



The Lange Letter

Oblate Sisters of Providence

April 2007

Mother Mary {Elizabeth} Lange Guild News

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Homegoing - 125 Years Ago

by Sister Madeline Swaboski, IHM

February 3, 2007

It was cold and dark outside, but inside held warmth, light, a spirit of kinship and gladness. The 125th anniversary of Mother Mary Lange's passing to eternal life was celebrated with prayers of song, praise, witnessing, meditation and reflection. This was the culmination of a day of rejoicing at Mount Providence, Baltimore, motherhouse of the Oblate Sisters of Providence.

The chapel held a crowd greater than two hundred, gathered in joy and reverence for the saintly woman who inspired so many in her lifetime and afterwards. Father Sylvester Peterka, C.M., pastor of Immaculate Conception and St. Cecilia Catholic Churches spoke emphatically and enthusiastically, breaking open Scriptures of the following Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time. There were problems in 1828 Baltimore and Mary Lange addressed them not just in word, but in deeds of true compassion and caring. God was searching: "Whom shall I send?" (Is.6). And Mary Lange answered in holy determination, "Send me". Then "Put out into deep water." (Lk.5). So children of color were changed; Baltimore was changed; the Catholic Church was changed; the world was

changed....the course of history was changed! Lives are being changed even today. Two women witnessed to the effect Mother Lange had on their families and personal health. Their faithful prayers asking for her intercession found a family saved from drowning in an auto accident; and a difficult and delicate brain operation undertaken successfully. Mother Lange herself was seen right before the patient succumbed to anesthesia. "Rest, my dear, you will be all right", were the reassuring, loving words heard by the patient. God still searches hearts today: "Whom shall I send?" Let us answer: "Send me!" Then put out into the deep waters with God's help to change the course of history, making this world a better place, God's place!



Father John Bowen, SS, chaplain, celebrates the Eucharist on the 125th anniversary of the death of Mother Mary Lange



(Photo to the left)

Entrance

Procession:

Celebrating a graced life and the 125th anniversary of the death of Mother Mary Lange.

Unseen: Lenwood Johnson carries the banner; Patricia Stewart, to the left.



Preparing *The Lange Letter* for mailing. (Shown are left to right) Sr. Virginie Fish, OSP, Sr. Annette Beecham, OSP

M. L. National Board of Directors Welcomes New Members

By Toni Moore Duggan

Providence has again provided. They heard the call and they said "yes." Ruth Mangaroo, Janice Greene, Daniel Medinger, Therese Wilson-Favors, Carol Depestre, Marie-Alberte Boursiquot, MD, Deacon Seigfried Presberry, Carla Hayden and Kirk Gaddy have joined the Mother Lange Guild's Board of Directors.

Toni Moore Duggan, president and members, many who have served since its inception in 1991, welcomed new members who have accepted the invitation to work together to promote the cause for canonization of Mother Mary Lange.

The purpose of the Guild's Board of Directors is two-fold: assist the Oblate Sisters of Providence in promoting the cause for canonization of Mother Mary Lange, and lend corporate strength in advising, assisting, planning and executing activities and/or



M. Lange Guild Board members get down to the business of "Promoting the Cause"; Toni Moore Duggan, president calls the meeting to order. (Shown are left to right) Sr. Annette Beecham, Christine Tolson, Carole Depestre, Janice Greene and Lenwood Johnson.

projects to educate, clarify and help raise funds to finance the process of promoting Mother Lange.

New Members will be officially installed in May at a Commissioning Service whereby they make a formal commitment to serve.

Teddy, Tony and Mel: Men also Emulate Mother Lange's Virtues

By Sister Virginie Fish

Emulation of the virtues of Mother Mary Lange is not restricted just to women. Interestingly enough, the whole idea of promoting the cause for canonization of Mother Mary Lange was initiated by a man—Theodore (Teddy) Wilson.

Sister Reginald Gerdes, OSP, Oblate historical researcher, writes "Teddy was diagnosed with serious heart problems and had to be hospitalized. He then invoked the intercession of Mother Mary Lange and...discovered that his symptoms became less severe. Upon leaving the hospital, Teddy intensified his devotion to Mother Lange and worked to introduce her cause for canonization." (*The Catholic Review*, Dec. 14, '06)

Tony Williams, a policeman, trusted his children's education to the Oblate Sisters. He grew to know and love Mother Lange and her daughters and was supportive of Oblate missions and ministries. Tony was always "on call" for anything the sisters needed: chauffeuring, security, assisting in so many ways requiring that special gift: brawn.

Melville (Mel) Pugh came to know and love Mother Lange and her daughters through his wife

Idell. Mel, a retired sociology professor at Morgan State U., supported everything his wife wanted to do for the sisters, and joined in efforts to promote the cause for canonization of Mother Lange. He made himself available to transport, help out, sell fruit cakes, and perform other tasks of the Mother Lange Guild. Some, like Teddy, Tony and Mel have gone on to Glory, but their names and deeds live after them in the thoughts, prayers and appreciation of the sisters.

Meanwhile God always provides. Men are called and respond to a woman whose spirituality knows no gender. Teddy, Tony and Mel are the tip of the iceberg. Others have stepped up to the plate and the cause for canonization progresses because of them: there are Lenwood, Ralph, Mike, Joe, George and Michael. There're priests (especially Fr. Bowen, S.S.), deacons, Oblate Associates and others who have responded to the call of Providence to tell the world the transforming power in a soul that says "yes" to Grace. They give witness to the validity of a Providence Spirituality so exemplified by Mother Mary Lange that their own lives have been touched and influenced.

Favors Asked Favors Received Favors Asked Favors Received

Love Blooms

Dear Sister: After being single/divorced for more than twenty-two years, dear Mother Lange kindly interceded for me.

T.A.; MD

Visa Obtained

TELL THE PEOPLE! TELL THE PEOPLE! Mother Lange helps people with immigration situations. I had lost the right to my visa. I made a novena in honor of M. Mary Lange, asking God, our Lord to concede to me this favor. God answered my call and I am happy for this gift. Donation enclosed.

Y.V.; MD

Health Improved

*Sister: We have been favored...through M. Mary Lange's intercession. Our daughter's blood pressure and cholesterol has improved and [she] has remained healthy for two years. My brother survived five heart attacks...his diabetes medication has been cut down...Thank you, Mother Lange. (Would you like to review their medical records?)

V.M.; IL

*Sister: Thank you for the prayers for my cousin. She's gone through very aggressive treatments of chemo for lung cancer...It is no longer in the abdomen or liver...[but] remains in the lung and lymph nodes. Praise God for the improvement...Continue to pray.

D.H.:(e-mail)

Just Thankful

*Expressing thanks for favors received. Please send prayer cards.

Sr. S.S., IHM; PA

*Expressing thanks for favors received.

Sr. S.A., IHM; PA

*Sister: Expressing thanks for favors received.

C.P; MD

Little Miracles for Little People

Dear Sisters: I talked about Mother Mary Lange in my first grade class. Later my student told me they had a "miracle" due to M. Mary Lange. On Wednesdays we have a dessert day. My student wanted to be called for dessert first. She prayed to Mother Mary Lange and she was called for dessert first. She was thrilled. Another girl prayed to jump well for the "Jump-A-Thon". She did well so she [too] had a "miracle". Thanks to Mother Mary Lange. I hope to continue to tell of the wonderful works of Mother Mary Lange.

Sr. M.W.P.,IHM; PA

License Obtained

Dear Sister: My mom was in a minor accident and has some health issues. [Never-the-less] I prayed for Mother Mary Lange's intercession ...and my mom got her license. Thank you.

E.T.; CA

Strength for the Journey

God bless Mother Mary Lange. Her courage and strength are positive attributes that I [try to] emulate. I suffer from diabetes which saps my strength [leads] to depression and [results in negative employment and interpersonal relations]. Each day I wore my M. Lange pin and prayed for her beatification. I found strength and comfort to face each day.

B.J.O.; PA (Now of DE)

Litigation Resolved

Dear Sister: My sister was involved in a car accident with an unlicensed driver. [Even with a lawyer] the opposing party stalled. I began praying to Mother Mary Lange for the case to be settled out of court and in my sister's favor. My prayers were answered. Enclosed is a donation.

L.B.; DC



**Michael Royale, M. L. Guild volunteer
(son of volunteer Teresa Royale)
takes bulk mail to the post office.**

Another First for Haitian Americans

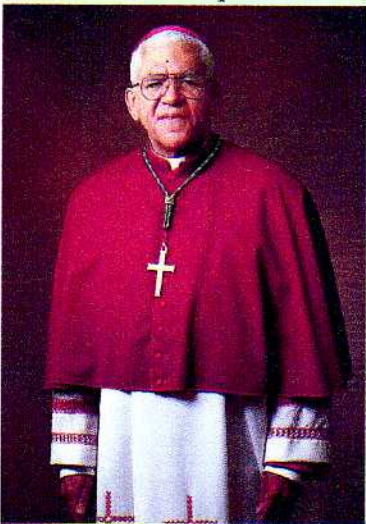
By Sister Virginie Fish, OSP

Elizabeth Clarisse Lange (a.k.a. Mother Mary), of Haitian ancestry, founded in Baltimore the first congregation of women religious of color in the world—the Oblate Sisters of Providence (1829).

Pierre Toussaint, slave, and "Father of Charity" was the first Haitian American to be named "Venerable" by the Catholic Church (1996).

Monsignor Sansaricq, pastor of St. Jerome Catholic Parish, Brooklyn and Director of the National Center of the Haitian Apostolate was named the first Haitian-American Catholic bishop in the Diaspora. He was consecrated

auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn on August 22, 2006.



Most Reverend Guy A. Sansaricq, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn is named to the Episcopate
(Photo courtesy of Investiture photo)

Members of the Mother Lange Guild congratulate all members of the Diaspora. Three Groups: St. Jerome, New York, Haitian Americans United for Mother Lange (HAU), and the Pierre Toussaint-Mother Mary Lange Information Center in New Jersey are pro-active in promoting the cause for canonization of Mother Mary Lange.

Coming Soon! - One Who Dared

One Who Dared is a 26-page children's booklet that introduces Elizabeth Clarisse Lange a.k.a. Mother Mary as a child liking and doing things normal children do. Authored by Sister Magdala Marie Gilbert, OSP and illustrated by Sister Babette Opferman, IHM, this is a booklet to be enjoyed by middle grade youngsters.

Elizabeth, says the author, grew from "childhood to womanhood...she danced and liked parties." She tells of education as Elizabeth's "thing." The story line describes some of the difficulties Elizabeth faced and the hard choices she had to make. Children learn of

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

A WOMAN OF VIRTUE

(Compiled by Sister Madeline Swaboski, IHM)4

**WOMAN OF
FAITH
COURAGE
DEDICATION
TO GOD'S WILL
TRUST IN
PROVIDENCE**



**SERVICE TO GOD AND GOD'S
PEOPLE
(YOUTH, ELDERLY, THE POOR)**

VISION

"Mother Lange's love for all enabled her to see
Christ in each person,
and the pain of prejudice and racial hatred never
blurred that vision."

Prayer for Canonization (Bishop Carl Fisher, SSJ)

HOPE

**LOVE OF GOD
AND GOD'S PEOPLE**

IMMIGRANT EDUCATOR

IMMIGRANT CONTRIBUTOR

IMMIGRANT INGENUITY

IMMIGRANT SAINT!!!

Elizabeth becoming Sister Mary as she founded the Oblate Sisters of Providence. They journey with her through the new challenges she faced answering God's call to be a woman religious in a strange land and a strange tongue, and most of all to be a free mulatto (black) woman in a slave environment. Children will be encouraged to observe and emulate the courage, faith and determination of a woman who gave everything she had to educate children and minister to the elderly and the poor.



Sister Magdala
Marie Gilbert, OSP

All photo's appearing
in this edition of the
The Lange Letter
are courtesy of
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de los Santos, OSP
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