



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

LIVING
OUR
Relationship
WITH
JESUS CHRIST



“The charity
of the good
knows no
creed and
is confined
to no one
place.”

St. Marianne Cope, OSF

Witnesses of Love

*Living signs of Christ's
presence in the world*

Saint Marianne Cope, OSF (1838 – 1918)

What would inspire a New York hospital administrator to go to Hawaii and work among people with Hansen’s disease (leprosy)? This question requires a look at Saint Marianne’s life.

The daughter of German immigrants, Barbara Cope joined the Sisters of St. Francis at age 24. Though her initial training was in education, Barbara, now Sister Marianne, became a hospital administrator in Syracuse, New York. To her, no challenge was too great. She withstood criticism for treating alcoholics and stood up for patients’ rights. She had charisma and the energy of one motivated by God alone. Sister Marianne’s success came from her high standards of hygiene, wisdom, and practicality.

When Sister Marianne was her congregation’s leader, a request came to take charge of hospitals for lepers in Hawaii. No doubt mindful of

St. Francis, who cared for lepers, Mother Marianne accompanied six Sisters to work and advocate for victims of leprosy and their families.

Saint Damien de Veuster, a priest serving lepers on Molokai, contracted leprosy and was shunned. But Mother Marianne and the Sisters cared for him. They carried on his work, running a Boys Home and starting a home for females and a Girls School. Their ministries of caring for the ill, meeting spiritual needs, and educating children gave hope to the suffering and exiled people.

What drove Mother Marianne? Faith, compassion, and generosity in the service of Jesus Christ, who also had a heart for outcasts. Mother Marianne Cope was canonized October 21, 2012. Her feast day is January 23rd, her birthday.

Sister M. Emilia Castelletti, SND

For Reflection

1. What inspires you most about Mother Marianne’s story?
2. What worry or fear may be standing in the way of your greater generosity and service to God and others?
3. What next step may God be asking of you in your life?

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