

“Project Hope – Where Families Move Up and Out of Poverty”

As we rapidly come to the end of yet another academic year, “Conversations at the Assumptionist Center” in Brighton, MA concluded this year’s series of six thematic presentations by inviting Sr. Margaret Leonard of the Little Sisters of the Assumption. Throughout her religious and ministerial life, Sr. Margaret has faithfully, energetically, consistently and passionately sought to further the mission of Assumption’s “zeal for the Kingdom” by striving to create a world that is just by lifting up the voices of the poor. She has been the Executive Director of Project Hope since 1985.

During these past twenty-seven years, this project has worked in partnership with families in the North Dorchester and Roxbury neighborhoods to be a catalyst for change in the lives of families and in the systems that keep them poor. They develop and provide family support solutions for the homeless and advocate for just public policies that will bring about systemic change. This work is done in collaboration with many organizations which support these goals.

Project Hope is a multi-dimensional and highly effective effort which has established: a speaker’s bureau, emergency services, employer and workforce partnerships, a children’s center, adult education services, affordable housing support services and a family childcare business enterprise. Most recently, contacts have been made in the area of health care which would enable qualified people to procure employment. It is evident that the ultimate dream and goal of Project Hope is personal and social transformation.

Accompanying Sr. Margaret was Rosa, a former homeless single mother with a nine month old son. That was in 1984 when she first met Sr. Margaret and the sisters who invited her into their

home which housed nine other families in Dorchester. In time, Rosa was able to study and become a nursing assistant. Four years later she began working for Project Hope. Today Rosa is the Director of the Shelter Program.

After a lively discussion, the community, residents and several guests gathered for the traditional delicious brunch.

For more information on Project Hope you may contact them at: www.prohope.org