



To seek out and advocate
for the poor and needy,
especially families,
for the Kingdom of God.

Holy Family Sisters

June-July
2016

Congratulations 2016 Jubilarians



Sister Margaret Hakeem

I am celebrating 70 years as a Sister of the Holy Family. Since my entrance into Community, I have felt a deep sense of the peace of Christ. One of my greatest joys has been the freedom of going out to people in home visiting, catechetical ministry, and especially working with families. Prayer is my life and it has given me a special joy to facilitate prayer groups for those seeking a deeper spirituality. I accept the pain in my life and it helps to understand the pain of others.



Sister Angela Marie Hinckley

One of my most significant experiences was the 11 years I spent as a Parish Associate in a small mission church in the mountains of Utah where there was no priest except on Sundays. Our little church was also supported by a Thrift Store that I managed. There were many joyful and some sad experiences, and many marvelous celebrations. I have lived as a Sister of the Holy Family celebrating mercy in my religious life and in my ministry. I am grateful for the love that has been shown to me these past 60 years, and trust I will continue to grow in mercy and in the love of God.



Sister Karen Stern

Active ministry as a Sister of the Holy Family has been the story of my life for the past 60 years. I entered the Congregation from Spokane, Washington in January of 1956. Geographically, my work took me from San Francisco to Las Vegas, Nevada to Park City, Utah with 25 years in various Congregational roles in between. In each assignment I found faith-filled people who became colleagues and long-time friends. We worked together in everything from baptism classes for new parents to adult education in the RCIA, from bereavement ministry to food banks. Now I am a volunteer at Washington Hospital with new avenues for letting God's compassion be known. How grateful I am for my vocation!



Sister Joan Marie Derry

In my later years, I feel God calling me to deepen my own spiritual life through days of prayer, meetings with other spiritual directors in our Diocese of Monterey, and the laity at various parishes where I have ministered in the Capitola area. In this way, I can better guide, educate and share with parents and families to help deepen their relationship with Christ. Just as I was “mentored” these many years by my parents, numerous priests, bishops, deacons, sisters and laity in my ministries in the San Francisco, Oakland and San Diego dioceses, I feel God’s guidance as I continue to foster the faith in families, lay leaders, and those who come for

spiritual direction. I am most grateful to God for “this precious season of life” with its challenges and joys. In my heart, I feel that is the meaning of this 60th Jubilee year.



Sister Mary Lange

I am a product of public elementary school and Catholic high school. While a student at Notre Dame, San Jose, I volunteered at St. Elizabeth’s Day Home in San Jose, which was operated by our Sisters. I loved working with the pre-school children and found myself very drawn to the life of our Sisters. I can remember my mother saying to me, “Why don’t you move your bed down there?” Little did we both know I eventually would. I spent time as a young Sister working at St. Francis Day Home in San Francisco and at Saint Vincent’s Day Home in West Oakland. I then spent most of my religious life working in Nevada, Utah and Hawaii. While in Hawaii I served as the Diocesan Director of the Office of Worship. Upon returning to California, I served for 12 years as the Director of Field Education at St. Patrick’s Seminary and University. Currently, I serve as a member of our Congregation’s Leadership Team. Life today is very different from when I entered 50 years ago – in the world, in the Church and in religious life. We are called to care for all of creation, which means relationship with God, self, others and all of creation. My life has truly been blessed...



Sister Sandra Ann Silva

I was born in Hanford, California, at Sacred Heart Hospital, to Edward Oliveira Silva and Albertina Toledo Silva, both children of Azorean immigrants. I grew up in Lemoore, California on a dairy farm and attended public schools. I am the eldest of five children. The Sisters of the Holy Family had a convent in Lemoore and served at St. Peter’s Church. This is where I began my journey with the Sisters of the Holy Family. Beginning in first grade and for the following eight years, I received religious instruction from the Sisters. As a young school girl I accompanied the Sisters to the migrant camps to help with the younger children while their older siblings received instruction. I was

a “companion” to the Sisters as they made home visits. Since I was a small child, there has always been a deep desire in me to be with people of other cultures and to know them better. As I got older and realized that I was being called to religious life, I considered entering an order that served in other

Sister Sandra Ann, *continued*

countries. However, Holy Family was my “spiritual family” and I entered on September 7, 1966, at Mission San Jose, California. This journey as a Sister of the Holy Family has given me the privilege and joy to minister with so many families over the last 50 years in our Day Homes, as well as in parishes in California, Nevada and Mexico. God, of course, knows my deep desire to serve people from other cultures/countries, because the majority of families I have accompanied on their faith journey have been from Mexico, Laos, and Vietnam. Presently, I am at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Pajaro, California, with Mixteco families from Oaxaca, Mexico. I am grateful to my Congregation and to those many companions on this journey of faith who have helped me to answer God’s call that I heard so many years ago.

Sister Aurora Perez

As a Sister of The Holy Family, I have been blessed. My past ministries as a catechist, DRE (Director of Religious Education) and Director of SPRED (Special Religious Education – Diocese of Oakland) for 37 years enabled me to share the good news of the Gospel with others. I witnessed God’s goodness, mercy and unconditional love in faith formation sessions, retreats and liturgies. Our friends with special needs revealed signs of growth in self-esteem, faith, and friendship. Catechists, friends and families alike responded to God’s call to community communion. A sense of belonging and participation in Church became a reality; thus, a deep joy of celebration for a people who have been on the margin of society and the church for most of their lives. Today, I am called to be with, to listen, to pray with... My new “Ministry of Presence” within the walls of San Quentin Men’s State Prison occurs every Sunday at the three Liturgies at the Catholic Chapel and the Prison’s Hospital. The Liturgies are meaningful and beautiful. On Wednesday evenings, with the Restorative Justice Roundtable group, I come early and stay later after the services/meetings; if anyone wants to talk, they approach me. Many men have shared their stories with me, or their concerns. God creates a safe and welcoming place for us to meet with respect, dignity, compassion, trust, and hope with a focus on mercy and the gifts of forgiveness and peace. I have been blessed to be called to this ministry.



Sister Ann Marie Gelles

I will be celebrating 40 years as a Sister of the Holy Family this year. For the past 31 years, I have taught blind and visually impaired children in San Mateo County, California and Reno, Nevada and currently at the California School for the Blind in Fremont. I teach Braille to students of varying ages and abilities. My deepest desire for each student is that they find the courage to live with the vision of the heart and the strength it takes to live without the vision of the eyes. We have been gift to one another. The words of one of our founders continue to inspire me each day — *“Remember, you belong to the people, consider them first. Give too much than too little. Give whatever they need.”* I pour my heart and energy out each day as gift.

