



interim

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

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July 2025

Let Us Pray

Let us pray... for all who have gone before us, especially those who have gone to their heavenly reward in the past six months: Sisters Ann Patrice, Barbara Ann, Rose Marie, Maria, Mary Arnold, Marilyn, Mary Claire, and Bernadine. We also remember Associates Joseph Sette, Shirley Byers, and Ron Visnosky who went to their eternal home in the past six months.

Let us pray... as well for each of you ... Sisters, caregivers, and staff (from phone operators to maintenance staff to our volunteers). You have blessed those who have gone before us as well as those of us who remain through your loving and gentle care.

O God of great love, bless all those who have ministered to our Sisters, Agrégées, and Associates who are no longer with us in this life. Their gentle and kind care has been a gift and an inspiration to us. It matters not what they did, but that they did it with great love. We are so very grateful to be blessed with a great staff of cooks, chefs, housekeepers, maintenance workers, administrative personnel, volunteers, phone operators, nurses and aides. You are a tremendous group that gives witness to God's great love each day.

On behalf of all the Sisters, thank you!

Sr. Mary
Sister Mary

2025 Milestone SSJ Anniversaries

375th Anniversary
of the Founding of
the Sisters of
St. Joseph

165th Anniversary
of the Sisters
of St. Joseph
of Northwestern
Pennsylvania

2025 Ministry Milestones

**Saint Vincent
Hospital**
150 Years

Gannon University
100 Years

**SSJ Neighborhood
Network**
25 Years

**Sisters of
St. Joseph
Mission & Ministries
Foundation**
10 Years



Join Us!
**Federation Event Livestream Watch Party
at the CLC
July 18-20**

While several members of our Erie SSJ family will be attending the event in Kansas City in person, we invite you to join us at the CLC where we will participate in the event virtually with all those gathered in Kansas City!

See page 3 for details.

MISSION: POSSIBLE!

375 Years Later, the Mission is Still Possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

As I was preparing to write this article, Stephanie Hall suggested that I might want to write about the upcoming U.S. Federation Event where many members of the family of Joseph will gather and celebrate the 375th anniversary of our founding in France.

A great deal of information has been sent to us encouraging us to participate as much as possible — by attending the event in person or virtually via ZOOM (as most of us are unable to travel to Kansas City, even though it would be great to be able to do so.)



Fr. Jean Pierre Médaille

As I gathered my thoughts, I came across one of the early announcements from the Federation which states exactly what I wanted to share here. *"The Sisters of St. Joseph began with six women meeting in a small kitchen in LePuy, France in 1650.*

These six women had a common desire to grow in their love of God and serve the unmet needs of the people around them, whom they came to call their "dear neighbors." These women, with the spiritual direction of a Jesuit priest, Jean Pierre Medaille, formed the first community of the Sisters of St. Joseph. From their humble beginnings as

widows meeting in a small kitchen, the order grew to include communities all over the world. Today, we continue to respond to the unmet and critical needs of our contemporary society and world. Our mission, informed by a deep and pervasive love of God and neighbor without distinction, moves us to respond in a spirit of unifying, reconciling love to the needs of our local communities, the people of God, and the global community in which we live."

Continuing in this same spirit of our founders, our Sisters, Associates, and Agrégées reach out to the dear neighbor without distinction however and whenever they are able. This is what makes the **SSJ Mission Possible!**

Congratulations to our 2025 Jubilarians!



Marjorie Adams, SSJ
75 Years



Mary Rita Kuhn, SSJ
75 Years



Stephanie Wagner, SSJ
75 Years



Josephine DePetro, SSJ
70 Years



André Feulner, SSJ
70 Years



Maria Assumpta Ruza,
SSJ 70 Years



Angela Marie
Servidea, SSJ
70 Years



Mary Herrmann, SSJ
65 Years



Nancy Prenatt, SSJ
60 Years

To read more about this year's Jubilarians, visit www.ssjerie.org/jubilarians/



Federation Event Livestream Schedule

Friday, July 18, 2025

- 7:30 pm Welcome and Opening Ritual
- 8:15 pm Keynote Speakers
- 9:00 pm State of the Heart

Saturday, July 19, 2025

Morning

- 10:00 am Gathering Prayer
- 10:45 am Keynote
- 12:00 pm Small Group Conversations

Afternoon

- 12:45 pm Q & A with Sr. Beth Johnson
- 3:00 pm Performance of Communion with Matthew LaBanca
- 5:45 pm Small Groups/Conversation with Matthew LaBanca

Sunday, July 20, 2025

- 10:00 am Gathering Prayer
- 10:30 am Justice presentation
- 12:00 pm Justice Collective Action
- 3:00 pm Liturgy
- 4:30 pm Gathering of the Graces
- 6:00 pm Banquet (livestreamed until dinner is served)



Live performance of the Off-Broadway Show

Communion

with Matthew LaBanca

When a gay Catholic school teacher marries the man he loves, the church fires him—upending his faith and unsettling his entire community. Based on the real life story of Broadway actor and playwright Matthew LaBanca, *Communion* is a powerful solo show that spotlights themes of delusion, spiritual trauma, and hope, reminding those who would use religion to discriminate against LGBTQ+ people that the most basic tenet of a spiritual life is that we are called to love one another.

"Profoundly personal and deeply moving, Matthew LaBanca's 'Communion' takes us behind the headlines to reveal the inspiring story of his struggle to remain part of his church community as both a believer and a gay man."
— Fr. James Martin, SJ, author of *Building a Bridge*

Event Highlights

We are delighted to have **Meredith Lynch** as our very first event emcee. You'll get to witness her insightful reflections and signature humor firsthand. Meredith is an LA-based content creator, writer, comedian and TikTok sensation. She credits her success to her CSJ schooling, which began at Arlington Catholic High School and continued at Regis College. She also worked at Mount Saint Mary's University in Los Angeles as the Assistant Director of the CSJ Institute. Her work has appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *Entertainment Tonight* and the *LA Times*.

Keynote Speakers

Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ

Sister Elizabeth "Beth" is a Distinguished Professor of Theology Emerita at Fordham University in New York. She was also the former president of the Catholic Theological Society of America.

Dr. Ann McElaney-Johnson

Dr. McElaney-Johnson is the 12th president of Mount Saint Mary's University (MSMU), founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet- Los Angeles. With over 30 years of experience, she is a thought leader for the advancement of women and a champion for innovative teaching and learning. She has led and implemented a strategic vision for MSMU that fosters a culture of inclusiveness and excellence.

Dr. Ryan Murphy


Dr. Murphy is an assistant professor at Chestnut Hill College (UHC) and mission integration coordinator for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Philadelphia. Ryan's research interests are in women religious, social stratification, gender and sexuality, and social determinants of health. He's published articles in sociology, religious studies and history academic journals. Ryan is married to his partner, Krista and both Krista and Ryan are SSJ Associates and are proud parents to their son, Liam.

PLEASE RSVP FOR THE LIVESTREAM SESSION OR SESSIONS YOU PLAN TO ATTEND! [CLICK HERE](#) or call 814-836-4040

Associates' News and Happenings

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Associate Director

Prayers

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Dr. Charles Zeigler, husband of **A. Peggy Zeigler** who died June 18, 2025. May Eternal Light Shine Upon Him 

Lord! May he rest in Peace. Also remember Peggy and the family in your prayers at this most difficult time for them.

We ask your prayers for all the Associates, Sisters and Agrégées and their family members who are ill, especially

A. Jon Fuhrman, A. Carol Dorr, A. Peg McCraey, A. Elaine Hirsch, A. Stephanie Domitrovich and **A. Joy Sherred's** grandson, Dylan Wentz.

Congratulations!

At the SSJ Family Picnic on June 28th, we recognized Associates who are celebrating milestone anniversaries and Sisters who are celebrating Jubilees this year. We congratulate all of them for their dedication and years of faithfully living the SSJ charism.

SSJ Associate Milestones

Forty Years

Nancy Donnelly
Ruth Mercier
Mary Roach

Thirty-Five Years

Jeanne Brim

Thirty Years

Rose Jones
Frank Mariella Jr.
Richard Marshall
Donna Maycock
Rev. Ray Selker

Twenty-Five Years

Mary Ellen Brown
JoAnn Elwell
Cynthia Grucza
Jean Heintzel
Barb McGaughey
Mary Ann White

Twenty Years

Alice Connelly
Gerald Derby
Stephanie Domitrovich
Anne Freitas
Alice Fuhrman
Lynn Jones
Audrey McLaughlin
Maggie Shaughnessy
Pat Shaughnessy
Debbie Thompson
Peggy Zeigler

Fifteen Years

Lisa Austin
Elaine Hirsch
Carol Hoffman
Margo Keefer
Rosemary Ohmler
Christine Partin
Dan Partin
Joy Sherred
Lorna Waddel
Rebecca Hower

Ten Years

Tom Hudson
Nancy Imler
Pam Kiehlmeier
Ben Villa
Brenda Villa
Mary Ann Weber
Betsy Williams
Mary Hickin

Five Years

Valerie Carlson
Amy Dennen
Maggie Link
Wendy Sadlier
Julie Whan
Sueann Wiest

Sister Jubilarians

Seventy-Five

Marjorie Adams
Mary Rita Kuhn
Stephanie Wagner

Seventy Years

Josephine DePetro
André Feulner
Maria Assumpta Ruza
Angela Marie Servidea

Sixty-Five Years

Mary Herrmann

Sixty Years

Nancy Prenatt

Envisioning Our Future

Thank you to the Associates who met to discuss their thoughts and ideas as we move into our new future together. It was good to gather and share what it means to us to be SSJ Associates and where we hope we will be as the changes lead us into our future together. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we will join together to share the charism and mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph in our lives, families, parishes, and our community.

More gatherings will be coming so you will have opportunities to listen and speak and be a part of the SSJ Associate future.



Are You Who You Say You Are?

*How well do you know yourself?
To what extent have others told you who you are?
Do you conform to other's expectations?*

SSJ Conference Retreat at the CLC

With Fr. Tom Hartle

August 3 - 8, 2025

Our days of retreat will reflect upon our inner journey.

Arrive after lunch on August 3

4:30 p.m. Light supper

6:00 Welcome and Opening of retreat

Closing on Friday, Aug. 8 at noon.

More information will be sent to those who register for the retreat.

Though "technically " retired, Fr. Tom Hartle continues to give occasional retreats and lead pilgrimages to Franciscan Italy.

He resides in the retirement friary in Butler, NJ.

At this stage of his life, he says relationships have become central.

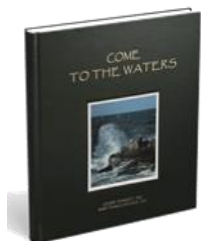
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Note: For Sisters living at the CLC, a sign-up sheet will be posted — no need to register online.

Living Laudate Deum

by Deb Seng, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

Now is the time of year when we all want to be outside. It might be camping, picnicking, or going to a concert. If you bring food with you, please take your trash home with you. Did you know that a tissue dropped in nature takes 3 months to decompose, a piece of paper takes 4 months, and chewing gum takes 5 years. An aluminum can decomposes over 10 years and a plastic bottle takes at least 100 years, and a glass bottle requires several centuries. We can all do our part by taking home whatever we have left over.



Come to the Waters

Click the image to page through our first 150 years as written by Sisters Leonie Shanley and Mary Francis Becker and featured on our new website www.ssjerie.org.

Charism in Action

Agrégées Jeanne Ryan and Arlene Chaney are having their annual garage sale to benefit the Hekima Place girls' orphanage and school in Kenya, Africa. Hekima Place, a small non-profit, dedicated to improving girls' lives. Since COVID, they have expanded to educating boys and providing community outreach programs.

**You can support the garage sale
July 4-6**

3309 Asbury Road, Erie



There is something for everyone in a variety of categories and prices. Come browse, shop, visit, help, and just say hello! at this sale.

RELAY FOR LIFE 2025—THANK YOU!

On behalf of Sr. Mary Fromknecht, Captain, and Sr. Marianne Stuckert and Agrégée Deb Seng (both on the Executive Board for Relay), I want to say THANK YOU a hundred times for your support of our Relay team this year. Every donation and every candy bar bought and sold brings us one step closer to finding a cure for cancer. The event itself raised \$142,618.00 of the \$148,000.00 goal. None of this would have been possible without you! God Bless you all!
Agrégée Tammy Van Buren



SSJs & As

Unity for a Cure

*Agrégées
Sisters
Associates*



SISTERS OF
ST. JOSEPH
OF NORTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA

We raised
\$6,270
and surpassed
our Team Goal of
\$5,000

LITTLE ITALY FARMERS MARKET
WE'VE MOVED!
 Just one block west to Three Sisters Park
430 WEST 19th STREET
 Bigger space, better parking!

EVERY MONDAY
June 30 — September 29
3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Closed only for Labor Day holiday on September 1
Plenty of parking for patrons on both sides of West 19th Street

Featuring the SSJNN Urban Farm produce, Wild Field Urban Farm, Laughing Hill Farm, Everlygreen Acres, Post Apples Farm, Blooming Valley & more!

The last Monday of each month is a special event day with live music and free activities for kids & families!

SNAP, WIC, & FMNP Senior Vouchers Accepted & DOUBLED



Please join us in thanking these gracious supporters: FA DCED, Erie Insurance, Highmark Health, Marquette Savings Bank, Northwest Bank, & Catholic Foundation of NWPA



Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network
 814-454-7814 • www.SSJNN.org

SSJ community July Birthdays

- 3 S. André Feulner
- 4 Agr. Betsy Wiest
- 5 A. Cindy DeCoursey
- 6 S. Mary Ann White
- 10 A. Patrick Shaughnessy
- 11 S. Susan Herzing
- 12 S. Marie Timmons
- 13 S. Jude Marie Talerico
- 14 A. Suzanne Newmann
- 15 S. Barbara Ann Zakutney
- 15 Agr. Deb Seng
- 17 A. Stephanie Hall
- 18 A. Peggy Zeigler
- 18 S. Marie Stephen Kebort
- 19 A. Kathleen Mannino
- 19 S. Sally Villa
- 20 A. Marvin Ridgeway
- 22 A. Ruth Mercier
- 22 Agr. Jeanne Marie Ryan
- 25 A. Christine Opron
- 27 A. Anne Swift
- 27 A. Joan McCain
- 28 S. Mary Herrmann
- 28 A. Mary Schwenk-Roach
- 30 S. Carmel Rojek

Exercising their First Amendment Rights



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SISTERS SPEAK OUT

**A Prayer and Public Witness for
Immigrants and a Just Economy**

In March of 2025, about 60 justice promoters from all over the country gathered in Columbus, Ohio for a 3-day meeting. As you can imagine, many social justice issues were discussed. The question that surfaced was "But what can we do about it?" Out of those discussions came the idea that Sisters have the moral authority to speak out against actions that include unlawful mass deportations, dismantling of public institutions and environmental protections.

On June 24th, Sisters, Associates, and allies of women religious prayed and witnessed

by Deb Seng, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

Sisters and allies, and more than 40 echo events across 15 states.

In Erie, the Benedictine Sisters, the Mercy Sisters and the SSJs hosted an echo event. We prayed together the same prayer used in Washington. Our event was held at the corner of East 18th and Ash Streets, across from the prison, because ICE is renting cells at the county prison for detainees.

About 75 to 100 people came to pray and Sisters at each of the motherhouses

in Washington, DC and throughout the country. There were 61 co-sponsoring congregations and faith-based organizations representing 40 states and more than 18,000

watched and prayed with those there in person via livestream. If you would like to pray the beautiful litany that was used, it [can be found here](#).

At the end of the prayer, the group was encouraged to call our senators to ask them not to defund vital programs for the most vulnerable members of our community. If you are so inclined, please do that also.



About 75—100 people showed up at the Sisters Speak Out echo event in Erie on June 24.