

# Mother Mary Lange Anniversary Prayer Service

A prayer service marking the 123rd anniversary of the death of Mother Mary Lange, OSP, the Baltimore woman who founded the first order of black nuns, will take place on February 3, 2005 at 7 p.m. at the Mount Providence Chapel, located at 701 Gun Road in Catonsville.

Born circa 1784 in what is today Haiti, Mary Lange and hundreds of others, fled that country in the late 18th century when a revolution occurred. By 1818, she and a companion were educating black children at her own expense in her Baltimore home. At that time, there was no public education for blacks in Baltimore. In 1828, with the help of Sulpician Father James Joubert, SS, Mother Lange and two other black women started the first black Catholic School in America—St. Frances Academy. A year later, Mother Mary Lange and three other black women pronounced vows to become the first religious order of women of color.

Today, the Oblate Sisters of Providence number 85 sisters and 20 associates, with 16 Guild Members. Their motto is, “Providence will Provide.”

Cardinal William H. Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore, nominated Mother Mary Lange for sainthood late last year.