



# Little Company of Mary Associates Newsletter 2008

*From the Greater Company of Mary Commission*

## LCM Associates Commission Meeting was held in Torrance, CA on February 23, 2008

Laguna Hills began by sharing the great projects they have worked on this year in their parish. We were very excited to hear about the packages created for our troops overseas. They shared with us that it will be a great loss to the community when the Sisters leave.

Torrance gave us a nice overview of their work with the Labyrinth and collecting clothes for homeless ED patients. A trip to Australia was discussed and put on hold. They all enjoyed a lovely retreat in the spring at the Mary & Joseph Retreat Center.

Jasper Sr. Adrian shared that their Associates have been meeting regularly as well. They, too, have experienced walking the Labyrinth and found it an incredibly spiritual experience. They also met for a beautiful autumn meeting on a lake with a fire. All present felt this was a great way to have fellowship with one another. Finally, Sister shared with us that Pat has a real gift facilitating prayerful retreats and she provided their group with an excellent retreat day.

Evergreen Park associates shared that they have met monthly, except summer. They did some service projects last year as well and currently are collecting for a needy family as a way of almsgiving for Lent.

## From Little Company of Mary in Virginia Beach, VA

We have been busy this year, visiting many of our parishioners in the hospital and homebound. We bring them the Holy Eucharist, and provide companionship for those in need. We say our LCM prayers with all of them. At times we sit and pray prayers with some of the dying.

We sent a donation to St. John's Church at the Thanksgiving for Families in Need. We provided and mailed well-stocked gift packages to a military platoon of 30 of our Armed Forces at Christmas.

We will be providing for an American Indian Tribe this Thanksgiving. Our group is very fruitful and prayerful as we continue to be guided by our Mother Foundress Ven. Mary Potter.



Virginia Beach, VA Associate Group 2008

Journey in  
Faith  
with the  
Sisters of the  
Little  
Company of  
Mary...  
in the Spirit of  
Mary to make  
visible  
the healing  
presence of  
Jesus  
in the midst of  
human  
suffering....  
Through  
prayer,  
compassion  
and solidarity.



## From the LCM Associates in Torrance, CA



The new group of Associates are welcomed by the Sisters and the established Associates at the dinner that followed the Commissioning 2008

**March** we hosted the director's annual meeting which was held at the Torrance LCM hospital. Sr. Sharon Ann Walsh represented the Province at the meeting. It was an all day gathering where a great deal of sharing took place and goals were set. The Evergreen Park Directors agreed to host the meeting in the spring of 2009. Following the sessions, we all dined together at the Torrance Marriott for some additional socializing.

**May** we held our annual Retreat up in Palos Verdes at the Daughters of Joseph and Mary Retreat Center. Darrah Glynn and Sr. Gloria directed the retreat

which was offered to both the Associates and the four Candidates who were preparing to make their first commitment in June. The Retreat was titled, "Finding God Through Compassion."

**June** we had our Commitment Ceremony which was held in the Torrance LCM Hospital Chapel. Msgr Joseph Brennan, Pastor of Holy Trinity Church in San Pedro, CA celebrated the Liturgy with us. Msgr. Brennan has a beautiful voice and, along with a cantor and organist from his parish, sang the entire Mass. It was truly a unique and awe inspiring experience. Three Candidates and one Affiliate made their initial commitment, eight Associates also made Recommitment. Five other Associates were not able to attend the function and will make recommitment at a private ceremony. A wonderful dinner followed the ceremony.

**August** we held our annual Summer B.B.Q. at the Mansel Convent. Some spouses attended along with five potential Candidates for the 08-09 Program. We were happy to welcome the two new sisters, Mary John and Mildred, who had just moved up to Torrance from Laguna Hills.

**September** Sr. Gloria and Co-Directors Darrah Glynn and Jessica Densmore attended the LCM Sister's annual gathering in Chicago. This was the first time that Associates were invited to come to the Sisters' Gathering spending two wonderful days with Fr. Fragomeni who spoke on the Blessed Mother and Mary Potter's special relationship with Mary the Mother of Jesus. This was a great time for representatives of all our Associate groups to meet and share with one another.

**October** we welcomed four new women to the Little Company of Mary preparatory classes who are on the journey to become Associates.

**December** brings all the new things for Christmas and the New Year. The group will be sponsoring an American soldier in the Military overseas and will be sending packages each month starting in 2009. Also all Candidates and Associates were invited to Sr. Terrence's annual Christmas Party. This is one of the best parties of the year!

We continue to have regular monthly gatherings. Various topics such as the spiritual life of Mary Potter, Mary the Mother of Jesus, various prayer forms, etc. are presented and discussed by the group. A small meal is shared by the group before which helps to reunite the group and allows time to catch up on each participant's life. At the present time, we have 13 Associates, 1 Affiliate, and 4 Associate Candidates.



## From the LCM Associates in Evergreen Park, IL

Our LCM Associates in Evergreen Park total 52 currently. We continued to meet monthly throughout 2008, taking off the summer months of July and August. Sister Jean met separately with our 13 candidates; offering them the opportunity to learn about Venerable Mary Potter, and explore their own feelings about making the commitment to becoming an Associate. In addition to our regular monthly meetings in which we pray as a group for loved ones, friends and co-workers experiencing illness, death and personal difficulties, we participated in some service projects as well:

- Scarf making for the 2008 World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia
- Donated food and prepared over 200 lunches for "The Port"
- Contributed food, gift cards and monetary donations for needy families at Thanksgiving

This year there were several special functions we participated in:

One was the "In Good Company" event that is held in April and sponsored by the hospital's Auxiliary. This event supports the pledge they have made to support our Maternal Child Services.

We were invited to and attended the LCM Sisters' Annual Assembly "Gathering Days," held at the Oak Lawn Hilton. This incredible two-day journey led by Fr. Richard N. Fragomeni afforded us the opportunity to reflect on Mary our Mother and it was a profound experience for all involved. It was also a wonderful opportunity to meet LCM Associates from Jasper, California, and Virginia Beach. Our collective thanks to the LCM Sisters and the Province, and avocations Office staff. We were overwhelmed by the reverent environment, hospitality and excellent program planning.

Finally, we had many opportunities for reflection, two mornings of reflection held in the Spring, one during Lent, and one in May focusing on the Rosary.

Certainly, it was a busy year. Our monthly gatherings continue to include an hour of prayer, reflection, and fellowship. This December we will culminate our year with our Foundress Day Liturgy, LCM Associate Commitment/Re-Commitments and a celebratory holiday meal. Amen!



Scarf making for the  
2008 Youth Day in Sidney, Australia

***"Let us look again where the Lord is calling us...we are called with a new earnestness and zeal...to bring goodness and justice to our world."***

### **Venerable Mary Potter**



Prepared over 200 lunches for "The Port"



### LCM Associates in Jasper, IN

The new year of 2008 was heralded in by the annual LCM Recommitment Ceremony held in the hospital chapel on January 5<sup>th</sup>. After the Mass our fourteen associates gathered for a splendid meal with Sisters Adrian and Renee as we basked in the warmth of our spiritual bonds and friendship.

A Lenten theme dominated our meeting in March. We prayerfully reviewed the LCM Motto for 2008. A video on "The Earliest Traditions About Jesus" and a meditation on "Mary's Way of the Cross" helped us to reflect on and prepare ourselves for this special season. The somber mood of Lent gave way to the joys of Easter and spring in our April meeting in which we studied the Gospel of Mark and prayed "A Spring Blessing" and "Antiphons for Spring."

In a rather ambitious May meeting we dedicated our prayers to our patroness, Mary, the Mother of God and also discussed the origin and history of the Rosary. Continuing our Gospel series we explored the Gospel of Matthew. Since Pentecost was also approaching we reflected on the presence of the Spirit in our lives and closed with prayers that asked the Spirit to open our hearts and renew us so we could build a better world.

In June our thoughts turned patriotic as we prayed for our country and our military in anticipation of July 4<sup>th</sup>. The Gospel of Luke was in the spotlight this time. Sr. Renee returned from her Heritage trip to England and a side trip to Ireland to give us a wonderful travelogue at our July meeting. She relayed how she was impacted by the reminder that Mary Potter's original charism was to PRAY for the dying. We completed our study of the Gospels with a look at the Gospel of John – "the different Gospel."

August brought a shift in our focus. We decided to begin a look at dying and death. We felt that our prayers for the dying would be enhanced by a better understanding of this fact of all our lives. The movie, "Tuesdays With Morrie," served to open the door into this subject and resulted in some good discussion.

Later in the month we began the formation classes for nine new Associates which, in addition to spouses, include our Vice President of Patient Services, two Directors, a Board member, our employee of longest duration (53 years), and another retired employee. They are an exciting group.

In September we continued our study by contemplating on the words of St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, the Gospel of John, the Book of Wisdom, the Dalai Lama, and Elizabeth Kubler Ross on dying and death. We also spent some moments quietly listening to a CD on the art of "contemplative dying." In honor of the September feast of Mary, Mother of Sorrows we concluded with a meditation on her "Seven Sorrows."

Two of our Associates, Bonnie Schuler and Alice Kluesner, attended the "LCM Gathering Days" in Chicago, September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. They came back to sing the praises of their experience and the hospitality of the LCM Sisters. They gave a delightful report of the program complete with music from the CD, "In This Place," recorded by the LCM choir in Evergreen Park. They gave this report as we sat around a picnic table on an October evening with autumn leaves falling all around us during our annual fall outing. Grilled hot dogs and the trimmings never tasted so good. Our prayers included meditations on the teachings of the season of autumn.

We opened our November meeting with a ritual of remembrance of our spiritual ancestors, writing their names on pieces of paper which we placed in a basket and then prayed over, giving thanks for having been such an important part of our lives. We examined a condensed version of the Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, written by Pope John Paul II in 1988, which emphasizes the importance of lay spirituality and its role in God's kingdom. We closed with a "Prayer of Gratitude."

On Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, both the "old" and the "new" Associates will come together for the first time for a retreat day at the St. Meinrad Archabbey. The inexhaustible topic will be "Prayer." It promises to be a glorious day.

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, the two groups of Associates will be officially united at our Commitment/Re-Commitment Ceremony back in our own hospital Chapel. We look forward to emerging renewed in our power to do good proudly to bearing the title – Associates of the Little Company of Mary.

***"It is not the greatness of what we do, but the way we do it that will render us pleasing to God."***

**Venerable Mary Potter**