

interim

Volume 37, Issue 3

March 2019

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania



St. Joseph Day Celebration

Saturday, March 16, 2019
Liturgy at 10:30 a.m.
followed by dinner

Please RSVP by March 8 on the SSJ
Community page at www.ssjerie.org
or by calling Jenn at 836-4204.

dare to
dream



NATIONAL CATHOLIC
SISTERS WEEK

Creating a Community of Kindness *A Conversation*

Sunday, March 10 7 p.m.

Walker Recital Hall
Mercyhurst University

Free and open to the public.



N Northwest



See page 2 for more information on National Catholic Sisters Week.

mission possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

Kindness, during the month of March, and always.

The month of March has always been significant for the Sisters of St. Joseph as we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph on March 19. Beginning in 2014, National Catholic Sisters Week has been celebrated March 8-14, making the month even more special.

As in the past, we will collaborate with the Benedictine Sisters, the Mercy Sisters and the Diocese of Erie on a local initiative in conjunction with National Catholic Sisters Week. This year's focus is kindness, specifically being kind and creating a community of kindness. Lilly Broadcasting /Erie News Now and Northwest Bank are co-sponsoring this year's initiative.

Kindness will be promoted throughout National Catholic Sisters Week via a series of PSAs

featuring prominent local community members and billboards throughout the area.

A highlight of the week is an event that will be held on Sunday evening, March 10 on the Mercyhurst University Campus (see cover). The town hall style conversation, moderated by Eva Mastromatteo of Erie News Now, will include brief reflections on the importance of kindness given by Mary Herrmann SSJ; Jenell Patton Mercyhurst Campus Ministry; Natalie Rossi, RSM; and Anne Wambach, OSB. The audience will be invited to ask questions following the presentations and share their thoughts and ideas on creating a community of kindness. The

evening will open with Erie Mayor Joe Schember and Erie County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper presenting proclamations and sharing their thoughts on kindness as well.

Our founder, Father Jean Pierre Medaille, reminds us in Maxim 64: *Strive to be kind always to everyone and unkind to no one.* As we

celebrate this special week, let us reflect on our actions and attitudes toward each person who crosses our path. Let these be opportunities for us to practice kindness. Let us also remember all creation deserves our reverence and respect. This is what makes the **SSJ Mission Possible!**

Be Kind magnets are still available at www.ssjerie.org



The liturgical season of Lent: opportunities for prayer and sacraments

ASH WEDNESDAY

8:00 a.m.
Morning Liturgy and Ashes
6:00 p.m.
PowerPoint Prayer for Ash Wednesday

SUNDAYS OF LENT

4:00 p.m.**
Please bring Lenten Office books
Evening Office of the Day with reflections by:

March 17

Sr. Marie Stephen Kebort

March 24

Sr. Rosemary O'Brien

March 31

Sr. Mary Drexler

April 7

Sr. Linda Fusco

ST. JOSEPH DAY

March 16
10:30 a.m.
Congregational Liturgy and Meal
March 19
8:00 a.m.
Liturgy
6:00 p.m.
Evening Prayer/Get Together

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Fridays at 6:00 pm
March 8
March 15
March 22
March 29
April 5
April 12



RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Thursday, March 21 at 4:00 p.m. **

Communal prayer and individual confessions with:
Msgr Robert Smith
Father Casimir Bogniak
Father Leo Gallina
Father George Strohmeier
Father John Fischer

**Please note that some of our services have been moved to 4 p.m. to make it easier to attend.

Last call for bakers

On Tuesday, March 19, the Sisters will deliver St. Joseph Day baskets – including home-baked breads – to neighbors who have been especially kind to the Congregation and others throughout the year.

Several Sisters and Associates have generously offered to bake bread, but we're still about 50 loaves short of the number needed.

So, if you're handy in the kitchen, please consider baking a mini-loaf or two. Favorites include banana, pumpkin, cinnamon, lemon and cranberry.

If you'd like to donate bread, please contact Carol Hermann at carol.hermann@ssjerie.com or call 836-4198.

directory changes

Associate George Dufala no longer has **email**.

notes



Sisters, Associates and Agrégées:
Thank you for your prayers, thoughts, cards and visits as I recover from my recent fall, hospital stay, and now rehab. I hope to be home soon, where I will have home health services. Thank you again.
Love,
Ann Flick, SSJA

On behalf of myself, Mrs. Patricia Devore (food pantry coordinator), the Saint Ann's Church Food Pantry and Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, I wish to thank you – the Sisters of St. Joseph, Sr. Mary Herrmann, Betsy Wiest and the benefactors of the Sisters – for your donation to our food pantry.

The continued generosity shared by the Sisters of St. Joseph to the local food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens, etc. shows their faith in all of us who try to carry out the teachings of our God, to care for others. Your kindness enables us to acquire many items that are not always available through the Second Harvest Food Bank, such as paper products or meat. It also allows us to purchase

more food when placing our order with Second Harvest Food Bank.

Our numbers increase steadily each month. We are proud to say we provided 75 baskets of food to our registered families for the Christmas Holiday. And thanks to your generosity, we will be able to continue to serve these 75 families.

Your kindness and generosity to our food pantry is a true gift from God. Our families are grateful with their groceries and cannot thank us enough. We know our families; they are not just food pantry clients – they are our parishioners, neighbors and friends. Many of the clients are elderly or disabled and are unable to get out to pick up their groceries, let alone carrying them back to their homes. We are fortunate to have the help of a young gentleman who delivers their groceries right to their front door. This is out of the goodness of his heart; no questions asked, no complaining, he simply does it with a smile.

Again, thank you very much

for your wonderful and generous donation and for remembering the Saint Ann's Church Food Pantry in your annual gift giving. You all remain in my thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely in Christ,
Rev. James T. O'Hara
Pastor, Our Mother of Sorrows Parish

Dear Sisters,

I'm the new Chief Executive Officer of the Good Samaritan Center in Clearfield, Pa. I was very excited to learn that the Good Samaritan Center was chosen to receive a gift from the Sisters of St. Joseph Thanksgiving Dinner Fund.

Thank you so much for the very generous donation. Your financial donation will help support our shelter for homeless men and will provide monetary assistance to individuals or families for necessities such as rent, utilities, transportation and miscellaneous items.

I will provide information to you later on about how our organization used the gift so that you may share the information. Thank you again

get to know ssj associates



Biological Sisters Joan McCain and Kay Hotchkiss

Meadville associates and biological sisters Joan McCain and Kay Hotchkiss became associates in 2009 with guidance from mentors Jerry and Loeta Derby. Joan and Kay are members of St. Hippolyte Parish in Frenchtown where they serve as Eucharistic ministers. Born in Meadville, they grew up on a farm in a family of eight. They agree that their siblings are their best friends and they cherish each other's company.

Joan cooked for several local restaurants and baked pies to help support her seven children. Her daughter and son-in-law, Christine and Dan Partin, are also Associates.

Kay is the mother of three and has been a foster parent. Four years ago, she and her husband, Carl, became Eucharistic ministers at Pleasant Ridge Manor where they continue to serve today.

associates' news and happenings

Congratulations to Associate

Ellen Mooney of Garland, Texas who became a certified Dallas County Master Gardener through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Master Gardeners are highly trained volunteers who provide residents with information on environmentally responsible gardening and landscaping including unbiased, research based information, problem solving experience and educational opportunities.



Ellen completed the required courses and 124 volunteer hours and received her certificate and badge at a ceremony in January. She is now preparing presentations for the speaker's bureau on journaling gardens and plants of the bible.



Did you know?

Our own associate Brandon Vogt is playing (and singing) a significant role in the Erie Playhouse production of Evita. Brandon plays the part of the show's antagonist, Che. The show runs through March 3. Nice work, Brandon!

In the 17th century, Father Medaille wrote the Maxims of Perfection or fundamental rules of conduct that a person seeking a life with God could follow and they still have a

message for us today. We offer the following Maxim this month for your personal reflection:

Maxim 21

Desire neither praise nor reward for your good works in this life and you will have deeper and fuller life in eternity.

Contemporary translation for this maxim:

Don't worry about getting credit for your good work; just enjoy the beauty of it.

For Reflection:

- Today I seek to do God's will as God wills.
- I notice my attachment to the approval of others.
- Today I will be a good steward of Earth's energy.

Happy "March" Birthdays:

Mary Kay Yochim
Jeannette Barczynski
Pat Moyer
Martha Connelly
Adrienne Ward
Rebecca Hower
Lorna Waddell
Deacon John Mang
Mary Hickin
Barbara Noonan
Mary Beth Smogorzewski
Patricia George
Mark McNerney
Jan Staszewski
Nancy Donnelly
Patricia McLaughlin
Stephanie Domitrovich
Cindy Ferber
Dan Partin
Ron Visnoski
Toni Stebell
Linda McQueen
Donna Nicholas
Lewis Nordin
Robert Haibach
Anna Turco



chapter of affairs and elections

Chapter chairpersons

Sister Mary Drexler

814-824-5557 or
814-464-3307

Sister Moira Sullivan

814-452-6580 or
814-460-8671

chapter info at www.ssjerie.org

Be sure to regularly check the special chapter page in the LOGIN area of the ssj website www.ssjerie.org.

Direction Statements for Mission and ministry

Recognizing the presence of God in one another, we commit ourselves to a spirit of living that embraces active listening, unconditional love and respect, affirmation and acceptance of the dear neighbor.

As a congregation of the great love of God, we will enhance our SSJ mission effectiveness program for our partners in mission while continuing to participate in Federation programs that develop a deeper sense of mission and charism.

March Community Day

Please note: the March Community Day will only be one day — Saturday, March 9. Agreee and associate Chapter participants will be excused after lunch since the afternoon pertains to finances.

Your on-going prayers are appreciated for the Chapter and strategic planning.

notes

(Continued from page 3)

and may God bless you all.
Sincerely,
Douglas K. Bloom

Dear Sr. Herrmann, Ms. Wiest, and the Sisters of St. Joseph, "It helped me and my kids have a place to live and not be homeless." -- *Melissa*

We can never adequately explain the impact of your gifts to us. Your dollars help families to have what they need each day. Your dollars help those like Melissa, quoted above, to avoid homelessness.

Thank you so much for your gift from the Thanksgiving Fund. Because of you, we can provide food, clothing and basic needs assistance to help families have a hand up when they need it most.
Thank you,

David González
Chief Executive Officer

Good morning,
Yesterday's event at the SSJ Living Center was truly amazing! The Sisters of St. Joseph have always been very near and dear to my heart. My dad was their insurance agent for many years and having worked with him, I always loved answering the calls from one of the sisters. They then were pivotal in my education at Villa Maria Academy and attending mass yesterday allowed me to reminisce with some of my former teachers. Now I have been reconnected with my work here at Gannon. It astounds me the lives this order affects every day!

We are beyond grateful for being a recipient of the generous gift for Strong

Vincent Middle School to purchase library books for the children; a gift that will keep on giving. The amount of money and organizations that received gifts yesterday was inspirational.

Thank you for all your passion that is so evident in your work and for including Gannon to be part of your contributions.

Many thanks,
Caroline DiPlacido
Project Coordinator, Office of
Community & Government
Relations
Gannon University

events, happenings and ministry news





13TH ANNUAL

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

Guess That Tune



SAVE THE DATE!

MAY 04, 2019



For tickets, call 454-7814 or e-mail jsprickman@ssjnn.org

Associates are collecting **gift cards and monetary donations** to assemble on a tree for the Gala. Donations can be brought to the retreat on March 2 or dropped off at the CLC or SSJNN, 425 W. 18 St. Our heartfelt thanks to all who help to make this event a success!



Last year the SSJ Neighborhood Network joined "TRIPS FOR KIDS," a national nonprofit with local chapters that provide youth development programs. The SSJNN Bike Program is now its Erie Chapter. This is a natural



Save the Date!

Alec Chien, an award-winning pianist from Hong Kong, will perform in concert as a fundraiser for St. James Haven.

Saturday, April 13, 2019
3:00 p.m.

Allegheny College
Ford Chapel
Meadville, PA

Contact S. Clare Marie Beichner for tickets which are \$10 each. Limited seating. Call 814-282-7798.

match. The TRIPS FOR KIDS vision is to support a world where kids from all walks of life have the opportunity to know the joy of riding a bike and the freedom to explore the natural world on two wheels.

So, what do we offer at the SSJNN Bike Program? We offer an Earn-a-Bike Program for Youth called Pedal Mettle, an Earn-a-Bike Program for Adults, a *ReCyclery Bike Shop* where people can come to repair their bikes using our tools and the expertise of volunteers and *Discovery Trail Rides* (trips with

SAVE THE DATE!



Spring
into Erie....DAWN!

Thursday, May 9th, 2019
 5:00 - 8:00 pm
 Bel-Aire by Wyndham

SILENT & LIVE AUCTION, MUSIC & MORE • \$50 PER PERSON

FOR MORE INFO: CALL 453-5921

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.ERIEDAWN.ORG

Thank you to our Sponsors!

NAOMI HARVEY • BILL & MARTHA HILBERT • MARY LINCOLN
 TIM & LISA NECASTRO • CHIP & TERESA SHAMBURG



kids to explore Erie and surrounding areas). Last year we had 45 youth enrolled in the program and gave away more than 145 bikes.

We are in the process now of gearing up for the next season with eight volunteers who come each week to repair donated bikes.

Above: Moustafa practices his bike riding skills.

where's the justice?

Students walk in the shoes of the homeless

Students from St. Gregory's School recently took a bus from North East to downtown Erie where, accompanied by their teacher Mrs. Lori Helfrich, they visited the Neighborhood Art House, Emmaus Soup Kitchen and St. Patrick's Haven. They carried backpacks filled with supplies for the men at St. Patrick's Haven. When they arrived at the Haven, their last stop, they were cold, wet and tired from being in the elements. The correlation was made to the fact that homeless persons experience that every day. Thank you to Principal Nancy Pierce and Mrs. Helfrich for giving their students a hands-on opportunity to become more socially aware.



Dept. of Health learns about human trafficking

Bryan Prior of the Crime Victim Center and Betsy Wiest recently gave a presentation to the staff of the Erie County Department of Health. The conversation focused on the \$150 billion worldwide human trafficking industry and the 25 identified business plans to sell humans discovered by Polaris Project during a ten-year study. Staff were encouraged to change their paradigm of thinking from "prostitute" to victim, from "pimp" to human trafficker and from "john" to purchaser of slaves. The group discussed forms of trafficking, recognizing victims, warning signs and what

to do if you suspect human trafficking, which is to call the national human trafficking hotline 888-3737-888.

You may save a life!

A Plastic Ocean—join the wave of change

JPIC is sponsoring the film, *A Plastic Ocean*, at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center on **Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.** Each year, 8 million tons of plastic are dumped into our oceans. Only a fraction of the plastic we produce is recycled. Once in our oceans, it never degrades – it is there forever. As plastics get into the food chain for fish, they then work their way into our food chain. In poorer countries, communities are being built on top of plastic landfills and garbage dumps. Crops are being grown in plastic landfills – again making plastic a part of our food chain. Watch this powerful film and join in discussions on how we can reduce our use of plastic and work together to care for our common home. *A Plastic Ocean* – join the Wave of Change. Change is possible and it can start with you!

Living a Responsible Lent

In 2015, Pope Francis wrote his Encyclical Letter: *On Care for Our Common Home – Laudato Si*. For Lent 2019, we challenge you to live a responsible Lent and care for our common home, the Earth. Each week, our website (www.ssjerie.org) will feature a short reflection

based on *Laudato Si*. The first week will be about the Encyclical and a link to download a copy. If you read one section a week, you will complete it by Easter. The SSJ Facebook page will feature posts with suggestions for easy things you can do to care for our common home. Share this challenge with your family and friends. If we all do just one thing, every day, to care for our common home, we can make the world a better place for generations to come.



Are you being called to a Ministry of Presence?

Each night St. Patrick's Haven opens its doors to 24 homeless men. A dedicated group of volunteers visit with the men each evening for about an hour to provide a ministry of presence and support. It lets our guests know they are valued children of God. If you are interested in joining this important ministry, call Betsy Wiest at 814-836-4153. What so ever you do to the least of my brothers, you do for me. Matthew 25:40



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SISTERS OF
ST. JOSEPH
OF NORTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA

Connecting with God ✦ Connecting with You

WWW.
SSJERIE
.ORG

Each year, the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph coordinates a trip to Haiti to visit Annunciation School in Leogane, 18 miles west of Port-au-Prince.

After the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the Federation made a 10-year commitment to sponsor ten girls through school. Each year, a group visits the school. I was to be part of the group traveling to Haiti on March 11 to tour the school and surrounding area and meet the girls we sponsor.

Due to the current widespread violence and unpredictable demonstrations throughout Haiti, the U.S. Department of State ordered the departure of all non-emergency U.S. personnel and their family members from Haiti. The U.S. government has limited



ability to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens in Haiti. They declared Haiti to be a Level 4 travel risk, it's highest level. As a result, our trip was cancelled. What

breaks my heart the most is that the girls we sponsor, who are working to break the cycle of poverty through education, are now living in a world of increasing instability and violence.

Protests, tire burnings, and road blockages are frequent and unpredictable. Violent crime, such as armed robbery, is common. Local police may lack the resources to respond effectively to serious criminal incidents and emergency response, including ambulance service, is limited or non-existent. Food and clean water sources are dwindling.

Please pray for the people of Haiti, but especially keep in your prayers the girls we sponsor. In times of violence, young girls are often the victims of violence. Please pray for their safety and for a quick resolution to the violence that has become part of their world.

Betsy Wiest

Silent Peace Walk for Haiti

There will be a Silent Peace Walk on **Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 4 p.m. in the CLC Chapel**. We will be walking and praying for the citizens of Haiti who are experiencing widespread violence in their homeland. We will also remember the 10 girls at Annunciation School in Haiti who we are sponsoring and pray for their safety.