

The Perpetual Light

Presented to graduates, friends and supporters of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School



Principal's Perspective By: Katie Franco

I hope this newsletter finds you happily adapting to 2024! As principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School for the last seven school years, I have grown to have a different perspective for January. In our calendar year, January represents renewal and a fresh start. We set goals to take us into a “new year, new me” mindset and we see the open possibility for what is to come in the next twelve months. In our school calendar, January marks the beginning of planning and preparations for the next school year. It is in a way a closing of the current school year and a shift to what is happening ahead. In either context, a new year allows us to reflect on all of the year’s events behind us and make plans for the future.

Here at OLPH School, we have had some wonderful things to celebrate. You will see in this article the faces of the new teachers at OLPH. We welcome them and thank them for being part of our school community. Also, you will see that our fundraising efforts were able to update our kitchen, which has been a much-needed project for many years. We have been lucky to return to mostly normal now after the pandemic. We are working hard to strengthen our school program and our offerings in the coming years. A big part of our reflection and goal-setting process for the school took place last school year when we underwent our WCEA/WASC accreditation. Every six years the school is evaluated in several areas, and is visited for 3 days by a team outside of our school who observes and forms a report based on their findings. The school was overwhelmingly successful in the visit and received the full six years of approval before the next accreditation. Some areas that the team highlighted as areas of excellence at OLPH School were Catholic Identity, the school’s Mission, and the support for students’ spiritual, personal, and academic growth. We hope you, as alumni, can spread the good news about Our Lady of Perpetual Help School.

We also plan to hold our annual raffle this year. You will find information in this newsletter as well as raffle tickets. This annual alumni fundraiser will go directly to our bathroom update, scheduled for Summer 2024. Please consider donating above and beyond to help support this endeavor. Thank you for your kind support, words of encouragement, and prayers. May the new year’s blessing be abundant for all of you and Our Lady of Perpetual Help School!



TOGETHER WE DID!

Over the summer, the school and parish, led by our pastor, Father Villote, worked in collaboration to remodel the kitchen in Alumni Hall. The kitchen was beautifully updated with new floors, gas lines, water pipes, food warmers, an oven, and a refrigerator. We are so blessed and grateful for all of these efforts. They were made possible by school and parish fundraising this past year. Thank you, parents, family, friends, and all who have given to OLPH School!

We are continuing to raise funds for our bathroom update project. Donations and grants have been awarded towards the project and we are close to meeting our goal. Funds from the annual alumni fundraiser will go towards completing this project. Thank you in advance for your help.

From the desk of Father Joe Gordon...*Class of 1959*

Reverend Edward Kevin Murray, Capt., Chaplains' Corp, USN, Ret.

Born: April 16, 1935 in San Francisco

Ordained: June 9, 1962 in St Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco

Died: December 18, 2012 in San Francisco

Retired: 2005, in residence at St. Stephen, San Francisco, while assisting in parish ministry there.

During his time there he continued his part-time chaplain's duties at St. Mary's Hospital until his declining health required a pull-back from all pastoral activities.

St. Catherine of Siena, Burlingame; full-time chaplain, United States Navy, 1966-1991, retiring with the rank of Captain; Our Lady of Mt Carmel, Mill Valley, 1991. Full-time senior chaplain (1996-97, 1998-2002), and later, part-time chaplain, St. Mary's Hospital, San Francisco; Ed.D., University of San Francisco, in educational psychology. Part-time professor of supervised ministry, St. Patrick's Seminary, 1993-95.

Pastor: St. Gregory, San Mateo, 1992-96; St Luke, Foster City, 1997-98; St. Teresa, San Francisco, 2002-05; beloved semi-retired priest, in residence at St. Stephen, San Francisco.

First, a personal note. Ed Murray's and my paths crossed for the first time at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Daly City (OLPH) during his seminary Christmas vacation of 1957. I was a 7th grader in the parish school and attending the mandatory altar server rehearsals for Christmas midnight Mass. Ed, a 1948 graduate of OLPH, was spending part of his seminary vacation training us servers – no easy task. He was in the first of six years at St. Patrick's Seminary, and thirty-five years later I was his associate at St. Gregory, an assignment and an experience that I treasure. We remained close friends until the day he died.

The ancient Persian proverb best describes Ed Murray, "Still waters run deep" (no pun). Highly organized, never wanting to be the center of attention in gatherings or meetings, understandably respectful of parish and diocesan chains of command, a skilled leader, and an inspiring presence to his Navy subordinates as well as commanding officers. Some parishioners at St. Gregory, accustomed to Ed's gregarious and verbose predecessor, called him aloof (some even claimed cold) but never questioned his competence and skills in guiding that large and active parish. Ed was all the more exemplary in this role when it is recalled that he had been out of parochial ministry for 25 years before arriving at St. Gregory.

In Ed's twenty-five years as a United States Navy chaplain, it was expected that he would keep himself updated in all manner of clinical psychology areas, and he attributed his enthusiastic pursuit of the Ed.D. degree - and earlier, the Master of Divinity (St. Patrick's Seminary) and M.S. in Counseling (San Diego State University) - to his natural attraction to health care ministry. But although named the pastor of St Gregory, "hospital work", as he called it, was still what he longed for, and he remained somewhat conflicted while in San Mateo. On the other hand, while on separate occasions offered the chaplaincies of two hospitals independent of each other, he nevertheless questioned if he could succeed in either of those ministries since he would need fluency in Spanish to perform optimally – and he declined each offer. "Ministering ineffectively to those hospital 'parishioners' – staff, patients, and patients' families -- is not an option that I will consider."

His opportunity to enter full-time hospital ministry finally arrived in 1997 when Archbishop John Quinn asked him to consider accepting the position of head chaplain of St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco. His skilled ease with collaboration and cooperation with a pastoral care team was a Godsend to all concerned, but yet, not long after he arrived at St Mary's he again began to feel uncomfortable. Skyrocketing health care costs to patients and their families in these times, accompanied by ever-increasing insurance constraints and regulations, had dramatically reduced daily hospital patient census counts (that surge continues to this day, 2023) and Ed reluctantly admitted that, frankly, he just did not have enough work to do. In conversations with John Quinn he asked to return to parish ministry, which resulted in his service for one year at St. Luke, Foster City. However, the administration team at St. Mary's had still not filled the position that he had left one year earlier, and John Quinn, while assuring Ed that the "not enough work" scenario was now nearly non-existent, Ed's return to his old job would be welcomed by all. Providentially, in addition, he was assured that if he chose to return to his chaplain position – which was being offered to him once again – he would have plenty of work. It was a win-win situation all around.

In speaking of Ed Murray in his final assignments, consider the following as a kind of litany of stops along his jour-

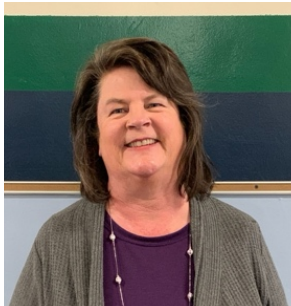
ney: a brief yet effective pastorate at St Luke in Foster City; an enthusiastic return to the chaplaincy of St. Mary's Hospital with residence at St. Teresa rectory; a successful pastorate at St. Teresa upon replacing the beloved Peter Sammon there (a nearly impossible task) while continuing as part-time hospital chaplain; and a predictably effective part-time chaplaincy again at St. Mary's Hospital upon his stepping down from St. Teresa and entering semi-retirement. To each of these ministries Ed Murray brought his countless skills, talents, and commitment.

Contrary to what a few folks had said of him, Ed Murray was not cold and aloof. He was supremely professional, but he did not draw undue attention to himself, even if that meant disappointing folks who were comfortable with their priests being flighty social butterflies or even glad-handing loud-mouths. When with his closer friends on days off or in gatherings of true camaraderie, or in lighter moments in a rectory, a ship's officers' areas, sailors' recreation sites, a hospital room or a medical staff meeting room, a rousing Murray family gathering of siblings and nieces/nephews, a reception hall for the hundreds of Navy officer and enlisted personnel who requested him for weddings and baptisms, whatever the locale, he exuded warmth and good humor without end - to no one's surprise.

Preparing this profile of Edward Murray reminds me that it is wise to conclude my sketch of this dear friend and good priest as I began it, calling on the words "Still waters run deep" to describe him. I shall give the scriptures the last word about Ed, however, and turn to John's Gospel when thinking of Ed as a true disciple of the Good Shepherd. As John the Baptist proclaimed about Jesus the Lord, and John the Baptist was as forthright and assertive as any disciple could have been, "He must increase, and I must decrease" (John 3:30).

**Well done, Captain Murray. Well done, Father Ed.
Requiescas in pace, and thank you – for everything.**

Thank you Mrs. Sheila Ortega



After serving OLPH School for 30 years, Mrs. Sheila Ortega moved on from Our Lady of Perpetual Help School at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. In her time here she served as a 2nd Grade, 8th Grade, and 7th Grade teacher. She also served under many principals as Vice-Principal. Mrs. Ortega's leaving left a big hole in our hearts and our school because she did so much for us. At OLPH, Mrs. Ortega worked tirelessly for the good of the school. She began our grant writing program to secure more funds for technology and other school projects, served as Student Council moderator, supported school fundraisers, assisted the alumni office by helping to produce the Perpetual Light, and assisted in organizing the Alumni Auction and raffle. Throughout her years here she partnered with hundreds of children to support the families and students of OLPH in any way she could. We are so very grateful to her for all of her years of service. Although she no longer works as a teacher at OLPH, she continues to support Our Lady of Perpetual Help School.

Her farewell was filled with both joy and sadness, and it even included a rendition of the "Twelve Days of Christmas" crafted specifically for Mrs. Ortega by Ms. Stella (5th Grade teacher) and Ms. Tunnell (Middle School Math teacher). "She is the heart of OLPH!" rang out several times as the students and staff sang to her. At the farewell lunch for Mrs. Ortega, Mr. Angelo Marquez delivered a heartfelt speech that encapsulated our feelings. He said:

"I think the most important thing that everyone knows already, is how loyal you are and how fiercely you love OLPH. You have been the backbone of our school and have connected generations. People from all decades still call OLPH their home because they feel connected through you. Whether you taught them yourself or met them through the alumni association, Saints from the past, present, and future will continue to come to our school and for that, we will be forever grateful. And so a new chapter begins for you. But no matter where you go, know that you will always be in our hearts here at OLPH. God bless you and we love you."



Our Lady of Perpetual Help School thanks you, Mrs. Ortega! We wish you the best always!

NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Ms. MAE RIOJAS



Ms. Riojas joined our OLPH family in January 2022 as our resource aide. Soon after, she took over 6th grade literature, art, religion, as well as tech electives. In the 22/23 school year, she remade tech into a STREAM (science, technology, religion, engineering arts, and multimedia) lab to incorporate arts and tech. Since then, she has provided our students with great opportunities like The Invention Convention, to introduce the creativity behind engineering to solve problems in our lives and the world beyond! She has also introduced coding to our TK-8th graders, thus creating opportunities for our 5th-8th graders to be able to compete in coding and robotics challenges with other Archdiocesan schools. You can also find Ms. Riojas capturing the best and heartfelt moments for all of our school events. We are truly blessed to have her!

Ms. JENNIFER MOTA

Ms. Mota has been part of our OLPH family since 2020 when she began as our resource aide. She completed her studies in 2022 at Sacramento State University, and came back for our 23/24 school year as our second-grade teacher. We are blessed to have her back and leading our second graders this year in academia and sacramental preparation for their First Communion in early February. Ms. Mota strives to create a positive and inclusive classroom environment where all students feel comfortable expressing their ideas, asking questions, and engaging in meaningful discussions. Her warm and approachable demeanor creates an atmosphere in which her students are encouraged to think critically and actively participate in their learning journey.



Ms. JAZVELINE MARTINEZ ESTRADA



Ms. Estrada joined our school in the 23/24 school year as our seventh-grade homeroom and departmentalized social studies teacher for 6th-8th grade. With several years of teaching experience under her belt, having previously taught a foreign language for the Archdiocese, Ms. Estrada brings a passion for her subject and a commitment to designing and delivering engaging lessons that inspire her students to learn and grow. Ms. Estrada engages her students in daily lessons that are aimed at reaching all her students' needs. We are grateful for her and all her efforts in going beyond the textbook, by integrating real-world examples and current events to make the subject matter come alive.

Ms. ALANNAH ORTEGA

It is a blessing to have Ms. Ortega join our OLPH family as our lower-floor aide and resource teacher. She is a recent college graduate and brings so much love to all of the students under her care and supervision. Her enthusiasm, patience, positivity, and guiding ways have been a key part of her success in helping all the students that she works with. We look forward to a great school year with Ms. O.



† IN MEMORIAM †



Tyler Rasay
Class of 2009

Elsie (Belli) Tonelli ('40)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Joan Battaglia '75-Serves at the CYO Camp Caritas Creek President. Our students ran into her during their time at Outdoor Education this February. She spoke highly about her time at OLPH.

Angelynn Gumboc '20 attended Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory in San Francisco where she has played volleyball for the last 4 years. Angelynn (bottom center) and her team won the Divisional round of the CIF Championship. Angelynn also received a Leadership Award from CIF and was the only one, on her team to do so.



Georgia Alvarado '20 moved to Florida after graduating from OLPH and is dual enrolled in both high school classes as well as her general education college classes. She will be starting college at Ave Maria University in the fall.

THE DEVOTED CLASS OF 2023



Alejandra Navarro Falcon, Dylanie Esteban, Isabella Marapao, Abigail Merced, Elyssa Marapao, Bianca Pascual, Samirah Manzoor, Kelly Ayuque, Audrey Lopez, Hasia Dalisay, Harrison Yip, Christian Alcaraz, Kingston Thouchalanh, Russ Abrazaldo, Bryan Lin, Khephren Higgins-Hampton, Sayhan Bhuiya

ISABELLA MARAPAO is our OLPH recipient of The Bud Duggan Scholarship for Kindness Award, given to the student who generously and unselfishly treated others with kindness and charity.



A SPECIAL NOTE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Under the leadership of principal William Kovacich, along with Development Director, Ed Mahoney, the OLPH Alumni was galvanized. Together they created the Perpetual Light and annual Alumni Auction. This event not only reconnected many alumni with each other, it also reconnected them with the school. Unfortunately, due to low reservation numbers last year we had to cancel the live event. We hope to bring this event back in the future. Although the auction was not held, the raffle still took place. Our Lady of Perpetual Help School is blessed that so many alumni generously donate to our yearly fundraising event. These yearly donations allow us to provide a quality education for our students. We thank you in advance for your support to this year's raffle.

MAJOR DONORS

John Madden ('50) Family	Tom Ryan '51
Pat (Ricci) Casey '56	Mike Ryan '53
Mary and Rich Lucett, <i>Retired Teacher</i>	Lucky Chances
Barbara Hall '64	Bob Gross ('47)
Bill and Roxane Kovacich, <i>Retired Principal</i>	Ferrari Family (ASF Electric)
Katie Franco, <i>Principal</i>	Mary Tunnell, <i>Teacher</i>
Sheila and Carlos Ortega, <i>Teacher</i>	Tony Spiteri
Lois (Lagomarsino) Erasmy '56	John and Arlene Castillo, <i>School Secretary</i>

LAST YEAR RAFFLE WINNERS

\$1000 Ronald Wertenberg ('59) \$500 Mr. Ocana (Grandparent of student)
\$250 Amaut Family (School family) \$100 Ruth Gonzales (School parent)
\$50 Terrence Gentle ('64)

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School

The Perpetual Light

Father Augusto Villote

OLPH Pastor

Katie Franco

Principal

Angelo Marquez

Vice Principal



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STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The dramatization of Stations of the Cross began in 1987. Joan Martin, a parent volunteer, made the original crown with vines from her yard. It has been used every year since then and the students learn about the special person who made it. Last school year, one of her sons, Mike Martin ('69), visited OLPH School and during his visit, we told him the story of its creation. Seeing that it was very brittle he created a new crown incorporating some of the old vines with the new. This year will be the first year the newly created crown is used and the beautiful tradition will continue on.

