

# interim

Volume 38, Issue 1

January 2020

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

## New Year Reflection and Happy Hour!

*Messgae from leadership*

Please Join Us!  
Friday, Jan. 17  
6 – 8 p.m.  
at the CLC  
Prayer of  
Reflection  
followed by a  
social/happy hour.

As we close 2019 and open 2020, it seems appropriate to reflect on where and how we have been, and where and how we are going to be. And it's an excellent time to have some fun together! We sent an email asking you to save January 17 to join us

for prayer and social. The prayer will call us to reflect on what drew us to the SSJs, what keeps us here, and what we need to sustain our sense of purpose. We will send some materials in advance to help you prepare for reflection. They will include an article by Tedd Dunn from the summer

issue of LCWR's Occasional Papers. The article focuses on "meaning-making." We believe we will live (not merely exist) so long as we find meaning and purpose in sharing life and community. The social will help us do that! We hope you can join us!

*Sr. Mary Olympia Sister Carol*

## Christmas with the Sisters!

Enjoy more photos by visiting [www.ssjerie.org](http://www.ssjerie.org)



Ask me why  
**I'm blue  
today.**

It's Wear Blue Day  
January 11

for Human Trafficking  
Awareness

See page 7 for more information.

## mission possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

# MISSION: POSSIBLE!

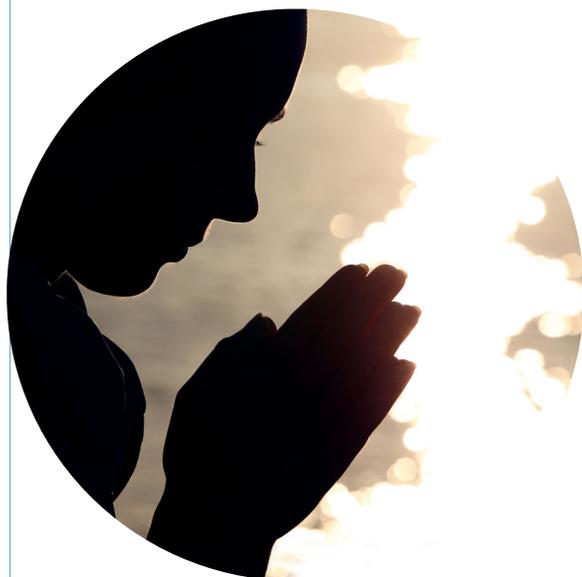
Wow! I can't believe that we are just a few days away from welcoming the New Year! It just doesn't seem possible that we will be starting a new decade - 2020.

As the Christmas season is slowly coming to an end, I am reminded of a poem that was sent to me in a Christmas card several years ago. It has become a favorite of mine, and I would like to share it with you as it serves as a reminder of what the SSJ charism and mission is all about.

### Work of Christmas Begins

"When the song of the angels  
is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes  
are home,  
when the shepherds are back with the flocks,  
then the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal those broken in spirit,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the oppressed,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among all peoples,  
to make a little music with the heart...

And to radiate the Light of Christ,  
every day, in every way, in all that we do  
and in all that we say.  
then the work of Christmas begins.  
*Howard Thurman, adapted.*



### SSJ Retreats 2020

*Thank you for your input!*

As you may recall, we distributed a survey earlier in the fall seeking input on SSJ retreat offerings at the CLC. The Retreat Planning team is grateful for the 68 responses we received. The helpful input is being processed as plans are being made for the 2020 CLC retreats. More information will follow in January.

Thank you,  
The Retreat Planning Team:  
S. Mary Drexler, S. Nancy Fischer, S. Rosemary O'Brien,  
S. Rebecca Ann Costa; Associates Margaret Chrymko and  
Nancy Donnelly; Agregee Teresa Cieslikowski and  
Theresa Ann Walkiewicz

## One love *shared*

During this Holy season, we celebrate the greatest gift ever – that One Love shared with the world through the birth of Jesus. And we are reminded that the gifts we are given, we are given to share.

Last year, the love you shared changed thousands of lives. Whether you made a gift, offered a helping hand, or held us in prayer, you strengthened our ministries and made it possible for us to be present in new ways to neighbors in need.

Last year, financial gifts to the Sisters of St. Joseph Mission &

Ministries Foundation – which were shared through grants to the Sisters and their sponsored ministries – helped to provide:

- care for the Sisters;
- shelter for homeless men in Erie and Meadville;
- housing and mentoring for women and children striving to rebuild their lives;
- career awareness education in inner-city elementary and middle schools; and
- food for the hungry throughout the Diocese and beyond.

But the work is far from done. The needs of the dear neighbor

continue to grow.

Please help us bring this year's appeal to a successful close. Whether you can help with a gift yourself, or by inviting your friends and family to consider a gift, it will help us to continue sharing love and hope with those who need it most.

If a gift is not possible at this time, please keep the dear neighbor in your prayers. And as always, we will do the same for you.

Gifts can be made online at [www.ssjerie.org](http://www.ssjerie.org) or contact the Development office at 814-836-4198.

## another happy thanksgiving – thanks to you

It takes a lot of hands (and loving hearts) to serve more than 800 meals on Thanksgiving Day. This year it was the generosity of 738 donors and more than 140 volunteers that made it all possible.

By 1 p.m. on Thanksgiving, more than 275 guests had been served at Gannon's Waldron Center, and 544 meals had been delivered to homebound neighbors throughout the Erie area.

In addition to their meal, dinner guests at Gannon

received Blessing Bags lovingly assembled by the JPIC team. Each Blessing Bag was filled with snacks, toiletries, first aid supplies and two pairs of Bombas socks (donated by Bombas).

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.

**Liturgy of Thanksgiving  
Sunday, January 12, 2020  
9:00 a.m. Liturgy**

**10 a.m. Continental breakfast  
and presentation of gifts**

**Please mark your calendar and join us on Sunday, January 12, 2020, when we celebrate our Liturgy of Thanksgiving, followed by Continental breakfast and the distribution of funds to area food pantries, soup kitchens and other organizations.**

## Thanksgiving letters/comments

Dear Sr. Mary Drexler and the whole crew,

Thank you for the delicious Thanksgiving meal you brought us. God bless your generosity.

Sincerely,  
*Sr. Laura Vallimont and  
The Residents of Grandview Manor*

On behalf of the residents at Elk Valley Manor, we wish to thank everyone involved in providing the delicious meals and desserts for Thanksgiving. Your generosity is greatly appreciated, and brightened

their holiday.

Sincerely,  
*Ann Flick, Service Coordinator*

Sisters, Staff and Volunteers,  
Thank you for the delicious Thanksgiving Day meals. We so appreciate all the things you did and do for all of us. Bless you for doing this.  
*The Residents of Elk Valley Manor*

Sisters of St. Joseph,  
Thanks for all your prayers and support all year long, and for

the turkey dinners, too.  
Merry Christmas,  
*Patty R.*

Dearest Sisters,

Thank you for the great Thanksgiving meal. It was delicious – and very appreciated. Having it delivered to my door made me feel so wanted. (I am a shut-in, almost blind.) Just wanted you to know how much you have meant to me over the past years. God bless you all. You will always be in my prayers.  
*Jeannette T.*

## get to know ssj associates



### Brandon Vogt

Brandon Vogt became an associate in 2012. At 32, he is our youngest associate. Sr. Mary Thomas Downing, his mentor, said, "Tell them you sang your way in."

Brandon is a pastoral liturgist and musician in the Diocese of Erie and serves as the Director of Liturgy and Music at Our Lady of Mercy Church. At 10, Brandon began cantoring at Blessed Sacrament Church under the guidance of Sister Mary Rose Romeo.

After graduating from Mercyhurst Prep, Brandon attended Baldwin Wallace College-Conservatory of Music and received a BA in Music and Arts Management. He will earn a Master of Arts in Liturgical Studies from the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago in spring 2020. Brandon is a member of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians and spoke at its national convention.

He enjoys performing at the Erie Playhouse and recently sang with Erie's Tennessee Back Porch during its Christmas show, "Follow the Star."

"My relationship with the sisters has had a profound impact on my spiritual journey. I continue to grow in living out the Gospel commandments of love of God and love of neighbor."

## associates' news and happenings

### Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to the following associates who are celebrating milestone birthdays in January:

***Maria Ines Patino Giraldo, Joann Rupp and Mary Ann Zarnick.***

### Help! Help! We Need Your Help!

Dear Associates, Sisters, and Agrégées:

Patty and I would like to revive an outreach ministry of caring. In order to do this, we are in need of associates, sisters and agrégées who will reach out and contact associates, sisters, or agrégées who may be homebound, in a nursing home, or who may live out of town, by sending cards, an email or making a phone call. We often tend to forget these people because they are not able to physically be with us.

If you have a few minutes once or twice a month and would like to join us in this ministry, please call S. Ann Marie at 836-4199. We will provide the cards, postage and information needed. You do not have to leave your house or attend any meetings to help with this ministry.

Thank you for considering this very important ministry. Hopefully we will hear from many of you. As the saying goes, *many hands make light work.*

### Annual Associate Retreat

Mark Your Calendars! Save this Date! Very Important Event!

Saturday, February 8, 2020  
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### Annual Associate Retreat Day

Sister Phyllis DiFuccia,  
Facilitator

More information is coming soon.

### Happy New Year

As you read this column, the new year is upon us. We wish you and your loved ones a happy New Year and pray that the year 2020 will be filled with blessings for you and your loved ones.

*The New Year stands before us, like the chapter in a book, waiting to be written.*

~Melody Beattie

*Sister Ann Marie  
and Patty*



Associate Sue Ann Wisniewski  
and Santa!



## Volunteer Opportunities at Saint Vincent Hospital

"Touch Lives" at Saint Vincent Hospital by offering your heart, compassion, and gifts. I invite you to apply or call to discuss how "together" we can enhance the patient/family experience as well as your own.

Jodi Andres  
Director, Volunteer Resources

Phone: 814-452-5646

[Jodi.Andres@ahn.org](mailto:Jodi.Andres@ahn.org)

To become a volunteer, apply online at  
<https://www.ahn.org/volunteer-application>

**NATIONAL  
HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING  
HOTLINE**

**888-373-7888**

## 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment Women's Right to Vote Events

As we move forward in our year of celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment – Women's Right to Vote – following are some upcoming community events.

**League Ladies Literature  
Pressed Book Store**  
January 18, 2020  
11:00 a.m. – 12 Noon  
[www.lwverie.org](http://www.lwverie.org)

**"The American Abortion  
Battle" with J.D. Fisher, Ph.D.**  
sponsored by Edinboro  
University  
Blasco Library  
January 22, 2020  
7:00 p.m.  
[www.edinboro.edu](http://www.edinboro.edu)

**Interpretation of the Vote  
High School Gallery Night  
Details TBA**  
Sponsored by the Woman's  
Club of Erie  
[www.eriewomensclub.com](http://www.eriewomensclub.com)

**"Danielle McGuire, Recy  
Taylor & the Roots of the  
#MeToo Movement**  
Mercyhurst University  
Mary D'Angelo PAC  
February 4, 2020  
7:00 p.m.

**Susan B. Anthony's  
200<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party**  
(Prizes for best suffragist  
hats, sashes & signs)  
Porreco College  
February 15, 2020  
2:00 p.m.

There is a fee for this event.  
See website for more details  
[www.Porreco.edinboro.edu](http://www.Porreco.edinboro.edu)

## Maxim Moments

### Maxim 4

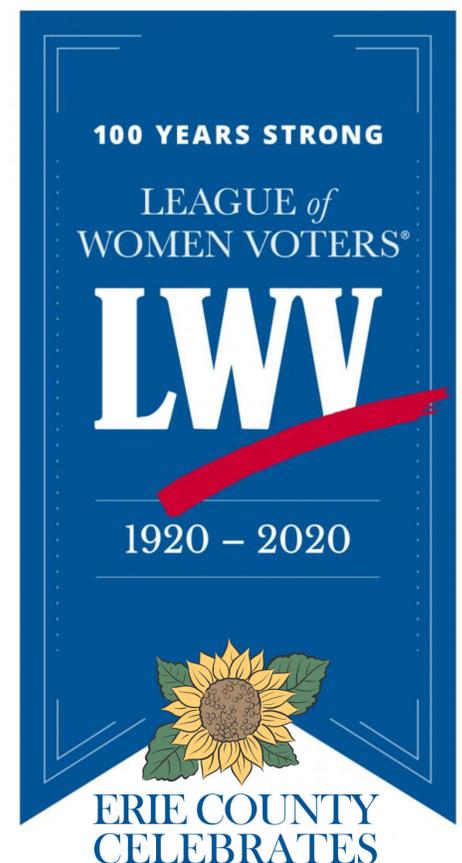
*Let your life be a continuous  
act of love*

### Contemporary translation:

Keep your relationships sacred!  
It's all that really matters, right?

### For reflection:

Each small choice of mine can  
bring love into the world.  
What face of love does this dear  
neighbor need from me?  
Do something that shows love,  
respect, and gratitude for the  
gift of creation.



## events, happenings and ministry news

### SSJNN volunteer opportunities

A receptionist is needed for the **SSJNN** office at 436 E. 26<sup>th</sup> Street for four hours on Monday or Thursday afternoons.

Volunteers are also needed at the bike recycling program at 436 E. 26<sup>th</sup> Street on Mondays any time from 1 – 7 p.m. If interested, please call SSJNN volunteer coordinator Lora at 897-6901.

### St. Patrick's Haven

The visiting team at **St. Patrick's Haven** commit to spending one evening a month for an hour at 7 p.m. talking with our guests. Can you spare an hour and join our team? We have a large need for more people to help with this important ministry. Please contact **Betsy Wiest** at 836-4153 for more information.

### brown bag & basketry

For our first 2020 basket, we will be creative and use some unusual natural items to make our basket. Seagrass, pine needles, palm branches, philodendron leaves, grape vines and more will be on hand for us. It will be interesting to see all we can do. Come and see the possibilities.



**January 6 & 7  
3:30 - 8:00 p.m.**

Ground floor of Heritage Apts. on the former Villa campus, 2547 West 8th Street. Specific instructions will be provided when you register.

**COST:** \$30

**MATERIALS:** Bag supper, comfortable clothes, old towel, dishpan.

**To make a reservation:**  
**s.andrefeulner@ssjerie.org**  
**or 836-4139 or 969-1429**

### SSJNN gives thanks

Thank you to all of the Sisters and Associates who helped with our Christmas soup kitchen dinner at St. Paul Church on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Many neighbors enjoyed the meal, gift, fellowship, and visit from Santa!



*Pictured above are Associates Joanne Sprickman and Lewis Nordin.*

And many thanks to Sr. Mary Rose Romeo (pictured below) who assisted with the wonderful Christmas carolers from Saint Vincent Hospital.



### SSJ Gift Shop NOW OPEN



*Bring your friends and family!*

Located just off the CLC lobby

**Hours: 9: a.m.— 7:00 p.m.**

Hand-crafted/original cards, seasonal cards, framed photography, inspirational sayings, etc. *Featuring art-work and designs by Sisters of St. Joseph.*



### Directory updates

**Associate Sue McCreary**  
new phone number  
814-602-0146

## where's the justice?

### It happens in PA!

At the recent SafeNet Conference on Human Trafficking, nearly 400 community professionals gathered to learn more about human trafficking in PA. Attorney Shea Rhodes of Villanova University was the keynote speaker and outlined what human trafficking in PA looks like. She talked about efforts to arrest those who are buying sex, and a shift toward looking at victims as victims, rather than as prostitutes. Changing the paradigm helps professionals communicate effectively and sensitively with victims to better assist them. Attendees practiced how to speak with survivors to help them recognize themselves as victims, and how to guide them to appropriate services. Betsy shared information with the group about the newly developed **Coalition Force—Erie**, the anti-human trafficking task force which is currently headquartered at Mercyhurst University's Ridge School of Intelligence.

### St. Joseph Church helps St. Patrick's Haven

St. Joseph Church Bread of Life Community in Erie holds an Oktoberfest each year. What makes this different than other church fundraisers is that St. Joseph Church tithes 10% of their raffle proceeds to a local nonprofit organization. This year, St. Patrick's Haven was the recipient of the tithe. Fr. Larry Richards presented a check for the tithe to St. Patrick's Haven. Thank you St. Joseph's for helping our "dear neighbor".



### Pyramid Healthcare clients help St. Patrick's Haven

Each year, the clients at Pyramid Healthcare organize a collection to assist a local non-profit. This year, the clients selected St. Patrick's Haven. Clients and employees.



### Wear blue day 2020

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is recognized each year on January 11th. In recognition of this important day, please remember to WEAR BLUE on January 11th and let people you meet know you are wearing blue to stand in solidarity with those who are caught in the web of modern day slavery.



## United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Developed in 2015 and to be completed by the year 2030.



### GOAL #3:

**Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.** Despite great strides in improving people's health, inequalities in health care still persist. Much work needs to be done to increase prevention and treatment of diseases, education and immunization campaigns. The SDGs make a bold commitment to end epidemics of AIDS, TB, malaria and other communicable diseases by 2030. The aim is to achieve universal health coverage, and provide access to safe/affordable medicines and vaccines for all.

**TAKE ACTION:** Contact your legislators and encourage them to work toward universal healthcare for all citizens.

## 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



WWW.  
SSJERIE  
.ORG

## welcome the stranger

A prayer service for immigrant children on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe was held in Erie. Approximately 50 people gathered to remember the immigrant children who have died while in U.S. custody and the immigrant children still being held in detention. The faith community has declared the detention of children and separation from their families not only as a violation of human dignity and rights, but also as contrary to religious teachings and the sacred call to care for all people, especially those most at risk, such as children.

During the service, the millions of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers worldwide who fled their homes seeking a safer place to live, as well as the eight children who died in US custody since December 2018 were remembered in prayer.

According to an article from

the Associated Press on November 12, 2019, "An unprecedented 69,550 migrant children were held in U.S. government custody over the past year. That's more children detained away from their parents than any other country, according to United Nations researchers. Some of these migrant children who were in government custody this year have already been deported. Some have reunited with family in the U.S., where they're trying to go to school and piece their lives back together. About 4,000 are still in government custody and more arrive every week."

Please join with those who attended the vigil and call your Senators and House Representative asking them to co-sponsor the Refugee Protection Act of 2019. You can reach your legislators at **202-224-3121**.

by Betsy Wiest, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

Below is a sample script for your call:

*"As a person of faith, I am calling today to ask (insert Senator or Representative's name) to become a co-sponsor for the Refugee Protection Act of 2019. It is a comprehensive blueprint for restoring and reinvigorating our refugee and asylum systems. Guided by our Catholic faith and our national values, we affirm the dignity of all people and our call to love our neighbors. We can and must remain a country that provides refuge for children, families and individuals fleeing violence and persecution. Thank you."*

Our nation was built on the strength of immigrants who came here looking for a better life. The melding of the gifts they shared has made us who we are. As you begin this new year, be a voice for someone who does not have a voice.