

THE PERUVIAN JOURNAL



Potatoes, Potatoes and more Potatoes...

By Sister Kathleen Neely

As I write these notes for the April 2009 issue of OURS, I am thinking of a special experience I had last week

here in Muquiyauyo. A family invited us to help harvest potatoes!

I had spoken with the mother of the family a few weeks ago that I would love to do that, if it were possible. I thought surely that she would not remember my comment, but she did! Yuli just started teaching in the small town of Huasquicha and Sue hadn't returned from Lima yet, but I gladly accepted the invitation.

Fortunately, the day was beautiful. This was on Friday March 6th. At 8:30 a.m. I walked to the family's home and the father, loaded down with huge sacks and tools, drove us to the small field. We all wore hats against the sun and the rain. We were only five women and two men. I thought to myself that I had better watch very closely because I had no idea what to do!

Everyone started in silence (and each in our own rhythm)...row by row, clearing off the weeds and dried growth. Each person gathered a stack and carried it to the side of the field, so that is what I did. Little by little the field was clear and all one could see was beautiful black earth. Then, a young man came with his two bulls yoked together. I only heard one instruction and that was to him ...to plow up every other row.

He plowed up the first row and we all followed after him, picking up the beautiful potatoes and throwing them into the large "mantas" (woven cloths). When my manta had all the weight I could carry, I picked it up and took it to the huge open sacks waiting to be filled.

As we all worked, my thoughts went to my brother, George, who loved farming. He would have LOVED to have been there with us. (Perhaps he was....he left us at the young age of 61 in the year 2001). About 10:30 a.m. we took a break drinking water and juice. When the bulls were not working, they were nibbling the dried grass along the sides of the field (still yoked together).

When all the rows were finished, the bulls went over the rows again to plow up any potatoes that were left the first time. At Noon, the mother of the family announced lunch. (She had left earlier to cook corn, rice, some other vegetables and boil some of the fresh potatoes.) We sat around the family table and thanked God for the perfect day (little sun and no rain) and the healthy crop that we had just brought into the home.

“On Holy Saturday a 55 year old woman will receive her First Communion...All of us in the Christian community are very happy for her.”

- Sister Kathy

The family went back to the field after lunch, but I had a meeting in Jauja that I had to attend, and they understood. The mother of the family, Señora Luz, handed me a bag of potatoes as I left their home, but the next day her sister came with a much larger sack for us. As of now we have POTATOES, POTATOES AND MORE POTATOES. I am sorry that I have no photos of this to share with you, but I felt that it was best not to take pictures. The family invited us to harvest corn the next time, so perhaps I will take some photos then.

Holy Week Preparations

As all of you are preparing to celebrate the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Lord, we too are in the planning meetings for Holy Week. During Lent each Friday here in our small church we have the Stations of the Cross at 6:30 p.m. and in a few days we will have a meeting with all the groups in the community to plan and carry out this very special time of our Christian faith and the joy of Easter Sunday.

On Holy Saturday a 55 year old woman will receive her First Communion. I have been accompanying her these weeks. Her family, especially her two daughters,

and all of us in the Christian community are very happy for her.

Through a phone call today, Yuli learned from her mom that a young man, tenderly called "Negrito" by his mother, Juana Gil, died of TB. (You may remember Juana, who came from Peru to receive the Angeline Award a few years ago.) His daughter, Denise, and all of his family are in our prayers.

May the blessings of the Resurrected Christ be with you always!

~Sister Kathy

The Ursuline Charism in the Headlines

Legacy of Teaching



This year's recipient of the Ursuline Legacy Award was profiled in the March 19 edition of The Record. Marty Burke Murphy was honored with the

award which was created last year as the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville marked their 150th anniversary. The award will be given annually to a Sacred Heart alumna who has devoted more than 20 years to teaching. It is sponsored by Sacred Heart Academy's alumnae association.

Marty Murphy, who is sometimes called "Saint Marty," has taught first grade at Holy Spirit School, Louisville, for 34 years. In the article, written by Marnie McAlleister, Marty is quoted, "I probably would not be a teacher at all if not for the good example (of the Ursuline Sisters.) their example rubbed off on me."

She credits the Ursuline Sisters for passing their legacy of teaching to her during her years at Sacred Heart Academy. Marty also said Sister Odilia Gadlage continued to influence her with the Ursuline charism while serving as a teacher's aide in Marty's classroom.

Also in The Record...

On Tuesday, March 17, Glenn Rutherford, a reporter for The Record walked into Marian Home flanked by three



women, Margie Hering, her daughter, Cass Nagy, and daughter-in-law, Pat Hering. Margie grew up with Sister Elizabeth Spencer at St. Joseph's Orphanage and planned to catch up with her old friend.

The visit caught the attention of the media because it coincided with the feast of St. Joseph, the home's namesake. In an article published in the March 19 issue, Margie's meeting with Sister Elizabeth is described as "warm."

"I stayed here (St. Joe's) until I was 16," Sister Elizabeth told the reporter. "Then I went to Ursuline Academy for a year before going to the convent." She began her religious life in 1937.

To read the full account of both articles go to www.ursulinesisterslouisville.org for direct links