



The Lange Letter

Oblate Sisters of Providence



April 2007

Mother Mary {Elizabeth} Lange Guild News

Issue No. 47

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.

