

President of Xavier University Retires after 47 Years

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MISSION



**Looking into each face, Dr. Norman C. Francis
hands diplomas to 2015 X.U. Graduates**

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The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, founded in 1891 by St. Katharine Drexel, is a congregation dedicated to the interracial apostolate in the USA, Haiti and Jamaica. Today SBS serve in elementary and secondary schools as well as at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans. They are also involved in a variety of other services including pastoral and spiritual ministries, social services, counseling, religious education and health care, primarily but not exclusively among Black and Native American peoples. The Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament is in Bensalem, Pa.

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p. 9: old photos – either XU or SBS archives; Presidential Medal of Freedom Award given by U.S. President George W. Bush – White House Photo Office; Dr. & Mrs. Norman Francis and St. Katharine Drexel Chapel – Sr. Mary Franceline Malone; students by XU campus bldg., Pres. Obama's visit to XU on 5th Anniversary of Katrina, graduating students, and Dr. Francis with His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar inspecting pharmacy pavilion construction— Irving Johnson III

p. 10: Georgetown University

p. 11-13: David Charpentier of Rosalia and family,; old photos: SBS Archives

—Defying the Odds—

Mulling over a theme for this issue, I jotted down the topic of each article. Of course! The whole issue is about people who defy the odds — poverty, racism, sexism, minority status, etc. Statistics predict they'll fail. *You wanna make a bet?*

Sr. Sandra Smithson, a Nashville child from a poor black Catholic (itself defying Southern odds) family, taught by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, becomes a Sister of St. Francis. After many successful years as an educator, she returns to Nashville. Now elderly, she sees a change. The children of the poor are on the streets, badly educated. Her concern leads to action. Catholic education today is beyond the reach of the poor, so Sister has an aha! moment — a public Charter School! The Smithson Craighead Academy is born and educates Nashville's poor, especially among its Black and now Hispanic populations. Sr. Marianne Poole, SBS, is part of the faculty support team.

Dr. Norman Francis, after 47 years as the first lay president of Xavier University, retires. From a poor working family in Lafayette, La., he attends X.U. on a work-study scholarship. After graduating, he integrates Loyola's Law School and becomes its first Black graduate! After time in the army and then in the U.S. Attorney's Office, he returns to Xavier so he could help many more people as he was helped. Starting as Dean of Men by 1967 he is Executive Vice-President. When asked by SBS President Sr. David to become XU's first lay president, he agrees. Though much has changed due to his leadership, X.U. still focuses on the poor and through scholarships sets them on the path to success.

Rosalia Badhorse, a Northern Cheyenne, was educated at St. Labre in Montana, a mission assisted financially by St. Katharine Drexel and the SBS for many years. With the help of scholarships, Rosalia, a teenager used to being surrounded by trees, chooses La Salle University in Philadelphia, a city where she can be surrounded by people. Rosalia graduates on May 17 in business administration and receives the **Most Outstanding Business Student Award!**

Carmen Bemudez knew hunger growing up supported by a single mom in Costa Rica. At age 15 she and her mother immigrate to the United States. The spunky young woman returns to Costa Rica and becomes a bull fighter! A severe accident put an end to that career. She meets her husband while traveling and learns business management from him. In 1994 she starts her own business, Mission Management and Trust. Being a woman and an immigrant, she faces financial discrimination. One of her first clients, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, chooses to invest in her firm.

Rereading the articles, I realized that not only do they defy the odds, but each wants to pay forward, to help others. Sr. Sandra writes: "We want to transform children from a culture of poverty to what we call a culture of learning and caring about others." Dr. Francis who has helped thousands tells the graduates, "I would especially hope that you give your talent and your expertise to those who need it most." Rosalia, seeing the needs of her native community, will spend a year at St. Labre, "to work harder to break the cycle of poverty in native communities." Carmen has not forgotten where she came from, but says, "When you get to the top you have to send the elevator down for others."



By using computer programs, children are able to develop skills at their own rate. Above a student shows she has incorporated a SCA value: seeing another student's need and helping out. While the boy watches, the girl demonstrates how to get into the program.

Smithson Craighead Academy Helping at-Risk Students Defy the Odds

Poverty, Success and Well-Being

2013 Census placed Tennessee 11th poorest among the Nation's states.

On April 10, 2014, The Tennessean: 18.9% Nashvilleans live in poverty.

On April 1, 2014, it quoted from a report by Terri Combs-Orme, a professor at the University of Tennessee College of Social Work, that "black and Hispanic children, nationwide and in Tennessee, trail far behind their white and Asian peers on measurements of academic success, health and economic well-being."

"The report ... also shows that Tennessee children of all races lag behind their peers in other states across the board."

Smithson Craighead Academy emerged out of desperate need. Public schools serve the poorest children. According to Combs-Orme's (see sidebar) research, "poverty causes the most stress on the brains of young children. ... "Poverty created what could be the single biggest barrier to success." A recent poll has 25 percent of Tennessee children growing up in homes struggling to put food on the table.

Due to diminishing numbers of sisters and brothers, lay persons now run Catholic schools. They have a right to a just salary. While most religious communities founded schools to educate neglected children — the poor, immigrants, oppressed racial groups, etc. — the need to hire qualified lay persons now puts Catholic education beyond the reach of the poor.

Sr. Sandra Smithson grew up blessed by good family values and from first grade through Xavier University was educated by Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. As a School Sister of St. Francis, Sister embraced the values that made her successful in school and in life. Schools are about more than math and English, they must be formative — developing faith, self-confidence, responsibility and concern for others.

Sr. Sandra and her sister Mary Craighead (now deceased) wanted Nashville children to share those values. Lacking the finances to set up a Catho-

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Whenever Sr. Sandra comes to SCA, she is greeted by warm hugs from both staff and children.

Sr. Sandra Smithson

Six-year-old Sandra, born with an adventurous streak, saw some strange looking women dressed in black with funny looking things on their heads. They were starting a school named St. Vincent de Paul — a different kind of a school — a Catholic School. Sandra’s older siblings went to public school.

In spite of their strange outfits, Sandra wasn’t afraid when a Sister called her over. She asked Sandra if she would like to go to their school.

“Oh no,” she replied. “We couldn’t afford that!”

“We could give you a scholarship,” replied the Sister explaining that the family would not have to pay.

An excited little girl ran home. “I could go to the Sisters’ school,” she rattled off to her mother. “Sister said they would give me a scholarship!”

“No, you are not going to the school with a scholarship,” replied her Mom. “You ask the Sister to give you a job.”

So began the relationship of Sandra Smithson with the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Sandra and four younger siblings went to St. Vincent. Other than attending a public middle school, Sandra and the SBS continued together as she went to high school and eventually to Xavier University of Louisiana.

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Sr. Marianne Poole assists with five classes and tutors some children needing individual attention. She helps this lad improve his reading skills.

Sr. Marianne Poole

Sr. Marianne Poole for many years served as principal of St. Charles School in Harlem, N.Y. She lived with other SBS in a convent on the fourth floor of the school building. To get to work, Sister stepped into an elevator, rode down to first floor, got off and walked down the hall to her office. Going to Mass, she just cut through the school auditorium then up some steps and she was in the church.

Sister traveled by bus or subway to museums, Central Park and department stores. She greeted lots of people along the sidewalks, and tuned out the blare of horns as cars whizzed by.

What a change her recent reassignment to Smithson Craighead Academy brought! Sister now lives in a house in a quiet suburban area among homes surrounded by tree-lined grassy plots with gardens in the back.

She forms community with Sr. Sandra Smithson, OSF, foundress of SCA, Sr. Mary Acerbi, OSF, in charge of SCA’s nourishing meals, and Joan Anderson, the owner of the “convent.” Joan is a 3rd Order Franciscan, a computer savvy lay woman who, until recently retiring, produced the SCA newsletter. Besides raising awareness it generated donations that helped the school.

Child	26%
Senior	14%
Women	18.6%
Single parent family with related children	43%
Food insecurity	17.4%
Low wage jobs	18.55%
Nashville	18.9%



Sr. Mary Acerbi, OSF; Security Guard Mr. Washington; Sr. Marianne Poole, SBS; and school secretary: Mrs. Stevenson. According to Sr. Sandra, everyone works together for the children’s success and well-being.

Now instead of taking an elevator to her office, Sr. Marianne and Sr. Mary have more than a half hour’s drive to the Academy in Madison. Last year the school moved to this more distant location. Children are bused in.

Harlem’s St. Charles’ students paid tuition. Not the children of Smithson Craighead Academy. It is a Tennessee Charter School. Principal and faculty salaries are paid by the state. It also supports a foster grandparent program through Fifty Forward. From four to six hours a day, senior citizens become teacher aides giving personal attention to the little ones in the classroom.

After dropping Sr. Mary at school so she can organize the food service before the children arrive, Sr. Marianne heads for Mass at St. Joseph Church in Madison about a mile or so away. Then back to school she goes.

Sister, no longer with the responsibility of being the principal, enjoys putting her teaching skills to work. Sister assists in five different classes, helping, when needed, individual children understand the lesson. Sister also has one-on-one sessions with a student helping build up his reading skills.

Back home at the end of the day, the four women pick up something to eat and gather around the television for the news. Afterwards, there is time for Sr. Sandra and Sr. Marianne to relax with a game of Scrabble while the other two may enjoy a game show or quiet time praying or reading.

Prayer is important to the life for this little community. Project Reflect is going through a transition time. While looking for competent and successful leadership for a new board, “Sr. Sandra has spent hours and hours in the chapel about this,” Joan confides. “It’s hard when you see problems and try to fix them.”

Meanwhile a new board, enthusiastic about the mission of Project Reflect and SCA, has been created.



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In 1954 Sandra became a School Sisters of St. Francis. She received the name Sr. Maria Crucis.

Early on, Sister was involved in education — high school, college and even reforming public schools in Costa Rica. Sr. Sandra packed a lot of love and fun into her school bag!

Back in Nashville in 1992, Sr. Sandra (using her baptismal name) became concerned about children playing in the street when they should have been in school. The crime rate was growing in the area where she had grown up.

“We were a low-income family, but we did not have those characteristics of generational poverty that cripple so many of the children of urban families in the United States today,” writes Sr. Sandra. “It is not poverty, but a *culture of poverty*, that grinds down urban children who are underachieving in school.”

Sr. Sandra lists some of the characteristics defining this culture:

- lack of vocabulary
- no regular bedtime,
- poor nutrition
- reliance on lying, stealing and cheating to get resources or escape punishment
- lack of responsibility

Sr. Sandra and her older sister Mary Craighead (deceased) started Smithson Craighead Academy as an outgrowth of Project Reflect, founded by Sr. Sandra Smithson. Sister’s vision for Project Reflect is “to support the work of education reform to meet the need of *all* children, but specifically those in danger of failing in school and in life.” At the moment they are doing this through the charter school movement in Tennessee.

PR sees its mission reaching beyond Tennessee, to “all urban America through education and policy reform,” with special focus on the poor.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me

because He has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor.

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lic school, how could they create an educational system that would meet the needs of all children, especially of those at high risk? They envisioned an educational system that would improve “the frayed fabric of society.”

Sr. Sandra mulled over the problem and spent many hours in the chapel with the love of her life — Jesus who welcomes little children.

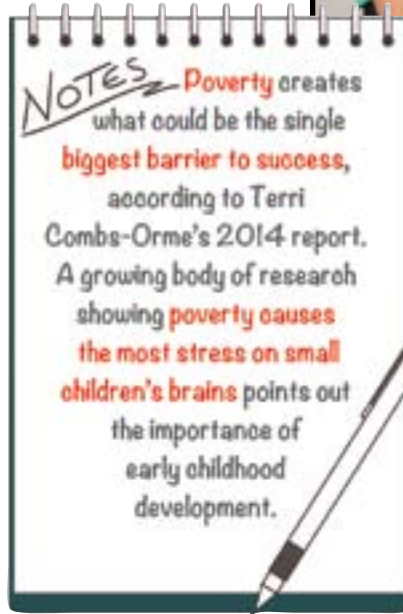
CHARTER SCHOOLS! Project Reflect could set up the program; as a public school the state would finance it. No, they could not teach Catholic doctrine, but they could offer Bible Study to after school students.

But —Tennessee had no charter schools! Sr. Sandra took a leap of faith, and — you guessed it — Smithson Craighead Academy became Middle Tennessee’s first charter school! Of course a lot of work by Project Reflect preceded it.

Project Reflect Educational Programs (PREP) had offered students summer and after-school programs since 1994. Parents saw it helped their children. Project Reflect attracted attention and the Smithsonian Peabody University Changing Lives Award. So when it came time to urge Tennessee’s legislature to pass its first charter school legislation in 2002, Sr. Sandra and a cadre of parents and friends inundated their legislators with telephone calls.

How is Smithson Craighead Academy different from other elementary schools? Besides having an extended school day, free breakfast and lunch as well as an afternoon snack from Second Harvest, character development is what makes the school stand out. Its discipline plan encourages responsibility and accountability, concern and respect for one another. Children are taught to reflect on their actions, to foresee results. Teachers and support personnel also must model these values in their treatment of each other and the children.

During the 2013-14 school year, SCA students’ scores jumped 24 percent. The school ranked 15th out of the 135 elementary schools in Nashville.



Principal Janelle Glover (right), and Ashley Driver and Chrissy Cherry meet before the school day begins. Time for fun can be part of play or built into music class by the teacher, while healthy food makes way for keen minds.



Teachers

SCA teachers and other personnel model genuine care for their students, parents and each other. They teach by example. Rather than yelling, the teacher encourages cooperation by speaking to the youngster with concern and respect.

Motivated by social justice, fourth-grade teacher Nichol Albertson has taught for 13 years. Before coming to Nashville, she taught 6 years in a Navajo middle school in New Mexico. She chose the school because she wanted to reach out, as Christ did, to “the least among us.” There were many at-risk children from disadvantaged homes, failing in school and having behavioral and academic issues.

She moved to Tennessee as the state’s director of Princeton’s Mathematical Political Research project. While looking for a teaching job, Nichol sent her resume to Sr. Sandra Smithson. Project Reflect’s values resonated with her own. “There is so much more to consider than pay,” she affirms. “The goal of SCA is larger than myself.”

Many of the children — Black, Hispanic and a few White — are from poor, disadvantaged homes located in areas afflicted with the culture of poverty (described by Sr. Sandra on p. 5). Yet at SCA there are fewer issues, conflicts and risks than she experienced on the reservation in N.M. Despite the challenges, Nichol says she has high hopes. “I have faith in my colleagues. Hope for the school is what gets me up every morning. There is no place else where I would rather be.”

This is Nichole Martin’s first year at Smithson Craighead Academy. When she relocated from Texas to Nashville, she searched for a job as a primary teacher. SCA accepted her resume.

One thing she appreciates there is parent involvement. At Parent-Teacher meetings, she gets to talk to parents and can give them tips and strategies for teaching the children at home, getting them off to a good start.

At SCA Nichole says she has the freedom and flexibility to adjust her lessons to the children’s individual needs. “Teaching is a wonderful profession,” she claims. “It is the best profession in the world.”

“First grade is a very important year” says first grade teacher Amy Castrovinci. “I enjoy watching the children learn. Everything is new to them. I like being a part of that.” Amy also affirms the importance of mutual respect — the need for the teacher to model that.

Aljanise Jones has been a teaching assistant for five months. “Being at SCA is like being part of a small family. Parents can come in and volunteer.” She notices some parents seem not to be involved enough and hopes to see that changed. Aljanise says she enjoys creating activities that make lessons easier for the children to understand. “At SCA there is more wiggle room.”



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Food insecurity	17.4%
Low wage jobs	18.55%
Nashville	18.9%



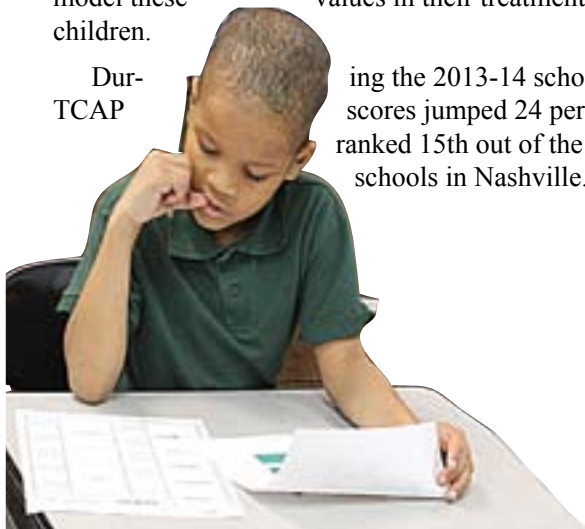
Nichol Albertson’s fourth graders learn about George Washington Carver. Nichole Martin loves teaching first graders.



David Moore is a third grade teacher and his wife Kristene produces computer savvy students.

Music teacher Richey Jarred really can get kindergartners (opposite page) clapping and moving to the beat!

Individual help from teacher aides can make the difference between success and failure.



Risk Pays Off

Mother David Young, SBS president, and her council gave the decision a lot of thought. It would propel them into unknown territory. The risks were real. Yet, St. Katharine Drexel — wanting to develop Black and Indian leadership — had faced risks and courageously moved ahead. Couldn't her successors do likewise?

The Civil Rights Movement of the sixties prodded the SBS leaders. Four Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament had served as Presidents of Xavier University. It was time for a lay Catholic to take up the challenge, a Black lay Catholic.

Who better to build on the spiritual and educational tradition formed by Mother Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament than a Xavier graduate? As they considered various candidates, a young family man working at Xavier since 1961 stood out. By 1967 he was already Executive Vice-President serving under Xavier President, Sr. Maris Stella — Norman C. Francis.



Norman C. Francis was born in 1931 to a poor working family in Lafayette, La. “But we did not know we were poor,” he says. He and his siblings attended Catholic school. To earn a little money he would shine shoes. At St. Paul High School, a sister-teacher urged him to go on to college. He would be the first in his family to do so, but he knew his parents could not afford the tuition. Still, sister prodded him to apply.

Francis got into Xavier on a work scholarship and was assigned to the library. Throughout each of his four years he was an honor student and was elected class president.

After graduating in 1952 with a B.S., Francis and another student set out to integrate Loyola University. They applied and were accepted by the Law School. In 1955 Francis earned a J.D. with honors — and became Loyola’s first black graduate.

After a brief stint in the Army, he — determined now to integrate federal agencies — went to work in the U.S. Attorney’s Office. When Xavier University’s student body president was arrested for integrating a lunch counter, Norman Francis became his counsel.

But Francis says law was not for him. He could only help a few people while the future belonged to the educated. So in 1961 he returned to Xavier and became Dean of Men.

When the Freedom Rider’s bus was attacked that year in Alabama, Federal marshals flew the integrated nonviolent group to New Orleans. Despite the threat of violence, Francis convinced the university to house them. “No room in the inn! We’re a Catholic school. We’ve got to open the dormitory.”

Francis moved over the years into higher administrative positions. He became Executive Vice-President under XU President, Sr. Maris Stella in 1967.

The following year SBS President, Sr. M. David Young, offered Francis the presidency of Xavier University. On the very day a gunman took aim at Martin Luther King in Memphis, Norman Francis accepted and became president of Xavier, the only Black Catholic University in the United States.

During his 47 years as president — the longest sitting university president in the country — Dr. Francis tripled the university’s enrollment and broadened its curriculum offerings. The endowment grew from \$20 million to \$160 million. The campus expanded, old buildings were purchased and renovated and new ones sprang up.

One of these was a delayed dream of Dr. Francis — the St. Katharine Drexel Chapel, named for the saint whose commitment to Black youth founded the university. Dr. Francis engaged César Pelli, one of the most influential architects in America, to design this copper roofed building, visible to passing motorists from I-10.

Like Francis, many of Xavier’s students come from economically struggling families who cannot afford to send their children to college, especially to a private one. They are there because of scholarships, often more than one. A 2015 graduate from Meridian, Miss., Pruitt’s studies were covered by two scholarships and a Pell Grant. He credits the level of financial aid available at Xavier to Francis’s leadership.

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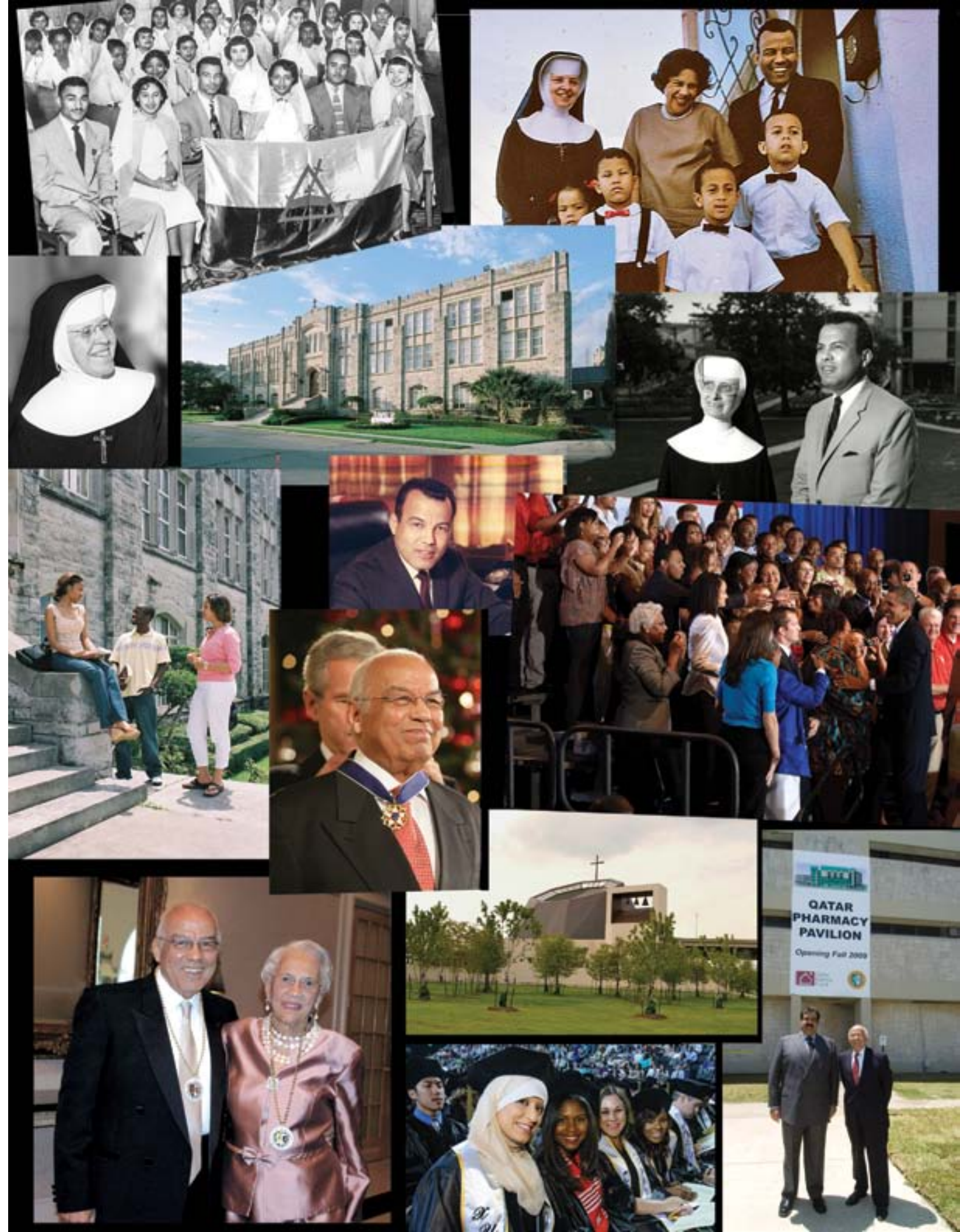


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Two premed scholarship students, cousins, were among the 564 students earning Xavier diplomas on May 9, 2015. Both are headed to medical school. For years, Xavier has been ranked first in the nation for the number of African American students accepted into and completing medical school. It is also ranked first for graduating Black students in chemistry, biology, physics and the physical sciences. .

Since Katrina, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is the only one in the area. While 35 percent of the its students are white or Asian, X.U. is third in the U.S. for graduating Black pharmacists..

Katrina did not play favorites when it crushed the levees in New Orleans on Aug. 29, 2005. The fall semester had just begun. Five or six feet of water rammmed university and neighboring buildings. Houses collapsed.

Eighty-five percent of the faculty lost their homes. Fright-



Georgetown University awards honorary degree to Norman C. Francis, J.D.

"His legacy as the first African American lay president of Xavier is epitomized in his unwavering commitment to educational and social equality, spiritual enlightenment, and community service," Georgetown said in announcing the award.

"Throughout his extraordinary career, President Francis has served in an advisory role to five U.S. presidents. This included service as a member of the historic National Commission on Excellence in Education, whose findings, published in the ground-breaking work, *A Nation at Risk*, created a sense of urgency yo bring about educational reform in the nation's school system.... In December 2006, President Francis received the nation's highest civilian award — The Presidential Medal of Freedom — from President George W. Bush"

ened students got stranded in dormitories. Abandoned stores, homeless people, closed schools, empty streets, overturned cars, broken houses — New Orleans became a ghost town.

Dr. Francis and his family found safety outside of New Orleans. Nonetheless, he speedily tackled the recovery, determined that students would graduate on time. Engaging faculty, engineers, electricians, plumbers, etc., the cleanup, rebuilding and repair began.

Less than a month after Katrina, Hurricane Rita hit the low-lying western areas of the state wreaking still more havoc. Throughout Louisiana trees lay uprooted, roofs blown off, fishing boats destroyed.

Facing massive amounts of destruction, Governor Kathleen Blanco, hoping to bring order out of chaos, tapped Dr. Francis to chair the Louisiana Recovery Authority. Even though already embroiled with the Xavier's recovery, Francis courageously managed the state's recovery as well.

By Jan. 17, 2006, Xavier was back in session. Adding some months in the summer enabled students to graduate on time.

When asked to what he attributes his remarkable success, Dr. Francis responds, "The quality of the faculty. You hire people smarter than you, and get out of the way." In other words, listen more than you talk. "No one, man or woman, can run a big organization alone." Francis chose capable people for their respective jobs. "That makes an organization great."

Change, Francis observes, is everlasting. Principles and values remain constant, but how they are taught changes with the times.

Xavier since it was founded by St. Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament always offered higher education to children of financially struggling families. "We are working with the same kinds of students," Francis tells one interviewer who brings up the efforts of many universities to attract minority students. A large proportion of Xavier students, Francis explained, are there because of scholarships.

Compared to universities with tuition of \$35 to \$45 thousand a year, Xavier's tuition is low. One of the X.U. presidents's biggest challenges is to find and get financial support for the students. Federal funds are important, but Xavier has to raise 95 percent of its income for scholarships to match those federal funds.

Xavier works with students to build up basic skills. "We give them the attention they need," declares Dr. Francis, "and they soar!" Holding their diplomas in his hand and looking into their faces as they graduate is one of Dr. Francis' greatest joys.

In his last graduation speech, Dr. Francis told the graduates never to forget where they came from. Then came what was dearest to his heart, "I would especially hope that you give your talent and your expertise to those who need it most," and remember, "God's mercy will never take you where God's graces will not protect you."

Dr. Francis chose to retire now because of the commitment he made 60 years ago to his wife Blanch, who now suffers from Alzheimer's disease. "She has need of my services now."



Rosalia Badhorse caught by the camera at her graduation at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pa. She proudly wears the Morning Star Medallion of her Northern Cheyenne People and she edged her mortar board with the colors of La Salle and of her tribe.



Miss Drexel Gets Involved

The Drexel Sisters are still adjusting to life without their father who had died in 1885. "Two clerics at the door are asking to see you," they're told. "You go down, Kate," said Elizabeth and Louise. For Kate, it turned out to be a defining moment in her life.

Bishop Martin Marty, Vicar Apostolic of the Dakota Territory, and Father Joseph Stephan, Director of the Catholic Bureau of Indian Missions, are visiting wealthy Catholic families trying to raise financial support for Catholic Indian Missions. Katharine, whose spiritual director is Bishop James O'Connor of Omaha, listens avidly. The clerics leave with a check of \$500.

That is only the beginning. Katharine, aware that

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Rosalia Badhorse Northern Cheyenne Woman Earns La Salle Top Business Award

"Have you considered Mount St. Mary's or Dartmouth?" David Charpentier asked senior Rosalia Badhorse. As mentor for St. Labre graduates now in college, he knew that alumni attending those schools got the support they needed to adjust to off-reservation life.

"No," replied Rosalia who grew up among the trees of Montana. "I want to go where no other St. Labre student has gone before. And I want to experience life in a big city."

Her conviction as she explained her goals unanimously won Rosalia the St. Labre Success Scholarship. Her ensuing four years at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pa., confirmed the committee's choice. When she graduated in May with a B.S. in business administration, Rosalia received the *Achievement Award* for her contributions to the La Salle community outside the classroom, and the *Undergraduate Academic Award* for the **most outstanding student** in the university's business program.

Now how did a young lady from a small rural Catholic high school on a distant Montana Northern Cheyenne Reservation earn these accolades? During her freshman year, Rosalia joined the Pep Band and played at nationally televised NCAA tournaments. Her above 3.25 GPA and Pep Band involvement earned her a Faculty Athletics Committee Academic Achievement Award and a certificate from the National Consortium for Academics and Sports.

Her confidence grew in her sophomore year when her first test in Marketing Principles got the top score - 98%. She confided to her mentor, Dave, that though a girl from a rural reservation community and small high school, she learned she could compete with top students from the East Coast.

Dave reports that he was continually delighted by what Rosalia accomplished. "I helped her with plane tickets and books, made sure her scholarship check was to the business office on time, and then I got our of the way." When she told him about what she was doing, he'd think out loud, "That's awesome! She never ceases to amaze me."

To give the La Salle students a chance to enjoy Indian tacos in the Student Union, Rosalia shared her grandmother's fry bread recipe with the cooks. She created a neighborhood thrift store so students and people in the community had access to items for dorm rooms and apartments. She also volunteered at a local soup kitchen.

She wrote a paper for class about Dr. Cornel West, a political philosopher. He came as a guest speaker to La Salle and asked to meet her. When she told him how honored she was to meet him, Dr. West smiled and replied, "No, it's an honor for me to meet you, my young indigenous sister."

To stay on track to graduate with a business administration major and a social work minor, Rosalia attended summer sessions at three different colleges — La Salle, Chief Dull Knife College and Sinte Gleska College. She took courses in Cheyenne culture and Native American history. Attending Ivy League colleges' Native



Rosalia Bad Horse holds her diploma surrounded by those who helped her make it happen. Left to right: Rosalia's mother Yvonne; Josh Buch, PhD, La Salle Professor of Finance; Rosalia's grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Charles Yellowfox. Mr. Yellowfox spoke at the Multicultural Reception and the reception Sunday after graduation.

American Summits, she discussed problems facing Native American Communities with other Native students. During the 2014 summer, she completed an internship for Aramark Corporation in Atlanta.

As graduation grew closer, Rosalia shared her thoughts with Dave.

I was just thinking about how grateful I am to even have this opportunity to reach such a milestone in my life, and I would really like to show my appreciation to St. Labre and the donors somehow. If it weren't for all the college prep during high school and all the scholarships, I really can't imagine where I would be right now. As the first person in my immediate family to approach graduation from a four-year university, I am just overwhelmed with appreciation for all of those that helped me get to this point... St. Labre has really made a difference in my life, and my family's too.

Rosalia's family traveled from Montana to be at her graduation. On Saturday morning with Dave they attended the Academic Achievement Ceremony and witnessed her receiving the most outstanding business student award. There was a multicultural ceremony in the afternoon and the Baccalaureate Mass in the evening.

Sunday, May 17, saw the culmination of years of hard

work shored up by her own faith and that of her parents, teachers and supporters. With her diploma in hand, Rosalia was embraced by those she loved and who loved her. Now she faces a new life.

Instead of immediately pursuing an advanced degree, Rosalia chooses to work for a year at St. Labre.

St. Labre ... would go hand in hand with some of my overall goals and dreams for my community. There are so many things that native communities need, but education is at the heart of it all. It's the one thing that will make everything else possible.... My peers ... message me often, both commending me for my accomplishments and expressing wishes to be in college too. It breaks my heart because I see a lot of them going downhill and developing depression. And, all of this has just fueled my motivation to work harder to break the cycle of poverty in native communities.

"Whatever Rosalia ultimately chooses to do, she will have a positive impact on those around her," writes Dave. "Perhaps her finance professor, Dr. Josh Buch, said it best at the reception, 'To speak in finance terms, I think you received a wonderful return on your investment.'

"We couldn't agree with him more!"



Top: Boarding students line up by St. Xavier Mission School on the Crow Reservation. Bottom: Ursuline Sisters were among the first to staff mission schools among the Crow and Northern Cheyenne in Montana. Katharine Drexel, as a lay woman and later as Superior General of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament was instrumental in supporting their missions. Three of the missions now part of the St. Labre group — Pretty Eagle [formerly St. Xavier], St. Charles in Pryor, and St. Labre itself — were among the sites receiving donations, some as early as 1888. (Photos from Archives of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament)

Drexel - Continued from p. 11

the Indian people are displaced from their homes and live in abject poverty, determines to do something about it. Convinced that education leads to a better life and the knowledge of Christ's love, Katharine begins building schools and churches for Native People even as far away as California.

In 1887 and again in 1888, Katharine and her sisters travel with Bishop O'Connor and Father Stephan through South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana and Minnesota. They meet and talk with the Indian people, listen to their concerns and learn about their cultures.

Meanwhile, Katharine is wrestling with her vocation, She's attracted to contemplative life, but Bishop O'Connor, backed

by Father Stephan, believes God is calling her to found a new congregation devoted to the Indian and Colored people. The idea terrifies Katharine. She feels inadequate.

Since 1887 Katharine has corresponded with Father P. Brandini, SJ., about the needs of St. Xavier Mission, in Montana. In 1888, he wrote, "Small successes at St. Xavier Mission, the Crow are planning to build a village around the Mission. The chapel is crowded on Sundays now. They need to enlarge the church and school."

That same year Katharine receives a poignant letter from Sr. M. Amadeus, OSU. Responding to pleas from the bishops of Cleveland, Ohio, and Helena, Mt., Sr. M. Amadeus, superior of the Toledo, Ohio, Ursulines, sets out with three sisters to Cascade County, Mt., to open a school among the Indians. She describes the poverty. Their novitiate there is full and the log cabins can hold no more students. She has to turn away some girls. Sister asks Miss Drexel's help in building a school.

In spite of her own inner turmoil, Katharine responds. During that year, she sends sister \$5000 for her work. Correspondence between them lasts from 1888 to 1908 when Sr. M. Amadeus writes of planning a new mission in Alaska.

Meanwhile, Katharine prays for guidance about her vocation. In 1889 while making a retreat on the feast of St. Joseph, she realizes that it was not she who would bring about the new congregation, it was God! To prepare for that life commitment, she spends two and a half years learning about religious life in the Pittsburgh Novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy.

Sr. M. Amadeus sends quarterly reports to Mother Katharine and thanks her for money sent. In her letters and in later ones from Alexander A. Anderson, St. Labre, the Crow boys of St. Xavier and St. Charles Mission School in Pryor are mentioned as well as a couple of other mission schools. Besides helping to build schools, Mother Katharine sometimes funds teachers' salaries. In 1919 Mother Katharine sends \$6000 to Bishop Mathias C. Lenihan of Great Falls, Mt., "to aid in the erection of a school for Indians at St. Labre Mission" for "the education of the Indians in religious and secular knowledge."

St. Labre Indian School in Ashland, Mt., now is responsible for Pretty Eagle Catholic Academy in St. Xavier, Mt., and St. Charles Mission School in Pryor, Mt.

I think St. Katharine would agree with Dr. Josh Bush's comment: "To speak in financial terms, I think you received a wonderful return on your investment."



St. Katharine Drexel
2015 National Justice Award
Recipient
Carmen Bermúdez

by Lou Baldwin

She was 15 in the late 1950s when an aunt in California sponsored her mother and herself for immigration and a new life. She attended Santa Monica High School while working to help her mother sponsor her siblings, and briefly attended Santa Monica College, but left to assist the family.

Returning to Costa Rica, she learned to be a bullfighter, but a severe accident in Mexico put that career to an end.

Bullfighting is not a typical women's occupation, but Bermúdez observed, "I look at it this way, the bull doesn't look at you as a man or a woman, a Catholic or Jewish or whatever, and life is that way too. I don't look on myself as a woman, I look on myself as a person."

It was during her travels that she met her future husband, Thomas Feeney, who was CEO of Marathon Asset Management in La Jolla, Calif. After learning the business through him she struck off on her own to found Mission Management and Trust in 1994. Among her very first clients was the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

"The sisters liked the idea that it was minority owned and also women," she explained. Mission Management has prospered to the point where Feeney has merged Marathon Asset Management into it and is now the chief investment officer of the combined company.

Through everything, a goal of Bermúdez is "helping people. If I had not been helped by others I would not know what that means." She has not forgotten where she came from, but "when you get to the top you have to send the elevator down for others," she said.

The official feast day for St. Katharine Drexel — the foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament who devoted her life to the evangelization and advancement of Black and Native American people — is March 3, the anniversary of her 1955 death and entrance into heaven. In recent years the sisters publicly celebrated this event on Sunday and presented their annual St. Katharine Drexel National Justice Award to an individual who reflects the values fostered by St. Katharine.

By coincidence not design, March 8 also happens to be International Women's Day and this year's honoree, businesswoman Carmen Bermudez of Tucson, Arizona, joins such previous female recipients of the award as Regina Benjamin, former surgeon general of the U.S.; Sister Kateri Mitchell, S.S.S., the first Native American executive director of the Tekakwitha Conference; Sister Sandra Smithson, O.S.F., founder of Project Reflect and promoter of education and policy reform; and Sister Mary Scullion, R.S.M., co-founder of Project HOME.

At the presentation ceremony, Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament president Sister Patricia Suchalski, described Bermudez as "a Catholic businesswoman from Tucson whose life reflects the values and visions of Mother Katharine who was also a very, very astute businesswoman."

Bermudez's own life is a colorful and remarkable example of rising above poverty and achieving the American dream. She was born in San Jose, Costa Rica, the third of four children, but her father left the family when she was 2, leaving them in dire poverty. When she was 7, she told her mother that someday she would not be poor. Her mother laughed and asked how this would happen. "I'll be a bullfighter," little Carmen said. Her mother laughed and pointed to a field where some cows were grazing, telling her to practice there.

<http://catholicphilly.com/2015/03/news/profile/st-katharine-award-recipients-rich-life-has-enriched-others>



Sr. Patricia Suchalski presents the Award to Carmen Bermúdez.

Carmen's husband Thomas J. Feeney and Sr. Anne Kelley rejoice with her.



Archbishop Charles Chaput, OFM Cap.
Celebrates Feastday Liturgy

It's March 8, 2015. St. Elizabeth Chapel tingles with expectation. People greet each other, seats fill up fast, musicians practice nervously, overlooked candles get lit! The procession gathers in the back.

Suddenly students from Holy Ghost Prep and Nazareth Academy burst into joyful song. Others chime in. Altar servers from St. Charles Parish, triumphantly carrying the cross, lead the clergy and Archbishop Chaput to the altar.

At the time for the homily, Archbishop Chaput reminds the packed assembly that celebrating the public Feastday during Lent means the Sunday Lenten Readings take precedence. Reflecting on Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, he selects: "We proclaim Christ crucified." Then pointing to the processional cross, he continues, "The cross is the center of our Christian life." Sacrifice is at the heart of Christian life. As Christ sacrificed for us, sacrifice to God for one another must be an essential part of our daily lives as Christians.

Left: "Through Him, with Him and in Him," sings Cardinal Chaput before the Great Amen. Behind him are concelebrants Rev. Richard McFadden, Rev. Fidelis Weber, TOR, and Rev. Joseph McCaffrey.

Right top down: Father McFadden of St. Charles Parish proclaims the Gospel.

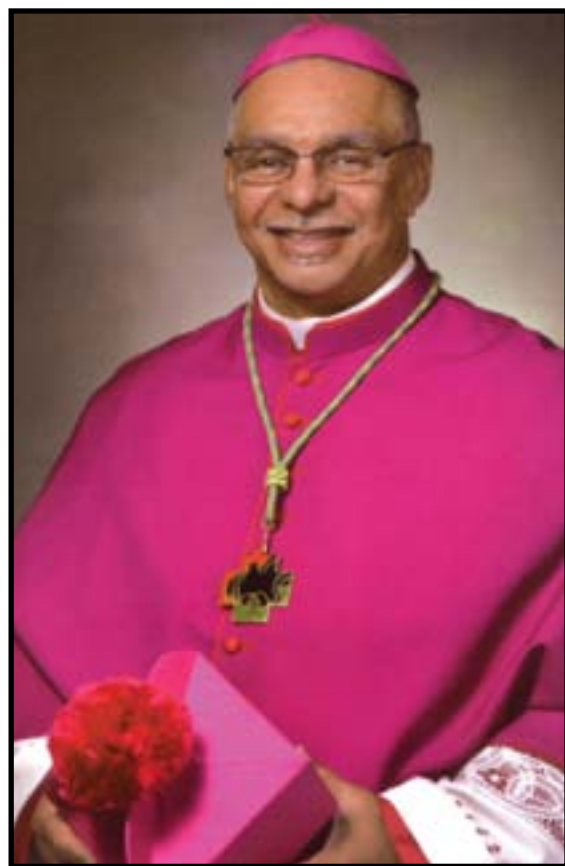
Students from Holy Ghost Prep and from Nazareth Academy combine their talents to make a complete choir led by Beth Vilsmeier, Director of Music at Holy Ghost Prep.

Sr. Roland Lagarde, SBS, leads the intercessions.





Most Rev. Ferdinand J. Cheri, O.F.M.
Ordained to the Episcopacy
March 23, 2015



“Lift every voice and sing,” the new Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans proclaimed, “to give thanks ... to so many who have taught me and brought me a long, might long way. For I’ve come, we’ve come, this far by faith.” Bishop Cheri declared he was so overjoyed by God’s grace, he had to sing. Which he did, loud and clear, rocking at the lectern. The congregation stood, clapping and singing and rocking with him.

Ferdinand was taught by the SBS in Ephany School in New Orleans. Sr. Mary Norbert Moline was one of his teachers. He studied for the priesthood at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans and served in several area parishes. He entered the Franciscans in 1992 and was professed in 1994.

*Be Ferd’s strenght, O Gracious God
 As he steps where you did trod.
 Ferd may rest in housing well kept
 Or, he may find Jerusalem where you wept.*

Father Ferdinand, OFM, worked in campus ministry at Quincy University in Illinois and at Xavier University in New Orleans. He became a renowned archivist of Black Music, and wrote books and articles on Black worship. (Is it any surprise then that he broke into joyful song during his episcopal ordination Mass at St. Louis Cathedral?)

*Perhaps he may catch a fish in a Louisiana pond
 Or, Like the apostles of Galilee,
 take needed time to bond.
 No matter the reasons
 In and out of seasons
 O, God, allow the life of our Bishop Harold Perry
 To continue to inspire
 our Bishop Ferdinand Cheri.
 Amen.*

by **Sr. M. Roland Lagarde**
 March 23, 2015

The future Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New Orleans earned a Master in Divinity from Notre Dame and a Master in Theology from the Institute for Black Catholic Ministry from X.U. of Louisiana. His priestly ministry included parish work as well as serving in high schools.

Ordained to the Piesthood
 May 20, 1978

Solemn Profession to the Franciscans
 August 26, 1996

Ordained to the Episcopacy
 March 23, 2015

Lord our God
 you have chosen your servant
 Ferdinand
 to be a shepherd of yout flock
 in the tradition of the apostles.
 Give him a spirit of courage
 and right judgment,
 a spirit of knowledge and love.
 By governing with fidelity those
 entrusted to his care
 may he build your Church as
 a sign of salvation for the world.

**God is my
 strength**

Sr. Mary Paul Kelly
 Jan. 26, 1918 – March 7, 2015
To Jesus through Mary



Dorothy was born and baptized 13 days later in St. Vincent Hospital in Sioux City, Iowa. She later received First Communion and Confirmation at St. Boniface Parish where she attended elementary school. After graduating from Cathedral High School, Dorothy earned a B.A. in social Studies at Briar Cliff College in 1940. Sr. Benedict Joseph, SBS, contacted Briar Cliff looking for teachers for the new high school in Marty, South Dakota. Dorothy and two classmates traveled several hours alongside the Missouri River to teach at St. Paul Indian Mission. Dorothy taught there for three years. Although she loved Marty, she left to enter the novitiate on Aug. 13, 1943. She was received as a novice called Sr. Mary Paul on July 16, 1946. Two years later she professed her vows. She was assigned to St. Francis de Sales H.S. in Rock Castle, Va. From 1951 to 1952 she lived in Washington, D.C. earning an M.A. at Catholic University. Thereafter Sister taught at Xavier Prep in New Orleans; Sacred Heart in Port Arthur, Texas; Sacred Heart in Lake Charles, La.; St. Francis de Sales again; and St. Catherine in Santa Fe, N.M. Sister also taught at Xavier University, La., and Blessed Sacrament College at the Motherhouse. She served in Torrsdale, Bensalem, and Warminster, Pa.; East Orange, N.J.; Fresno and Los Angeles, Calif.; and Eunice, La. In 2001 Sr. Mary Paul returned to the Motherhouse where she assisted in the Archives. She moved into St. Michael Hall in 2007 where she enjoyed visiting with the Sisters and took an active part in the community’s prayer life, meals and activities. In January 2015 Sister fell when her hip broke. Surgery repaired the hip; however, complications hindered her recovery. She returned to St. Michael Residence on March 4. Sister was placed on Hospice Care on March 6, but died that night shortly after midnight.

Sr. M. Francis Paul Zboyan
 Oct. 29, 1915 - April 19, 2015
My Soul doth magnify the Lord



Mary Agnes was born is Stamford, Conn., and baptized on Nov. 10, 1915 in St. Mary’s. She attended Brookside Grade School and Benjamin Franklin Jr. High School, both in S. Norwalk, Conn. She entered the convent on Aug. 15, 1940. When she was received as a novice on Feb. 27, 1941, she wore a white veil and answered to Sr. M. Francis Paul. Two years later, Sister committed her life to Christ with the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Her ministry often put her in charge of the maintenance needs of the convent and/or boarding school. Sister was very well organized, even keeping screws, bolts and nails in carefully labeled containers. She served in Winnebego, Neb.; Pawhuska, Okla.; St. Louis, Mo.; Marty, S.D.; the Motherhouse (12 years, later 4 more); St. Michaels, Ariz.(twice); Powhatan, Va.; (7 years); then back to the Motherhouse from 1983-2009. From there she moved over to St. Michael Hall. During her time there she kept in touch with the missions by writing notes on cards for every feastday celebration, sometimes enclosing a funny cartoon that touched her. Even into her late nineties, her handwriting was firm . When a sister visited from the missions, Sr. M. Francis Paul would ask about the sisters there and how things were going. A stroke took her to the hospital for a short time. Her living will asked for no extraordinary means to prolong life and were respected by the doctor and community. Back at St. Michael, she was placed on hospice care, but died within a few days on Sunday, April 19.

Sr. M. Alice Patrick McCabe
 Dec. 10, 1918 - April 21 2015
Behold the handmaid of the Lord



Anne Teresa was born in County Monaghan, Ireland, on Dec. 10 and was baptized the following day at St. Mary. She attended the National School for three years. When the family moved to Philadelphia around 1928, Anne finished grade school at Our Lady of Mercy, going on to Hallahan High School. After high school Anne worked for the U.S. government in the war department. She entered the convent on Aug. 26, 1946 and was received as a novice on July 16, 1947. In honor of her parents, she chose the name Sr. M. Alice Patrick. During her second year in the novitiate, Sister did practice teaching at Holy Providence School at the Motherhouse. After her profession of vows on July 16, 1949, she taught a year at Holy Ghost in New Orleans then until 1962 she put her shorthand and typing skills to use as Registrar and Secretary at Xavier University of Louisiana. Meanwhile in 1959 Sister received her B.A. and in 1972 her M.A. from XULA. From 1962 to 1973, Sister taught and/or was principal in SBS schools in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, St. Louis and back again in New Orleans. She became plant manager of the Motherhouse in the winter of 1973, then was assigned to St. Michael Indian School where she taught business education and was for two years the plant manager. Then relieved of being plant manager she served full time in the high school until 1987. When Sister returned to the Motherhouse, she first assisted in St. Michael Hall. From 1996 to 2003 she was Coordinator of Human Resources, then from 2004 to 2010 Sister became the Convent Administrative Assistant. In 2010 she transferred to St. Michael Hall. As the 2015 approached her health deteriorated. She was placed on hospice care on Jan. 5, 2015, seemed to improve briefly, then further declined until her death on Tuesday, April 21, 2015.



Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament

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YES!
We Can!

Parents, children,
teachers

— lay and Sisters
like Sr. Marianne
Poole, SBS, and Sr.
Sandra Smithson.

OSF —

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working together
we can do it!

Do what?

make OUR
world
a better place.

What kind of
better world
do you see?



Ms. Beasley, Darian Green and
Sr. Marianne