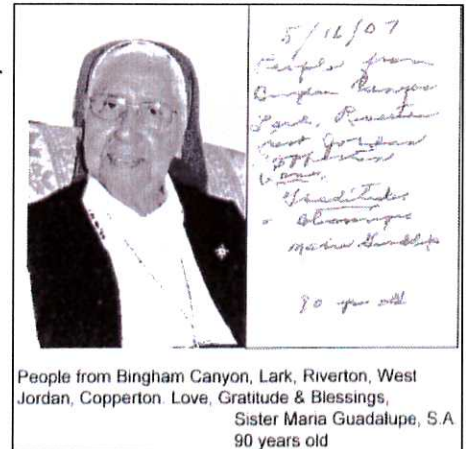


Parish People: Sisters of the parish

This is part 5 of a 12 part series about our parish history which we are running in the bulletin to celebrate our 50th anniversary year. Parts 1 through 4 focused on early parish construction. Parts 5 thru 8 will focus on parish people, starting with this article that covers the sisters of the parish.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, based in Garrison NY, had been an integral part of life at St. Joseph the Worker until December 2009 when our last sister, Sister Fabian, left for health reasons. The mission of the Franciscan Sisters is to live in simplicity and joy while serving the poor, enabling the neglected and oppressed, responding to the needs of our time and striving to be instruments of justice and peace.

St. Joseph's remained a mission church under the jurisdiction of Immaculate Conception Parish in Copperton until 1969. During this mission period, Sisters would travel from their convent in Copperton to St. Joseph's to help with religious education and any other areas where they were needed. One of these Sisters who is very fondly remembered is Sr. Maria Guadalupe. We were able to contact her in 2007 when she was 90 years old. See her letter on the right, translation underneath. Sr. Guadalupe passed away at the age of 95 at the Mother House located in Garrison NY.



In 1975, the Copperton Sisters moved to a new convent in West Jordan, located at 1560 West and 7575 South. It is now a private home and still stands today. The first "official" Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker were Sister Consiline Flynn and Sister Elizabeth Telford. Sister Telford lived at Graymoor at the time this article was written (November 2008) and Sister Flynn resided in Greenwich Connecticut. We talked to Sister Flynn by phone at that time. She said there were some challenges in the early days of the parish, but she was impressed by the spirit of the people of the parish and she had many fond memories.



Sr. Elizabeth Telford



Sr. Consiline Flynn

Sr. Flynn was replaced by Sr. Teresa Schlereth who was kind enough to write us a letter. She shared many of her memories of St. Joseph the Worker. Here are just a few of them: *Fr. Daz brought the first computer for the rectory. He also had the parking lot black-topped. One of the parishioners did the work. One night the large steamroller he was using disappeared! As far as I know the police never did locate it or find out who had taken it.... We began the practice of sending a special crucifix home with a different family each week. The family received it at Mass and returned it the following week with the intention of praying for vocations for the priesthood and religious life...The parish would send two or three catechists to Anaheim or Denver to the annual Religious Ed Congress. Not only did it give them new insight and help in imparting the faith, but it also built up their faith...One memory happened when Fr. Daz was away on retreat. He was replaced with an elderly little Jesuit priest from back east, Fr. Shue (spelling?) One night there was a storm with wind, rain, thunder and lightening. The winds were powerful enough to shake the doors off the church and set off the alarm. I was too fearful to venture across the yard to turn off the alarm because of the downpour and lightening. At the same*



Sr. Teresa Schlereth

time I feared that the little priest would risk the danger and be blown away by the wind. However the next morning before Mass I asked him how he enjoyed the storm, His answer was "I slept like a baby. I never knew we had one until I saw the wet ground this morning." We had a small rock garden on the northeast corner of the convent where we placed a small plastic statue of Our Lady. One morning the statue was missing. Around 5 am I heard voices outside the convent. I saw a teenage blond girl throw something white into the field. Shortly after that when I looked towards the hall I saw a group of teenagers one with a kitten. I recognized none of them. Later the police came by. They were interested in my description of the youth and not at all concerned about what had been taken from us. We found out that there had been a break-in at one of the stake houses and the police were hot on their heels. I later found the statue in the field. It was the white thing that I had seen the blond girl throw into the field.

September, 1982 was a very special time at St. Joseph the Worker. This is when the new Boise Cascade convent was built on church property and when Sister Fabian Uriot first came here. For many in the Parish, she was their favorite part of St. Joseph the Worker Parish. She died on Holy Thursday, April 21, 2011. Here is a story we wrote about her at that time:

Sister Fabian and St. Joseph the Worker are synonymous for many of us. She has served here longer than any other sister or priest. Many current parishioners have known her since they were children. She has seen many of our children from infancy to adulthood. And, amazingly, she could remember everyone's name!

It may be hard to believe that she had a life before St. Joseph the Worker, but indeed she did. She was born on May 29, 1925 as Glenda Uriot. She was raised in West Roxbury, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. She was one of 5 children. Her father died when she was only 3. She never attended Catholic school but she was always Catholic and was always active in such groups as the Catholic Youth Organization. In high school she loved basketball, both as a player and as a spectator. Her favorite subjects were English, Business Math and Algebra.

From time to time Sister had considered a religious life, but she didn't go into this immediately. After high school she worked for several years for the phone company in the treasury department. She discovered that she loved to travel when she and nine friends took a cross country trip.

As a young woman Sister did volunteer work helping raise money for a summer camp run by the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement. She enjoyed working with these women and was so impressed by their work that she decided to learn more about them. She realized that the lives lived by this dedicated group of sisters provided something that seemed to be missing from her life.

To become a sister she needed to obtain sponsorship by a priest, be interviewed and pass a physical examination. She did these things and was accepted. On September 8, 1953, she moved to the Mother House at Graymoor, in Garrison, NY. She served first as a Postulant, a time in which she learned about the Franciscan community. April 30, 1956 was her "Clothing Day". This was a special day when she received her sister's clothing, including a white veil. She also received her name of Sister Fabian, which incidentally was not her choice. On May 1, 1956 she made her first of five professions; after the 5th one, the vows are permanent.

Her first assignment was to Cobleskill NY where she worked teaching religious classes and taking a parish census. Next, she was assigned to Alamosa CO where she stayed for 4 years. She then went back to the Mother House in Graymoor and made her fifth and final profession.



In 1962, she was assigned to Mechanicsville NY. Children there had release time from school much like the LDS children here. Sister taught religious education. She also started taking classes, herself, at Sienna College. Her primary criteria for deciding where to go to college was whether or not they had a swimming pool, which she claims helped her to study.

Next for Sister was the “Olive Capital” of Lindsey CA. She served there for 5 years and also went to college in Corvallis OR. She was then sent back to NY for 1 year, then to North Conway, NH, a resort town. Sister often went skiing while she lived there. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Religious Education and Psychology at Notre Dame College in Manchester NH.

In September, 1982, she came to work at St. Joseph the Worker parish in West Jordan, UT. She moved in the very first year the new convent building was opened. She has always felt very welcome here. She worked first doing a parish census. She then got involved with the religious education program and continued this for several generations of children. She has made an indelible mark on our community. The parish Social Hall was officially named Sister Fabian Hall in her honor.

Sister left the parish due to health reasons, in November, 2009 and returned to her Mother House in Garrison NY. It was our great hope that she would join us for our Dedication Day on May 1, 2011, but sadly she died just a week and a half before that great day. Sister was a great supporter of the new church and looked forward to seeing the photos that we sent to her of the church at various stages of construction. She was able to see photos of the finished church and found it beautiful.

Once more, it is time for us to show our appreciation for her 30 years of dedicated service. We now must say our very last “good bye” to this wonderful woman we call our sister and friend. She will be deeply missed. Sister Fabian has shown us by her example how to live the values of our patron Saint Joseph the Worker. She has been hard working, faithful, dedicated and kind— not for personal glory or gain but to serve others. St. Joseph the Worker parish is forever in her debt. ***God bless you, Sister Fabian!***



Above: Photos of Sister Fabian at various times in the life.

Read all about the priests of the parish in next weekend's bulletin!