

ICSB NEWSLETTER

Monthly newsletter of Immaculate Conception/St. Bridget's



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

We honor those women who have walked “over the way that with tears has been watered” and who have made a way out of no way with a “thank you Jesus” on their lips and hands always ready to help those in need. We celebrate women to remind ourselves of the accomplishments of women throughout the years through family, culture and society. Here are three stories that speak about these accomplishments.

A LINE OF STRONG BLACK WOMEN

Written by Joanne Gordon

I come from a line of strong black women who did just that, my grandmother Daisy Holcomb and my mom, Sarah Gordon are just two of them. Granny accomplished so much in her life with very little formal education. However, while in her 50's she decided to get her GED because she wanted to set an example for us of the importance of an education. She was that woman who made a way out of no way and she always gave God the Glory. It was not uncommon to hear her say “Thank You Jesus” and she would always say “I’ll do....if the Lord is in the plan”. My grandmother's house was the place that the neighbors loved to visit. She was a wise woman who loved to cook. She was the whole neighborhood's "Granny."

A LINE OF STRONG BLACK WOMEN (CONT'D):

Written by Joanne Gordon

My grandmother passed those values on to my mom who has been on her own since the age of 14, while putting herself through school. She married at a young age and raised her only child as a single parent. She was an avid reader and loved to play Bid Whist. Mom was always straight forward, so you never had to guess where she was coming from. Even though she exuded confidence, she was quite shy. After over 30 years of service and numerous awards, Mommy retired from the VA Hospital in the late 90's. She then moved to Rochester to help raise her grandson, Julian. Today, Sarah lives with Alzheimer's Disease. She was diagnosed 15 years ago, but the past two years have been difficult. My mother and I have always been very close and I am the woman I am today because of her. I admire her so much because she is a fighter. Although the best of her is gone, I stand beside her loving her always, even after she's eventually gone.



Joanne & Sarah Gordon



Daisy Holcomb,
Joanne & Sarah Gordon



Joanne, Julian, & Sarah Gordon

SIX GENERATIONS OF ACHIEVEMENT: THE MORRISON, EDMOND, DUKES, STINSON, CASTLE AND KNIGHT WOMEN

Written by William Castle

Five generations of educators, daughters, mothers and grandmothers. It all started with a rural great-great-great-grandmother, Rachel. Rachel worked the land along with her family, but she knew that if her daughters were to succeed they had to be educated.

Rachel sent her daughters, Margaret and Susie, to the city to live with their uncle. In the city, they could go to high school and maybe teach someday. Losing their help on the farm was a great sacrifice for Rachel, but it had to be done. Margaret and Susie had very little when they went to the city. But were determined to finish high school. Margaret worked hard and was one of the smartest girls in her class. She remarked that she had only two dresses; but she washed, starched and iron one every night. The other girls teased her because she had only two dresses, but that did not dampen her desire for an education. Margaret graduated from Manassas High School in 1927 and left home going to Tennessee State College. She left college after a year to get married.



Front Row: Marie Dukes Jordan, Margaret Edmond, Kaila Knight (baby)

Back Row: Musette Castle and Kathryn Castle

SIX GENERATIONS OF ACHIEVEMENT (CONT'D): THE MORRISON, EDMOND, DUKES, STINSON, CASTLE AND KNIGHT WOMEN

Written by William Castle

Rachel later moved to the city and created a job for herself and a service for others. She cooked meals for the colored men working at the Woods Lumber Co. The men were not allowed to enter the restaurant to buy their meals. Miss Rachel, as she was called, would cook meals at her home, pack the food in her red wagon and walked a mile to the lumber yard. She arrived promptly at twelve noon every work day. In 30 years she never missed a day. The men paid 25-30 cents per meal with dessert and could pay her on payday. The day in 1962 that she did not show up, they sent someone to see what was wrong. Rachel had had a stroke and was lying on the floor unable to move. In those 30 plus years, Rachel bought two plots of land and built a house on one plot. That took a lot of cooking, walking and serving, but she made it happen.

Margaret became a wife and mother. She worked for many years as a domestic. One of the only jobs available for women of color without an education. At forty years of age Margaret went back to college. She and her daughter Marie went to Lemoyne College together. They took all the same classes and shared the books, thus having to buy only one set of books each semester. At the same time, Margaret also taught in the rural school systems in Arkansas and Tennessee. At that time, you could teach with only one or two years of college. Between college and teaching, she and Marie were in a school setting year round. Both Margaret and Marie graduated from Lemoyne College and started teaching in the Memphis City Schools. They taught at the same elementary school.

Marie, later went to Atlanta University and earned a Masters in Library Science. She served as a librarian in the Memphis City Schools until her retirement. After retirement, she went to Las Vegas, Nevada and helped with the building and set up of a new branch library. She later returned to Memphis to care for her mother and served as the head librarian at a branch library.

Marie is the mother of Musette. Musette spent most of her early summers on the college campus with her mother and grandmother. During the summers when they were teaching in the rural areas, Musette went to school with them and was a student in a classroom. Being a teacher's child had benefits that would serve Musette later in life. She spent many years seeing her mother and grandmother prepare for school. She spent the weeks before school opened working in the classroom helping to put up bulletin boards, counting books and arranging desk.

SIX GENERATIONS OF ACHIEVEMENT CONT'D: THE MORRISON, EDMOND, DUKES, STINSON, CASTLE AND KNIGHT WOMEN

Written by William Castle

When Musette graduated from high school, she went to college and became a teacher. Musette taught in Memphis and Rochester. In Rochester, she moved from the classroom into administration, eventually becoming a school principal. Musette attended SUNY Brockport and earned two Master's degrees and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Education Administration. She always enjoyed being a teacher and educator. It was what she had known all of her life and it was such an awesome profession.

Musette had two daughters, Kathryn and Carole. Both of her daughters helped her prepare classroom materials and spent time helping to prepare the classroom before school started. They both were educated on the sacrifices that earlier generations had made so that the people of color would have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Education and achievement were an everyday part of life.

After high school graduation Kathryn went to Spelman College, a HBCU, and received a degree in psychology. She received a Masters and Ph. D in Clinical Psychology from DePaul University in Chicago. She has worked at the University of Rochester for the past 22+ years and during her tenure she has held many leadership roles. She is currently the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry; Psychology Chief in the Department of Psychiatry; and Director of Ambulatory Services (Behavioral Health and Wellness, outpatient) in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

Carole attended Spelman, Lemoyne and Empire State College. She has started her own business, Castle Mobile Services. Her goal is to be a successful young black entrepreneur. She says that working for yourself is not easy because you are always on call. But she is following the path started by her great-great grandmother Rachel. You can make your own way; all you need is the opportunity.

Kathryn has a daughter named Kaila. Kaila learned the lessons that were passed down to her mother. Others before you have paved the way, move forward and do your best. Kaila earned a B.A. from Nazareth College. Kaila is an early childhood educator.

This is the history of five generations of women who achieved in a difficult world. Throughout their lives they reached out to others to help them on their journeys through life.

"Next to God we are indebted to women, first for life itself, and then for making it worth living." Mary McLeod Bethune

THE WOMEN IN MY LIFE

Written by Douglas Parker

I believe life to be 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. I was raised to respect work hard, to strive for success and to care for my neighbor. Gender, race and social standing don't determine who you are, desire and effort shape who you become.

I've seen examples of this through my whole life, women who haven't just "talked the talk, but have walked the walk". My great-grandmother raised 21 children (!), my grandmother was self-sufficient most of her life, working from her teenage years to near her dying day. My mother put her own interests aside to raise three rambunctious boys and a daughter and then to restart a career. My wife started a career after college, raised both her own and other's children, maintained a growing business and remains actively engaged in community volunteering through Rotary. My daughter, who is raising four active and fiercely independent children in an inclusive environment, manages a stressful career in medicine and makes time to volunteer in the community.

I learned early that life is what we determine it to be, and the women in my life have lived that, making an impact by their actions.



Jessica Schock & Madison



Kathleen Parker



Victoria Parker

YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

Pope Francis has declared 2021 to be the year of St. Joseph, the patron saint of the universal church. Wedded to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the foster father of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Joseph played an integral part in salvation history. In his Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris Corde* ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis writes that Saint Joseph was a beloved father, tender and loving, obedient to God and, an accepting father; a father who was creatively courageous, and hard-working; a father who remained in the shadows protecting Mary and Jesus.

Not much is written about St. Joseph in the early years, with the gospels of Matthew and Luke the primary sources of information about this gentle man. By all accounts, Bethlehem appears to have been the birthplace of Joseph, though it appears that he had settled in Nazareth prior to the Annunciation. Many speculate that he had relocated due to the need to make a living, and his trade as a carpenter was more suited to the opportunities available in Nazareth.

Betrothed to Mary, and not understanding the mystery of the Incarnation, he became uncertain of his feelings towards the unexpected (and unexplained) pregnancy. Early writings indicate that he wished to be respectful of Mary, and have no bad feelings or defamation be brought upon her, as they had not yet married. He thought to have her quietly put away, and was contemplating such action when he was visited by the Angel of the Lord who told him not to be concerned or afraid, as Mary had been conceived by the Holy Ghost. He did as the angel had instructed, and took Mary to be his wife.

Joseph's early days showed that he would follow the teachings and guidance of the Lord in caring for Mary and the Child. Having to travel to Bethlehem for the census, Joseph took Mary and ensured her safety and comfort during the travels and the birth of our Lord. After returning to Nazareth following the birth of our Lord and the presentation in the temple, Joseph was yet again called upon to protect Mary and Jesus. With Herod decreeing that all male children under the age of two years to be killed, once again the Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and instructed him to take Mary and the Child and flee to Egypt for safety. After a few years when it was safe, they returned to Nazareth and settled into their daily lives.

YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH CONT'D

Though the Gospels hold very little information about Joseph, the early church fathers wrote more about Joseph and the importance of his role in the lives of Mary and Jesus. The Coptic church in the East kept his feast day beginning around the beginning of the fourth century, while in the Western church the importance of Joseph began to appear in more writings in the ninth and tenth centuries. For the first time, a church was built and dedicated to Joseph in Bologna, in 1129.

In December 1870, Pope Pius IX declared that Joseph would be the Patron Saint of the Universal Church, and today we celebrate his feast day on March 19. Joseph is an example for all Catholics, showing himself to be an intercessor, a support, and a guide and protector in times of trouble. He was obedient to God's will during the unexplained pregnancy of Mary, and supported both her and Jesus in the early years, fleeing to Egypt for protection from Herod, and eventually returning to Nazareth. He appeared to be a simple man of God, working as a carpenter to make a living, dedicated to the care of Mary and Jesus, and following the word of God. He is an example of patience and tolerance for us all.

ST. PATRICK

St. Patrick was born in 387 AD, in Kilpatrick, Scotland. He is reported to be from a family of high stature, as his father came from a Roman family of high rank, and his mother is said to have been a close relative of St. Martin of Tours. Patrick resided with his family in Scotland until he was sixteen years of age, at which time Irish marauders took him into captivity, and sold him as a slave in Ireland. Patrick tended his master's flocks for approximately six years, writing in his "Confessio" that he prayed constantly during his captivity, and eventually escaped to the shore, where he was able to secure a slot on a boat and returned to his home, vowing to serve the Lord.

He was mentored by St. Germain in his early years back, and eventually entered into the priesthood, engaging in missionary work throughout his homeland. He was soon directed by Pope St. Celestine I to return to Ireland and teach the people about Christ. During his journey into Ireland, he wished to return to his former slave master to pay the price of his ransom and bestow upon him God's blessing. However, the reports of Patrick's power in working miracles throughout the land and his preaching of God's word had reached his former master prior to his arrival. Not wanting to be upstaged by his former slave, the master set his buildings and treasures on fire, and threw himself into the flames.

ST. PATRICK CONT'D

Patrick traveled throughout Ireland, bringing the faith and belief in God to all who would come to listen to him, pushing back on paganism and druidism, which were the prevalent belief systems at the time. During this time, it is reported that Patrick, on a sunny Easter morning, picked a three-leaf clover (shamrock) and used it to explain the Blessed Trinity and its' doctrines, noting the three leafs and one stem.

Patrick continued his journeys throughout Ireland, building churches and establishing parishes, preaching the word of salvation to all who came to him. Many miracles have been attributed to him during his time of travel and conversion of others to the faith. He is reported to have baptized many during his travels, and ordaining bishops and priests to continue with his teachings. Despite his continued preaching and conversions, he would take time away from all to retreat in solitude and spend time in prayer.

Eventually he returned to Saul, where he was joined by St. Brigid and her virgins. She was with him at his death, and was alleged to have wrapped his body in a shroud made by her own hands. His remains were buried at the chieftains fort two miles away. In later years, the cathedral of Down was built. St. Patrick is reported to have died on March 17th, in the year 493 AD, though some scholars believe that the year was closer to 460 or 461 AD.



REFERENCES:

New Advent.org/Catholic Encyclopedia; History.com; Britannica.com; Catholic.org

THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist is “...the source and summit of the Christian life (Catechism of the Catholic Church)” as it brings to all of us the promises of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As Catholics, we are privileged to receive the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, when we partake in Holy Communion at Mass. At the heart of the celebration of Mass is the moment of transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus, the Real Presence, fulfilling his words that He will be with us until he comes again.

Jesus was very explicit in his words that he “...is the bread of life,” “the living bread that has come down from Heaven. If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” Speaking to the crowds at Capernaum, many had difficulty in understanding His words. But He continued, “The man who eats my flesh and drinks my blood enjoys eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. My flesh is real food, my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, lives continually in Me, and I in him” (John 6: 55-57). They continued to be puzzled by His words, and He began to emphasize the importance of what He was saying. “Such is the bread which has come down from heaven; it is not as it was with your fathers, who ate manna and died none the less; the man who eats this bread will live eternally. (John 6: 59).



THE EUCHARIST CONT'D

Many began to leave and went back to what they had been doing previously, until Jesus was left with the 12 apostles. When he asked them "Would you, too, go away?," Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom should we go? Thy words are the words of eternal life; we have learned to believe, and are assured that thou art the Christ, the Son of God" (John 6: 68-70).

It was at the Last Supper when the apostles finally understood the true meaning of Jesus' words, breaking the bread and saying "this is My Body, which will be given up for you," and raising the chalice of wine and telling them "this is My Blood, which will be shed for you." He further instructed them to "...do this in memory of Me," thus instituting the priesthood and the manner of worship until he returns. From the early days of the church, the apostles and early church fathers constructed this liturgy for keeping holy the Lord's Day, bringing the words and sacrament of the Eucharist to all.

Into the second century we have the witness and writings of St. Justin Martyr to understand the basic origins of the order of the Mass. The Liturgy of the Word instructs us to read the memoirs of the apostles and writings of the prophets, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist allows us to receive the consecrated Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The church has kept this structure in place since the beginning, bringing the words of salvation to all who would hear, and the opportunity to receive the Bread of Life, so that we, too, may one day be with him in eternal life.

We gather as one family in worship, adhering to the teachings of the Lord and His apostles, and partaking of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is the greatest gift we could ever receive. As we enter into the Easter Triduum, let us be mindful of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us, and be ever grateful for the opportunity to one day be with Him in eternal life.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE MARCH BABIES

Ramona Moore – March 2
Marcia Fugate – March 3
Ralph Destephano – March 8
Patrick Flaherty – March 8
Kaila Knight – March 14
Tracy Jordan - March 21