A FAMILY HAS FORMED AT MAISON BON SAMARITAIN

Below is an excerpt of the February 28th Global Sisters Report, of National Catholic Report, by Geri Lanham, a volunteer living in community with the RJM in Gros Morne, Haiti.

Its name, Maison Bon Samaritain, "the House of the Good Samaritan," speaks to the fact that it is a place where the hands of others come to support and heal those who were broken. The hands of the four-person nursing staff act as the healing hands of God.

Miss Carmel, director of Maison Bon Samaritain, calls the residents by their names, but she adds the titles of matant, aunt, or tonton, uncle. By bestowing these titles, Miss Carmel places herself inside the Maison Bon Samaritain family, and she invites visitors to the nursing home to do the same by introducing the residents as Matant Ange or Tonton Wally.

Sr. Jackie Picard, a Religious of Jesus and Mary sister who has been in Gros Morne for 20 years, has been on the board since 2002 and was instrumental in the transformation of the center. Although the majority are older than she is, the residents call her manman, mother. As the residents will tell anyone who enters the center and asks about its history, "Sister Jackie is a mother for us."

As care and compassion are given to the residents, they themselves are invited to participate in the life of the community, which is the life of their family. It is not the family into which they were born, but it is the family they have formed with one another.

Some of them have family who occasionally visit, while others only have the family of Maison Bon Samaritain, their newfound brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles. Those who are more physically capable offer encouragement and assistance to those who are less capable in a manner that shows what service the residents can give to one another. With 21 onsite residents and two daytime residents, the nursing staff stays busy as they strive to continue the good work of making this center a place to call home.

The full article is available at: http://globalsistersreport.org/blog/gsr-today/ministry/family-has-formed-maison-bon-samaritain-52256
**UPDATE FROM CATHOLIC DAY OF ACTION FOR DREAMERS**

Srs. Rita Ricker and Mary Bourdon, RJM, and Sr. Carrol Ann Kemp, SNJM were among the more than 200 Catholic priests, sisters, and laypeople who demonstrated at the Catholic Day of Action for Dreamers on Tuesday, February 27th.

The demonstration was in support of immigration reform which would include allowing Dreamers - children brought into the US illegally as children - to stay in the United States and give them lawful, permanent resident status.

The sunny, seasonably warm day began with prayer in front of the U.S. Capital building and ended with 42 arrests for civil disobedience in the Russell Senate office building rotunda, shown in the photo on the right.

For more information, a “Backgrounder on DACA” is attached to the email accompanying Bridges, and a Pax Christi USA article on the Catholic Day of Action for Dreamers, can be read at: [https://axchristiusa.org/2018/02/28/pcusa-leaders-arrested-and-bishop-president-stowe-speaks-at-catholic-day-of-action-with-dreamers/](https://axchristiusa.org/2018/02/28/pcusa-leaders-arrested-and-bishop-president-stowe-speaks-at-catholic-day-of-action-with-dreamers/).

**JPIC RESPONSE TO PARKLAND SHOOTINGS**

At their last meeting on February 18, members of the JPIC province committee were still reeling from the shock of the mass school shooting in Florida four days earlier.

While the prepared agenda called for some contemplative dialogue and sharing, it was clear that we wanted to express our sorrow and anger over yet another national tragedy. Above all, we felt compelled to act – as women religious and as educators – and to let our legislators know that gun violence to our schoolchildren must be addressed and lessened, if not stopped.

The committee members decided to prepare a statement on behalf of the RJM and to send it to the President, leaders of Congress, and state congressional representatives where we have sisters. Our province leadership agreed to sign the statement urging Congress to take the specific actions listed in the statement. This may be a simple gesture but it responds to our Chapter’s call to “work for the restoration of harmony and mutual care” in our society. The statement is on the next page. Let’s pray that this may be a turning point toward more responsible gun laws for the United States.
STATEMENT OF RELIGIOUS OF JESUS AND MARY ON GUN VIOLENCE – March 1, 2018

As Catholic sisters who have served in schools of our nation for almost 150 years, we are more than grieved by the tragic shootings that took place on February 14 in Florida, when a troubled teen opened fire on his former classmates, killing fourteen of them and three staff members, and reopening the nation’s wounds caused by so many earlier incidents. Along with the sadness and sorrow we have shared with students, teachers and families, we are also frustrated that so many attempts to address gun violence in our schools have failed to move lawmakers to effective changes in gun legislation. We have prayed and sorrowed for those touched by such tragedies, but so little has been done legislatively. We need as well to address the issue of gun violence as it is affecting our children. How can they go to school when they are fearful or mistrusting? What has become of the teaching profession when we feel we can no longer protect students in our care? The idea of teachers training as armed guards is unimaginable for a number of reasons.

The Religious of Jesus and Mary are committed to “work for the restoration of harmony and mutual care that we know to be God’s desire for the world.” As women of faith, we are called to put that faith into practice. In the most urgent terms, we now call for sensible gun legislation that will help prevent senseless killing in or near our schools. This is a public health issue. It is not about abolishing or disregarding the second amendment; it is about protecting a more precious gift, the lives of our children.

Together with others, we call upon our elected officials to take up legislation IMMEDIATELY to:

- Require universal background checks and mandatory waiting periods on all gun purchases;
- Ban civilian ownership of assault rifles and high-capacity weapons and magazines;
- Make gun trafficking a federal crime;
- Improve access to health care for individuals at risk to do violence to themselves or others.

We admire and support the young women and men of Stoneman Douglas High for speaking out on this issue. Fifty years ago, young people were passionate about ending a senseless war; today, their passion is about preventing senseless harm to children. We stand with them as they advocate for an end to violence at the March 24th “March for our Lives.” And we ask you to do what you can to heed and support them for the threatened life of our nation. Translate your thoughts and prayers into effective congressional legislation as soon as possible.

The Leadership Team of the US Province, Religious of Jesus and Mary

Margaret Perron, RSM
Sr. Margaret Perron, RSM  Sr. Anne Magner, RSM  Sr. Rosemary Mangan, RSM  Sr. Rita Ricker, RSM
Provincial Superior
MD/DC REGION TO CELEBRATE BICENTENARY

Plans are in place for the RJM’s of the Washington, DC area to mark our 200th Anniversary to be held at St. Mark’s Church in Hyattsville.

Family members, friends, and colleagues will gather on the afternoon of April 7th, Easter Saturday, for a Liturgy and Reception.

Frs. Mike Barth, ST and George Wilkinson will preside at the 1:30pm Eucharist, and children from the Washington School for Girls will participate with singing and dancing.

Any and all from the province who can join are most welcome.

Please RSVP by March 15 to Rita at rricker@rjmusa.org

MARCH ANTI-TRAFFICKING NEWSLETTER

The March issue of the “Stop Trafficking Newsletter”, published by US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking is attached to the email accompanying Bridges. If you prefer to view the newsletter online, please click on [http://www.stopenslavement.org/assets/stoptraff1603.pdf](http://www.stopenslavement.org/assets/stoptraff1603.pdf).

PROVINCE OFFICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 4 - 21</th>
<th>Sr. Marge’s Visitation to Haiti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 6 - 12</td>
<td>Sr. Anne out of the office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>Sr. Rosemary out of the office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR...

- University Park Community, as this week’s community for special prayer;
- Sr. Alice Cote, RJM, as she continues to recover from recent knee surgery;

WE ALSO PRAY FOR

ALL THE NEEDS OF

OUR RJM SISTERS,

FAMILY, AND FRIENDS.

https://rjmusa.org

Praised Forever Be Jesus and Mary