

interim

Volume 36, Issue 12

December 2018

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

Sundays in Advent Each Sunday, 6 p.m.

Evening prayer using Daily Prayer/ Daily Bread Office books with reflections by Sisters and Associates.

Reconciliation Service Thursday, December 6 at 6:00 p.m.

Five priests will be available to hear individual confessions.

Christmas Eve Lessons and carols 8:00 p.m. followed by Liturgy



All are welcome to come together to pray during this season of

WAITING IN JOYFUL HOPE!

A Church in Crisis: A Local Diocese's Response

Bishop Lawrence Persico, who has led the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie since 2012, will be interviewed by Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reporter Debra Erdley in a Dec. 4 forum open to the Edinboro campus community and the general public. Bishop Persico was

publicly lauded by Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro in a New York Times story for his direct and transparent handling of the clergy sex abuse scandal. His approach to dealing with allegations of sexual abuse by priests and laity in the Erie Diocese has attracted local, national and international media attention from news outlets including the New York Times, Washington Post, PBS Newshour, National Public Radio, the

Philadelphia Inquirer and German weekly news magazine Der Spiegel, the largest such publication in Europe.

Prior to his appointment as bishop of Erie, Persico served as vicar general and chancellor of the Diocese of Greensburg, where he also was a parish priest.

An award-winning journalist, Erdley has provided extensive coverage of the Pennsylvania grand jury report of sexual

(Continued on page 2)

Edinboro University's Uncomfortable Conversations Series

When: Dec. 4, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Multipurpose Room,
Pogue Student Center

For news and dates regarding Chapter, see page 5.



mission possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

In November, we celebrate the season of Thanksgiving ... a time to remember and to thank God for all His blessings. In her book, *Fresh Bread*, Joyce Rupp suggests that we take time to reflect on the people in our life who are special gifts to us and to thank them.

Recalling Rupp's suggestion and a conversation with Betsy Wiest, our social justice coordinator, I thought about the associates who are special gifts in my life and for whom I am grateful. I also recall the many ways associates reach out to the dear neighbor wherever and whenever they are able.

As I reflected, the following words came to mind and I was inspired to write a *Litany of Gratitude*.

Thank you, SSJ Associates, for making the ***SSJ Mission Possible***.

Litany of Gratitude for SSJ Associates

by Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ

We give thanks, O Lord, for our SSJ associates who:

- ... volunteer in Marycrest
- ... knit and crochet prayer shawls
- ... serve on the associate advisory committee
- ... visit St. James and St. Patrick's Havens
- ... plant gardens and share the harvest with neighbors
- ... volunteer at SSJ Neighborhood Network west and east
- ... volunteer at Saint Mary's Home of Erie
- ... help at Circle of Friends
- ... attend Summerpalooza and donate gifts to our sponsored ministries
- ... bake bread for St. Joseph Day Baskets
- ... deliver St. Joseph Day Baskets
- ... help with the monthly mailing of Interim
- ... volunteer in support of the Thanksgiving Day dinner by baking pies, or delivering and serving meals

We are ever so grateful, O Lord, for these SSJ associates and all of our SSJ associates who reach out in a myriad of ways to help the "dear neighbor." We ask your blessing upon them as they live our mission of unity of neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God, without distinction.

A Church in Crisis

(Continued from page 1)

abuse by Roman Catholic priests.

Released in late summer 2018, the report revealed credible allegations of abuse of more than 1,000 victims by 300 priests over multiple decades. Erdley also provided substantive coverage of sexual abuse charges against former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky. Sandusky was convicted and PSU's mishandling of the situation led to the ouster in 2011 of legendary football coach Joe Paterno and eventually university President Graham Spanier. The scandal cost the university millions of dollars in settlements.



Annual SSJ Thanksgiving Dinner

30 years of kindness – thanks to you

On Thanksgiving Day – Nov. 22 – the Sisters of St. Joseph served its 30th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner. More important than the turkey, stuffing, potatoes, or even the pie, was the outpouring of kindness from more than 700 donors and 135 volunteers who made our 30th year possible.

By 1 p.m. on Thanksgiving, more than 330 guests had been served at Gannon’s Waldron Center and nearly 500 meals had been delivered to homebound neighbors throughout the Erie area.

In addition to their meal, dinner guests at Gannon received *Blessing Bags*, filled with snacks, toiletries, first aid supplies and socks – thanks to the generosity of Villa Maria

Academy, Gannon University Support Staff Association and Mother Teresa Academy.

Heartfelt thanks to all who supported this year’s dinner with gifts of time, talent, treasure, and of course, so many pies.

As always, cash donations are used, first and foremost, to provide dinner. Remaining funds will be distributed to assist agencies that provide food, shelter and other services to those in need throughout the year.

Watch for the next issue of *Journeys*, where you’ll find a full story and lots of fun facts about our 30 years of Thanksgiving ministry.

Liturgy of Thanksgiving Sunday, January 13, 2019

Please join us for our Liturgy of Thanksgiving, followed by Continental breakfast and the distribution of funds to area food pantries, soup kitchens and other organizations.



get to know ssj associates



Tammie and John Mang

Tammie and John Mang became associates in 2013. Sister Mary Fromknecht was John's mentor while Sister Marianne Stuckert was Tammie's.

John is an ordained Deacon and is assigned to Our Lady of Peace parish in Erie. In September, John became a full time chaplain at Lakeland Hospice. John spends much of his time performing works of charity, including visiting patients in hospitals and those who are homebound.

Tammie is currently the Faith Formation Director at Our Lady of Peace parish. Prior to that, she was a teacher with the Diocese of Erie for 20 years. Although she is busy with her volunteer and parish work, she enjoys reading when she has the time.

The Mangs have one daughter, Kaitlyn, a sophomore at Clarion University, who previously worked at the CLC front desk.

Tammie and John support each other and live by the following:

"In the spirit of Father Medaille and through the grace of God, we hope to leave people a little better than we found them."

associates' news and happenings

Dear Associates,

There is a saying, "better late than never." My thank you note was inadvertently left out of the column last month therefore I am trying again.

Thank you ever so much for the Jubilee card and gift card to Ricardo's. It is one of my favorite restaurants. I am sure that I will enjoy using it. I also wish to thank all who were able to join in the celebration on Jubilee Day. It was truly a most memorable day!

Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

Gratefully, Sr. Ann Marie

We are grateful to **Sister Mary Rose Romeo** for preparing the beautiful memorial service which was held on November 18, 2018 to remember our six sisters and eight associates who have gone to their eternal rest during this past year. We are truly blessed with Sister Mary Rose and her gifts and talents which she so generously shares with us.

The next issue of Journeys will feature an article about the men of SSJ — our male associates! Thank you to our guys with email who received an online survey to help us in writing the article. Feel free to let **Sr. Ann Marie** know if you have anything interesting to share about the men of SSJ!

As you read this, one Liturgical Year is ending and another beginning. Advent is a time to prepare our homes and our hearts to celebrate the gift of Christ on Christmas Day. This year perhaps we can all consider the gift of presence to one another. A phone call, a short visit, an email or text, whatever will bring the gift of our presence to others. Presence can be our gift in prayer, reflective spiritual reading, and just quiet with our God. As we enjoy the Christmas carols and festive lights that surround us, may we find time for quiet, peace, and presence to celebrate a new year more fully. Your presence is a great gift to us throughout the year. Christmas blessings!

As we head into 2019, we hope to make this SSJ associate page more engaging and filled with information for and about associates. We need your help! If you have some interesting news or if you hear something interesting about another associate, whether it's a milestone celebration, an award or recognition, or a ministry accomplishment, let us know so we can include it here. This will help us all get to know each other better and build our SSJ Associate community.



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

Important chapter dates

February 9 & 10, 2019	Membership
March 9 & 10, 2019	Resources
April 6 & 7, 2019	Elections*
May 4 & 5, 2019	Elections*

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.

Delegates' Statement

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit and our mutual trust in one another, we commit to make decisions by praying, being informed, listening and speaking our truth in a non-judgmental manner. Collegiality and Subsidiarity will continue to be the congregational decision making process. We accept our responsibility to support and carry out all decisions.

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.

notes



We thank the Sisters, Agrégée, and Associates for their support of this year's CROP walk. Your contributions were \$453.50. Special accommodation to Associate Susan Shannon who recruited donations at all area WalMarts for an additional collection of \$850.11. Total contribution to Crop Walk was \$2,803.61. We thank each of you for your continued support. Sisters Millicent Zimmer and Phyllis Hilbert

Sisters,
Here is my contribution for your Thanksgiving Day Dinner Fund.

May God bless all you Sisters for all the good you do to help feed the hungry on Thanksgiving. Those dinners are very good. God bless you always, Jerry W.

My name is Paul and I want to say a very, very, very special thank you to you and your staff for what you do every year – putting those meals together and bringing them to people who can't go to where they're serving it.

Thank you guys very much for what you do every year... without you, a lot of people would be lost.

Thank you for your heart. Thank you for caring. That's why they call it "teamwork." T-E-A-M. Together Everyone Accomplishes More.

So thank you for all you've done to reach out and touch the community. We love you all. Paul R.

[voicemail received 11/26/2018]

The residents of Elk Valley Manor located in Girard, wish to thank the Sisters and Volunteers for the wonderful Thanksgiving meals. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Thank you again.
Ann Flick, Service Coordinator

events, happenings and ministry news

thanksgiving blessings

St. Patrick's Haven is thankful for the kindness of Cynthia Toland who donated blessing bags distributed during Thanksgiving week. Each bag contained food and toiletry items the men who need.



EFCU "Soctober" event

St. Patrick's Haven was the recipient of the "Soctober" collection of socks by employees at Erie Federal Credit Union.

Pictured is Michelle Beckman and Tiffany Layden of the EFCU with Betsy Wiest.



St. Patrick's Haven is always in need of coffee, canisters of creamer and sugar and hot chocolate packets—especially now that the cold weather is here. **St. Patrick's Haven** is always in need of visitors one evening each month an hour at 7 p.m. Please contact Betsy Wiest at 836-4153 if you are able to make a donation or would like to volunteer.

SSJ Neighborhood Network Quilt Raffle

A beautiful quilt handmade by SSJ Associates Gina Adams and Brenda Desser will be raffled on May 4, 2019 at the 13th annual Guess That Tune Gala. Quilt

dimensions 88' x 103'. Tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. Call 454-7814 for more information.



Luther Memorial Church is again hosting a **"Blue Christmas"** Service on **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2018**, at 6 pm. The church is located at 225 West Tenth Street in Erie. The service is for anyone who may be grieving the loss of a loved one, struggling with illness, or have experienced the loss of a job. All are welcome to attend this quiet and comforting service. A reception will follow this beautiful service.

brown bag & basketry

December 3 & 4, 2018

4:00 - 8:30 p.m.

4:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Heritage Apartments
2547 W. 8th St. (ground floor)

Enter the door at the south end. Parking is next to the gym. Cost: \$30 Please bring: bag supper, old towel, dish pan. Please make your reservation as soon as possible: 836-4139 or 969-1429 or s.andrefeulner@ssjerie.org



reflections during Advent and Lent

Sisters, agrégées and associates are invited to give a reflection during our Sunday evening prayer services during Advent and Lent. Please contact Sister Lucille DeStefano if you are willing to share a reflection.

congratulations Sr. Phyllis Hilbert

Sister Phyllis Hilbert was presented with the 2018 Charles R. and Katherine L. Scalise Community Service Award by the Housing and Neighborhood Development Service (HANDS). The award was presented at the organization's annual community celebration which was held at the Erie Art Museum in November. This award honors an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the Erie community and who has exemplified HANDS' core values.

Sister Phyllis taught at several schools in the Diocese and coordinated religious education programs. She also did missionary work in Arusha, Tanzania. Sr. Phyllis ministered to women at Erie's Community House for Women. She became co-director of Bethany Ministries and founded Erie Dwelling Advocacy For Women in Need Erie DAWN). In 2006, she joined the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network as housing and family advocate.



H·A·N·D·S



Take Back the Site

The Benedictines for Peace are organizing a Take Back the Site Vigil for:

John Wesley Allen
Thursday, December 13, 2018
5:15 p.m.
822 East Fifth Street
Erie, PA

where's the justice?

on the road again

Erie County Executive, Kathy Dahlkemper and Director of Administration, Gary Lee met with Betsy Wiest and Carol Finotti of the Crime Victim Center on October 22, 2018. They discussed the initiatives to bring awareness of human trafficking in the Erie area.

training session for the Dept. of Health

On October 22, 2018, Betsy Wiest and Carol Finotti of the Crime Victim Center conducted a training for the nursing staff at the Erie County Department of Health. The training included questions the nurses should be asking their clients to help identify possible victims and what to do if they encounter a victim of human trafficking.

getting the word out

Betsy Wiest and Carol Finotti of the Crime Victim Center gave a presentation to the Sisters of Mercy on October 28, 2018. The presentation included what human trafficking looks like in the Erie area and the value of awareness of this issue.

"Sadly, anti-Semitism — which we again denounce in all its forms as completely contrary to Christian principles and every vision worthy of the human person — is still widespread today.

We reaffirm that 'the Catholic Church feels particularly obliged to do all that is possible with our Jewish friends to repel anti-Semitic tendencies.'"

-POPE FRANCIS, AUDIENCE WITH THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

U.S. Federation of the SSJ Condemns Anti-Semitic Killing and Calls for the Healing of Divisions.

The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph joins with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) and countless groups and individuals across the country and in Pittsburgh to condemn the slaughter of our brothers and sisters at Tree of Life Congregation in the community of Squirrel Hill.

Our hearts are heavy and our souls are pained at the intrusion of anti-Semitism and violence in God's sacred space. We join with LCWR and Catholic sisters across the nation to extend our sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives. We will mourn with you. We will pray with you. We will walk with you in the spirit of God's love.

We recognize that shootings at synagogues and schools, churches and mosques, in our homes and on our streets have become all too common. The current political climate and growing polarization of our communities feed hate and spawn violence.

In responding to this act of violence, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) stated that "Violence as a response to political, racial or religious differences must be confronted with all possible effort. God asks nothing less of us," he said. "He begs us back to our common humanity as his sons and daughters."

We recognize that the role of racist rhetoric and the senseless rancor must stop. White supremacists and their white nationalist ideology must be exposed and denounced. Anti-Semitism, racism, and hate of all kinds must be clearly condemned by our religious and political leaders, and each of us as well.

We acknowledge that all of us have played a role in the polarization of our communities and the denigration of the other. Each of us must participate in the healing and binding of wounds for which our communities long. We offer our prayers for the members of the Tree of Life Congregation and for all who have been victims of hate and violence and we say loudly and clearly, enough.

Condemnation alone cannot bring change. Our mission as Sisters of St. Joseph, which calls us to unite neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God, reminds us that we build community by being the neighbor to the one we don't know: the person next door, the person who works with us, the stranger we meet on the street. It is only by breaking down our own barriers of comfort and isolation that we can begin to understand and appreciate those whose religion, race, gender or lifestyle is different than our own.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

5031 West Ridge Road
Erie, PA 16506-1249
Phone: 814-836-4100
Fax: 814-836-4278
E-mail: publicrelations@ssjerie.org



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CSSJ Justice and Peace Coordinators

During the first week of November, the CSSJ Justice and Peace Coordinators from all over the country gathered in Wichita, Kansas for their annual conference. The conference was wrapped in prayer with each recipient receiving a prayer shawl donated by the SSJ and the St. Joseph Church Prayer Shawl ministries.

This year, the keynote speaker was Janet Mock, SSJ and her presentation focused on standing in what Parker Palmer (author, educator, activist) calls the Tragic Gap. The capacity to stand in the Tragic Gap is a difficult balance of being able to see what is and what could be without leaning too far into either side and then determining how we can affect positive change. For example, we live in a violent time but

peace is possible. To stand in the tragic gap can be heartbreaking but if we allow hearts to be broken open and not just broken, we can discover new possibilities and new life giving responses to the struggles of our times. To accomplish this, we need to develop Circles of Trust – people who stand in the gap with us, support us and work toward change while being ever respectful to both sides of the gap.

Toward the end of the conference, the attendees toured the Mid-America Indian Center and learned about the philosophies of the American Indians, their love of the earth, family and community. At the center, there is a statue of the Keeper of the Plains. The group participated in a painting session where all painted a



picture of the Keeper. During this Christmas season, I challenge you to stand in the tragic gap, to let your heart be broken open to new possibilities for positive change and to be the Keeper of your Plains. Merry Christmas!

