



# The Lange Letter

Oblate Sisters of Providence



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Mother Mary {Elizabeth} Lange Guild News

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## The REAL Miracle

**Fr. Borbely, SJ challenges members of the Guild to "think outside the box." In an all day Strategic Planning Retreat/Workshop**

By Sister Virginie Fish, OSP

We've been so intent on getting Mother Lange canonized, we've become almost myopic. The thrust and interest has become "Where is the cause NOW?" What has ROME said? Do we have a HEALING yet?" Has it passed "muster?" (been approved as a miraculous healing?)

Father James Borbely, Jesuit consultant and spiritual director gave a retreat/workshop to members of the Mother Lange Guild Board and Chapter reps Saturday, April 24, '06.



Father James Borbely, S.J., directed a Retreat/Workshop for members of the M. L. Guild Board and Chapter Reps.

virtues of this woman of God, one gleans evidence of the power wrought through connectedness with Christ.

Mother Lange was patient when she could have been arrogant and demanding. She was generous, selfless and forgiving when she could have been self-centered, angry, and disenchanted with the unspeakable indignities vented by Church and society. (Long before the Emancipation Proclamation, Mother Lange, a woman of color, immigrated about 1812 to Maryland, a slave state. Mother Lange had forbearance and perseverance when it could have been so easy to quit. Mother Lange shared her gift of education with the "have nots" of her day. She sought out the marginalized, the aged and youth. And God used her to work the

miracle of founding the first congregation of women religious in the world, the congregation whose fruit continues beyond 177 years.

The virtues of Mother Lange must be key to promoting her canonization leading to the hope of changing lives. Fr. Borbely challenged his hearers to simply GO OUT and DO IT-leaving the results to God.



Retreat/Workshop participants show various expressions of attentiveness. To the left Toni Moore Duggan, Guild president and LaVerna Scruggs. Above l. to r. Sister Madeline Swaboski, IHM; Lenwood Johnson; Sister Katharine Brent, OSP



Attendees were reminded that the greatest miracle is the transformation of lives. If lives are changed, good is accomplished. If Mother Lange's life of virtue is known, emulated or practiced, THAT would even surpass physical healing. (Problem: it can not be documented. Rome requires documentation.) Consequently, too much emphasis is placed on a physical healing.

Father emphasized the need to promote the virtues of Mother Mary. Through the knowledge and



Retreat/Workshop participants take a break: l. to r. Sister Babette Opferman, IHM; Carol Depestre; Lenwood Johnson; (seated) Sister Marina Kelly. OSP

All photos this page by: Christine Tolson

# Annual Re-Commitment

By Sister M. Virginie Fish, OSP

Members of the Lange Guild Board of Directors along with Chapter representatives and volunteers assembled to give witness to their conviction that Mother Mary Lange is a saint. Mother Mary Lange devotees gathered at Mount Providence May 24th at 7:00 p.m. and enthusiastically renewed their commitment of time and talents in promoting her cause for canonization.

Presiding over the rite was Bishop Denis Madden, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore. Toni Moore Duggan, president of the Board, spoke of new visions and challenging directions facing the Lange Guild. Members of the Board and representative members of six Chapters responded in faith to the opportunity of continuing their quest for the public and official recognition of Servant of God Mary Lange.

The latest Chapter, St. Peter Claver, Inigoes, MD, chaired by Loretta Ann Dove, made an impressive showing. They have achieved a membership of twenty-six (six of whom came for the Commissioning Service). All Chapters reported their efforts to promote the Cause and made a monetary contribution to assist the general efforts of the Board. Reporting for their respective locations were Gift of Providence Chapter, Baltimore (Theodora George, Chair); Haitian Americans United for M. M. Lange (HAU) Washington/Baltimore, (Co-Chaired by Dr. Rose Marie Sylla and Carole Depestre); St. Benedict Chapter (Chaired by Dorothy Gomes, Philadelphia), also Camaguey/Havana Chapter-Cuba (represented by Sister Margarita Musquera, OSP). New York Mother Lange Chapter (Chaired by Deacon Paul Dorsinville) sent an impressive report and contribution.

Idell Pugh received the First Annual M. L. Guild

Board Award—a plaque of appreciation. A second plaque was awarded Sister Mary Alice Chineworth, OSP, Charter member and the Initiating Petitioner. Fr. John Bowen, SS and Sr. Virginie Fish, OSP received plaques of appreciation. Certificates of appreciation for many years of volunteer service were awarded to Charter members Sr. Marina Kelly, OSP and Lenwood Johnson. Other award recipients were, Theresa Royale, Lillian Wainwright, Francis Marinaro, Sr. Mercia Delgado, OSP, Ruth Mangaroo, Florence Cowans and Catherine Thomas. Members of the Board hosted a period of fellowship concluding the ceremony.



Photo by: Sr. Veronica de los Santos, OSP

A group of pilgrims pause to remember and pray at the 610 George St. site where the city of Baltimore erected a monument commemorating the contributions of Mother Mary and the Oblate Sisters to the city of Baltimore.

## Mother Lange Was An Immigrant!



*Without immigrants, where would we, as a nation, be?*



By Sister Virginie Fish, OSP

While concerned about legislation to curtail and control immigrants, we forget the tremendous contribution immigrants have made to this country, to the church, the world.

As with immigrants the world over, the family of Elizabeth Clarisse Lange fled the revolution of Haiti. They sought a better life taking refuge in Santiago de Cuba. Elizabeth, due to dire circumstances there, migrated to America and eventually settled in Maryland—a slave state, no less. However,



Sketch taken from the Mother Lange Coloring Book



Photo by: Christine Tolson

Members of the Board attend the Service of Re-Commitment. First row: Idell Pugh; second row: V. Esther Sanders, Florence Cowans, Fr. Donald Fest, S.S.J, Third row: Sr. Marina Kelly, OSP, Lillian Wainwright

