

# interim

Volume 36, Issue 8

August 2018

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania



*a Sister of St. Joseph  
works in order to achieve unity*

We invite you to celebrate the life and ministry of

***Nancy Fischer, SSJ***

on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee

Saturday, September 1, 2018

10:30 a.m.

Sisters of St. Joseph

Community Living Center

Luncheon  
immediately following

Please RSVP by August 24  
814-836-4208

*One Sacred Community © Mary Southard CSJ MarySouthardart.org  
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# summerpalooza!

See page 4

## mission possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

Contrary to many beliefs about bad things happening on Friday the 13th, this month the day turned out to be very uplifting for me. Thanks to one of our associates and four partners in ministry, my monthly dilemma to find a topic for this column was solved.

I had the opportunity to participate on Friday the 13th in an interview of SSJ Associate Mary Beth Smorgewski for an article in the next issue of *Journeys*. Mary Beth volunteers at the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network East and West. She helps out in many programs and especially enjoys reaching out to the people of her local neighborhood. Mary

Beth told us that by being an associate, she found opportunities to fulfill a desire she had to be of service to those in need. She truly exemplifies the SSJ mission – *uniting neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God without distinction*.

Following the interview with Mary Beth, I ran into four of our partners in ministry who stopped in on their way home from Cleveland where they just finished participating in a week long CSSJ “Spirits on Fire” program. SSJ administrative staff members Vicki Pangratz and Betsy Wiest, who recently completed the program, were on hand, as well.

“We really are all one.” This is what Samantha Stump, Brian Tenney, Debbie Baer and Allan Bonace discovered during their first session program.

Their enthusiasm and excitement as they spoke about the charism and mission was encouraging and reassuring. They realize that the charism is with us and not just the sisters.

We are blessed to have such wonderful people as associates and partners in ministry. After spending time with them and listening to their experiences, I know that the SSJ spirit is alive and well and making the SSJ *Mission Possible*.

## retirement of Sharon Will, administrative assistant

SSJ Leadership wishes to acknowledge its appreciation for Sharon Will and her many years of hard work and dedication to the Congregation. Sharon was an efficient executive assistant with the ability to remain fo-

cused while performing many functions.

Sharon possessed a great understanding of the congregation and its operations. Sharon was trustworthy and mis-

sion-centered.

She had a great ability to relate with our sisters. Thank you, Sharon. You will be missed.

## Important — upcoming chapter of affairs and elections!

Please note — you will soon receive a letter and information about the upcoming chapters of affairs and election. The dates listed for the first weekend are incorrect and should be SEPTEMBER 8 & 9 (not 9 & 10).

Please note this important change and mark your calendars accordingly.



## 2018 circle of friends—new date, same fun-filled celebration saturday, september 15, 2018

plant  
kindness  
harvest  
love



Mark your calendar and plan to join us for outdoor mass, hot dogs on the grill, and an afternoon of fun and fellowship at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Circle of Friends Celebration.

If you're so gifted, consider participating in the arts and crafts show during the picnic. We have space for up to 10 tables (under a tent), where you can display and sell your work.

We're also looking for a few more associates and agrégées to help out with the picnic. If you're interested in volunteering, please let us know.

For more information on Circle of Friends, the arts and crafts show and/or volunteering, please contact Carol Hermann at 814-836-4198 or [carol.hermann@ssjerie.org](mailto:carol.hermann@ssjerie.org)

## erie gives day 2018

The work of the Sisters of St. Joseph has never been ours, alone. Our work is your work. In fact, you make our ministries possible.

We hope you'll continue to be a part of our story and ministry by making a gift on Erie Gives Day.

Donate by logging onto [www.eriegives.org](http://www.eriegives.org) on Tuesday, Aug. 14, and your gift will be partially matched by the Erie Community Foundation and its Erie Gives partners. If you can't make a

gift, say a prayer for your neighbor. We'll do the same for you.

### The Details

#### Day and Time:

Tuesday, August 14, 2017 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST.

**Gift Amount:** The minimum gift is \$25 (but there is no limit to the amount of money you may give to one or more organizations).

**Credit Cards:** Only Visa, MasterCard and Discover will be accepted.

**Your Receipt:** You will receive an email receipt of your gift; please retain it for tax purposes. Unless you choose to remain anonymous, your donor information will be sent to the appropriate organizations.

### When Nonprofits Receive

**Donations:** The organizations will receive your donation plus The Erie Community Foundation's prorated match at the Erie Gives check distribution day.



## have you heard?



Thanks to a grant from the Hardner Foundation, sounds in the chapel and gathering space will soon be as clear as a bell – even for Sisters and guests with hearing deficits.

The technology that makes this possible is known as a "hearing loop," and two such loops will be installed at the CLC.

Technically speaking, it works like this. Sound from the microphone is converted to magnetic energy and transmitted directly to hearing aids through a wire loop that surrounds the audience. (But, that's enough about the technology.)

For most people, the results are amazing. The wash of indecipherable noise often heard in large rooms becomes clearly spoken words. As one user described his first hearing loop experience, "It was like going from a rough gravel road to fresh asphalt."

At present, plans are still being finalized for installation. But rest assured, as this project progresses, we'll keep you in the loop.

## get to know ssj associates



### Meet Mary Lou Rathers

*In an interview a few years ago, Mary Lou Rathers said that she became an associate because she desired to “deepen her spiritual life by actively living our mission of unity of neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God.” She has been doing just that, and sharing her many gifts and talents, since becoming an associate in 2002. Mary Lou began the SSJ prayer shawl ministry and has volunteered at Saint Mary’s at Asbury, St. Patrick’s Haven and the Thanksgiving Dinner. She belongs to the Christian Mediation group.*

*We wish our best to Mary Lou and her husband, Mike, as they become full-time residents of Florida. We will miss having her here, but we know she will continue reaching out to the “dear neighbor” wherever she is.*

*We are blessed to have Mary Lou as an associate.*

## associates’ news and happenings

# summerpalooza!

**Saturday, August 4, 2018**

**11:45 a.m.—2:00 p.m.**

**12:00 noon—prayer and blessing of donations  
followed by a picnic lunch  
SSJ Administration Building and Patio**



As you read this, **Summerpalooza** is just around the corner! This new event, which takes the place of “That’s A Wrap” will benefit our sponsored ministries and provide a fun-filled picnic gathering for everyone.

We will gather in the Administration Building at 11:45 a.m. Prayer and blessing of the gifts will be followed by a picnic lunch and games. DJ Don Swift will be sharing some of his treasured “oldies.” Renew friendships and make new ones as we join together and celebrate our unity and blessings of our sponsored ministries. Inside or out, weather is not a factor. We look forward to seeing you! Friends and family are all welcome.

August 6, 2018 is a morning of **prayerful discernment** for five people interested in becoming SSJ Associates. These inquirers will reflect on their attraction to the SSJ charism and mission and how they

influence their lives. Formation sessions will follow to inform candidates about the SSJ history, prayer, mission and ministry, charism, and spirituality. Keep them in your prayers as they discern their call to be an associate. If you know anyone interested in learning more about associates, please have them contact us in the Associate Office (814-836-4134).

Our **true ministry** is that of presence that unites. We are very aware of how important our presence is to those who are not able to physically be with us. During the next few months, we would like to visit associates who aren’t able to be with us in person. We are inviting other associates, sisters, and agrégées to help us by periodically making phone calls, sending cards or visiting once in a while. If you are interested in this ministry of presence, please contact Sr. Ann Marie at 836-4199 or [s.amcappello@ssjerie.org](mailto:s.amcappello@ssjerie.org).

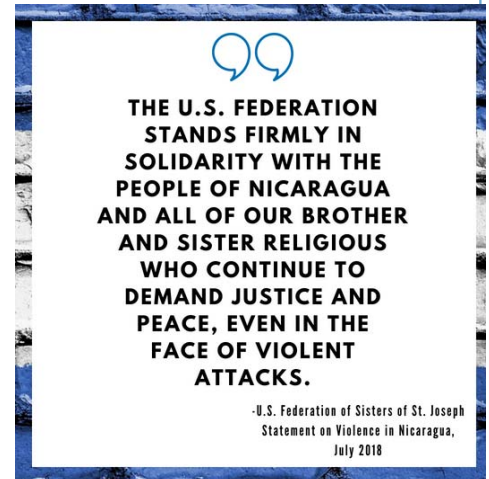
## U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph Condemns the ongoing violence in Nicaragua

The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph joins the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) in their deep concern about the growing repression and state-sanctioned violence in Nicaragua. Citizens' voices have been silenced and their peaceful protests violently suppressed. Citizens — including campesinos and campesinas — doctors, students, religious, and clergy have been abducted, tortured, and killed. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, reported that over a twomonth period from mid-April to mid-June at least 178 people were killed, the vast majority at the hands of police forces and armed pro-government groups, and at least an additional 1,500 were wounded. We expect that those numbers have climbed significantly in the past weeks.

As a country that Sisters of St. Joseph have served in, we are horrified to hear of the injustices occurring against our "dear neighbors" in Nicaragua. The U.S. Federation stands firmly in

solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and all of our brother and sister religious who continue to demand justice and peace, even in the face of violent attacks. We join with the Nicaraguan Catholic Church in denouncing the violence and with the first Latin American pope, Pope Francis, in calling for a return to dialogue that rejects violence and repression, respects freedom and reverences the lives of all. Finally, we pledge our prayer and promise that we will do all in our power to call attention to the injustice and violence being perpetrated against the people of Nicaragua.

*The Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania join with the U.S Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph in condemning the violence in Nicaragua. We pray for the people of Nicaragua whose voices have been violently silenced as they protest for reforms in the nation's social security system.*



*President Daniel Ortega, leader of the 1979 Sandinista revolution, was President of Nicaragua from 1984-90 and reassumed the position, which he still holds, in 2007. It is interesting to note that some believe Ortega is becoming like former dictator Anastasio Somoza who he worked to overthrow in 1979.*

For more information on the situation on Nicaragua, visit <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-nicaragua-unrest-20180726-story.html>

## enlivening the charism

Betsy Wiest recently participated in a committee of sisters, associates and agreees who are working with the SSJ Federation to seek ways to enliven the charism. The committee recently met in Kansas City, MO. Committee members are investigating

programs including such as fireside chats, guided retreats, middle school immersion program, social justice and the charism and building a community of inclusivity. During the next six months, the committee will meet via Zoom to continue to refine their recommendations.



## events, happenings and ministry news

### St. Patrick's Haven updates and needs

Do you like meeting new people? Do you have the gift of hospitality and a good listening ear? Each evening, the homeless men of Erie come to St. Patrick's Haven where they are welcomed and given a safe place to spend the night. We are in need of people who are called to offer a ministry of presence by visiting the men who stay at St. Patrick's Haven. With our new building, we had a larger capacity and need more visitors. Visitors are asked to commit to one evening each month to visit with the men for an hour or two beginning at 7 p.m. In this ministry, you will talk, laugh and share stories with our guests. Please pray and ask God if this is a ministry in which you are called to serve the dear neighbor. If you are interested in becoming a visitor, please contact Betsy Wiest at 836-4153 or [betsy.wiest@ssjerie.org](mailto:betsy.wiest@ssjerie.org). Remember, "Whatever you did for these least brothers of mine, you did for me". Matthew 25:40

# LITTLE ITALY FARMERS MARKET

331 West 18th Street

FRESH • HEALTHY • LOCAL

**EVERY MONDAY**  
**June 25 — September 24**  
**3:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

Featuring produce grown in the  
 SSJNN Urban Farm by Little Italy teens  
 as well as  
 Fat Hawk Farm, Old Path Farm, Kim's Aquaponics, Strawberry Lane Produce, French Street Farms, Ferko Farm, Blooming Valley Farm, Post Apples, & the Erie School District Gardens








SNAP, WIC and FMNP Senior Vouchers  
 accepted & MATCHED to encourage eating  
**FRESH • HEALTHY • LOCAL**

Also accepting credit cards.  
 Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network  
 814-454-7814 • [www.SSJNN.org](http://www.SSJNN.org)






### sr. marie eileen moyer – remembered at st. patrick's haven

A plaque was hung in the lobby of St. Patrick's Haven honoring Sister Marie Eileen Moyer who passed away on 2/18/18. Sister Marie was a dedicated servant to the men of St. Patrick's Haven

from 1989 until 2000. Her guidance, leadership and loving care will be forever remembered.



## Sr. Mary Claire Kennedy – A Woman of Social Justice



At the Women Who Are Called event which was held during National Catholic Sisters Week in March, Sister Mary Claire Kennedy was presented with a tree honoring her work in social justice. The tree has been planted on the CLC grounds. Please join us for a tree blessing ceremony.

**Wednesday,  
August 15, 2018  
9:00 a.m.  
(following 8:00 a.m. mass)  
Outside the east end  
of the CLC.**

## human trafficking – representative bizzarro upates

Betsy Wiest, Social Justice Coordinator and Carol Finotti of the Crime Victim Center of Erie met recently with Representative Ryan Bizzarro and his Chief of Staff, Tim Vickey, to discuss initiatives to

combat human trafficking in the Erie area. Representative Bizzarro's office working to get human trafficking notices placed in the rest stops along I-79, I-90 and I-80 in Pennsylvania.



## Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation – Does this pull at your heartstrings?

If working toward a world in which all are one, all care for the “dear neighbor”, and all live in peace and in harmony with our Earth, please consider joining the Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation team. We meet monthly to talk about and plan

ways to bring awareness and action to current issues. Please contact Betsy Wiest at 836-4153 or [betsy.wiest@ssjerie.org](mailto:betsy.wiest@ssjerie.org) for more information on how you can work with us to make a difference!



## Congratulations Sister Bernadine!

Photo taken at Sister Bernadine’s retirement party after 11 years of service at Saint Mary’s.

*Pictured, left –right: Sisters Mary Ann White, Mary Herrmann, Margaret Frank, Bernadine Gehringer, Phyllis McCracken, Dorothy Wilwohl and Clare Marie Beichner.*

## Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

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## Muslim travel ban – Just another way to close the borders

Betsy Wiest, Agregree- Social Justice Coordinator  
On June 26, 2018, the United States Supreme Court voted to uphold the current travel ban on several predominantly Muslim countries. The decision was upheld in the midst of the “zero tolerance” actions for illegal immigration at the United States southwestern border where children have been separated from their parents as families crossed into the country without proper documentation. The ban restricts travel from seven countries: Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen. The US Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph, in their recent statement stated, “We believe that this travel ban intentionally targets Muslims and

that the Court’s decision adds to the climate of fear of Muslims and fuels the flames to anti-Muslim sentiment in the country.”  
As we close our borders, are we closing our tolerance and our ability to see all as equal? Are we closing our ability to accept and welcome those who come to us seeking a better life for their families?  
The plaque on the Statue of Liberty states, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” Have we forgotten the vast majority of us are descended from

those who, like the current refugees, wanted their families to live in a safe place, a place where they could be free of fear, hatred and oppression?  
I urge you to continue to contact your Congresspersons and implore them to support policies that protect and unite families, that assist (not separate) those individuals who are seeking asylum on our shores and that do not discriminate. You can reach your Congressman by calling the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121. Call today and be the voice for those who have no voice.  
*“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels”.*  
Hebrews 13:1-2