting. I am grateful for Mother Lange's intercession with God. **A.D.; MD**

**Survives Bullet in Head-** *The following healing was reported to the Mother Mary Lange Guild on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (Our blessed Mother's gift to us.) --- A young man, shot in the head was not expected to survive the night. Should he live, he would be in a vegetative state. His aunt and the parish liturgical minister prayed to Mother Lange. Now, five years later, the young man is well, working, and praise God, a possible candidate for a healing investigation through the intercession of Mother Mary Lange.* **N.M.; MD**

## **Speaker's Bureau / Pilgrimage**

**To engage a speaker or plan a pilgrimage  
for your group call or write:**

Mother Lange Guild Office  
701 Gun Road  
Baltimore, MD 21227-3899



Email: [srmmel@aol.com](mailto:srmmel@aol.com) **N.B. Please use M. Lange in subject line**  
Website: [www.oblatesisters.com](http://www.oblatesisters.com) **then choose "Ministries".**



### **Greetings from Members of the Mother Mary Lange Guild Board of Directors**

(Seated: l. to r.) LaVerna Scruggs; Sr. Magdala Marie Gilbert; OSP, Florence Cowans; Idell Pugh; Marlene Apollon; Fr. John Bowen, S.S. and Sr. M. Virginie Fish, OSP (Standing: l to r.) Fr. Donald Fest, SSJ; Sr. Marina Kelly, OSP; Toni Duggan, President; Lenwood Johnson, V-Pres; Sr. Annette Beecham, OSP, Superior General; Sr. Madeline Swaboski, IHM; Sr. Babette Opferham, IHM; V. Esther Sears, Chapter Formation Coordinator; and Christine Tolson. (Not shown: Sr. Mary Alice Chineworth, OSP, Fr. Jack Podsiadlo, SJ, Rev. Thomasine Adams, Bob Brown, and Sr. Veronica de los Santos, OSP).

**MOVING?** Are you interested in receiving  
*The Lange Letter?* Please take time to  
send us your change of address.

Phone: (410) 242-6861  
Fax: (410) 247-5172