

interim

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

Won't You Be My Neighbor?

This month I would like to give a quick update on some of our ministries. Just last week I had a visit from my three nieces who were here to visit their mom who is a resident at **Saint Mary's Home at Asbury Ridge**. My one niece is a nurse by profession who does a great deal of work with nursing homes where she lives. This is what she said about her mom being at Saint Mary's Home. "I knew Mom made the right choice for her elder care. The moment I walked into Saint Mary's, I was greeted by employees I saw along the way. People helped me with directions and the place was clean, bright and cheerful. Because her children live out of state and don't see her as often as they would like to, they were assured that she was in the right place to get the care she needed.

I just read an article that had an update about **Saint Patrick's Haven** written by its Executive Director, Shelby Folga. I wanted to print the whole paper because it was so well written but there wasn't enough space so I will give you a "few snippets" from what Shelby had to say. Shelby describes the Haven as "a place to be seen, heard and welcomed. We are intentional about one thing above all: the men who come through our doors are our guests. And when someone is a guest in your home, you welcome them, learn their name, and ensure they are seen, heard, valued and respected." Great job, Shelby and staff!

This next weekend, the **SSJ Neighborhood Network** will hold its annual "Guess That Tune Gala." The evening features cocktails, theme baskets, silent auction, dinner, remarks, and Guess that Tune Competition. All of this is part of what supports the Neighborhood Network in the work they do to restore the neighborhoods across the core of Erie one block at a time. After 19 years of

doing this Gala, we are so grateful for the wonderful work you do.

St. James Haven has a unique way of providing, in part, for the care of the men who come to seek shelter each night. Once a month, a Meadville area business sponsors a community drive-through dinner at the Haven. The food is prepared by volunteers at the Haven and pick-up is available from 3pm to 6pm for a minimal offering of \$5 per meal but all donations are accepted. These funds help with many things needed for the Haven. What a blessing to the men at the Haven and to those who come by to purchase a family meal once a month.

Finally, the **SSJ Mission and Ministries Foundation** mission is to build resources to support the congregation, its ministries and other like-minded organizations. While building resources is important, so too is building relationships with our donors. All donations from the smallest to the largest are a gift from the heart that need to be recognized. As I write a note of gratitude, I feel as if I am bonding in some way with each donor. As our "friend list" grows, so, too, does our ability to serve others....and this is something for which we are always grateful. Led by Almitra Clerkin, the SSJMMF team brings energy, creativity and enjoyment to the work they do. Our ministries are doing quite well in serving those in need. We are most grateful for their extraordinary leadership, creativity, and loving to care for those most in need.



Continued Easter Blessings,

Sr. Mary
Sister Mary

SAVE THE DATES
Pre-Chapter
and
Chapter meetings

June 27, 2026

October 3 & 4,
2026

November 7 & 8,
2026

April 13 - 17,
2027



MISSION: **POSSIBLE!** Thanks for Making the Mission Possible

Sr. Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

In 2008, the Employees of the CLC affirmed the Employee Mission Statement that was written by employees representing each department. In 2012, the original statement was amended to the present one: ***"Inspired by the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the employees of the Sisters of St. Joseph establish an environment of unity and mutual respect that characterizes our daily interactions with each other, the Sisters, neighbors and all***

who visit here, thus reflecting the unifying love of God and neighbor." Ever since then, we have celebrated Employee Mission Day here at the CLC on the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker when possible and have awarded service pins. This year the following Employees were recognized for their service:

- 5 years:** Dana Kosiorek and Cass Shimek;
 - 10 years:** Janice Barron, Marcia Calabrese, and Sheila Mack;
 - 20 years:** Cindy Polesnak;
 - 25 years:** Cindi Olesky.
- Retirees honored** were: Stepanie Hall, Sue Hoag,

Carleen Onuschak, and Bill Winarski. **Congratulations to all these employees!**

I would also like to acknowledge all employees from housekeeping, kitchen, maintenance, nursing, front desk, transportation, and administrative staff who minister to us, and with us, each day! We are also grateful for the employees from our sponsored ministries who daily minister to the dear neighbor without distinction. The SSJ community is blessed to have so many wonderful and dedicated people in our lives. This is what makes our **SSJ Mission Possible!**



SSJ Associate Recommitment 2026

It is once again, time to discern your recommitment as an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania. As you discern, consider the commitment you made as you were welcomed as an SSJ Associate:

I desire to deepen my spiritual life by actively living the mission of unity of neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God without distinction as an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Your commitment expresses your desire to live the SSJ charism and mission to the best of your ability. This can take many forms -- personal and communal prayer; volunteering in SSJ ministries, your parish, or the local community; or caring for family and the dear neighbor. It's not *what* you do but *how* and *why* you do it that reflects the charism and mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Following your discernment, please complete the enclosed form and return it to the SSJ Associate recommitment 2026 (5031 West Ridge Road, Erie, PA 16506) by May 31, 2026. You can also complete and submit the form online at [2026 SSJ Associate Recommitment - Fill out form](#)

Know that you will be in the prayers of the entire SSJ family as you consider your recommitment.

Associate and Agrégée News

Associates Steve and Linda Kuhn have returned from wintering in Florida. Even though they miss the sunshine and warmer temperatures, they are very happy to be home in Erie.

Associate Carol Hermann of the SSJ Mission and Ministries Foundation is changing from working full time to two days a week in an effort to move toward retirement.

As SSJ Social Justice Coordinator, **Agrégée Deb Seng** will attend the JPIC (Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation) Conference in St. Louis.

Congratulations to **Associate Mary Ann Zarnick** on the birth of her granddaughter, Isla.

Condolences to **Associate Sue Ann Wisniewski** on the recent death of her brother, Lou Colocchia.

In Memorium

Associate Betty Chess, 84, died April 13, 2026 in Georgia. Betty became an Associate in 2006. A private burial will be held at a later time at St. Ann's Cemetery in Hermitage.



May eternal light shine on her, O Lord, and may she rest in peace.

What's Going On In Your Life?

We want to know what is going on in the lives of our Agrégées and Associates! Are you celebrating a special anniversary or birthday? Is there an addition to your family? Maybe you are taking an exciting trip or have started a new job. Don't be shy about telling us. We really want to know. Sharing details of our lives is one way for us to stay connected. If you have something to share, email us at SSJNews@ssjerie.org.

Please join us for the

SSJ Community Picnic

Saturday, July 11, 2026
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
SSJ Admin. Bldg.,
5031 West Ridge Road

**Honoring Sisters,
 Associates, and Agrégées
 celebrating milestone
 anniversaries this year**

Guests, please plan to bring:
 Last Name A-H cold salads
 Last Name I-P hot dishes/casseroles
 Last Name Q-Z snacks/dip/finger foods

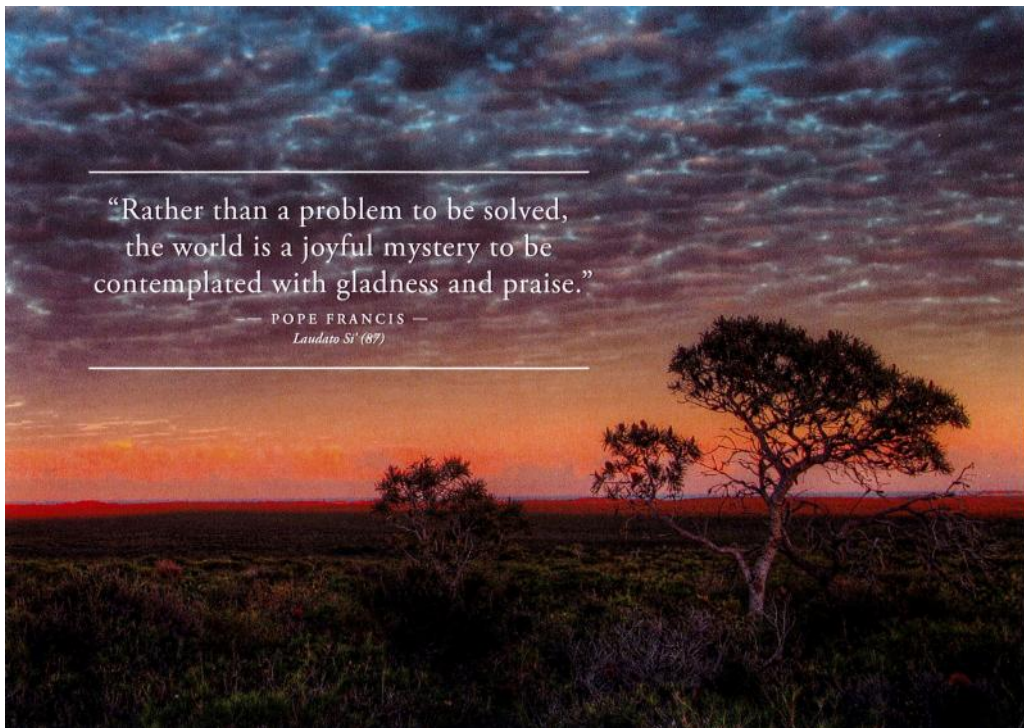
RSVP by June 24
 to 814-836-4040 or rsvp@ssjerie.org

A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
That we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of
this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and
destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice,
love and peace.



Signing letters to our congressmen
(See page 8)



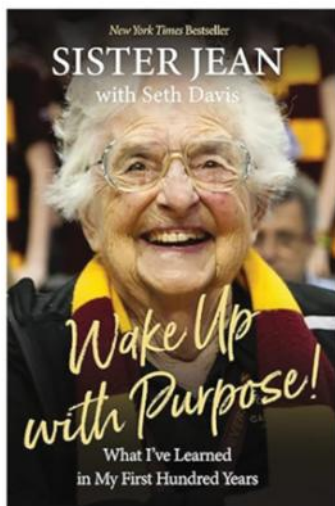
Living Laudato Deum

by Deb Seng, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

Paper and cardboard, which are both recyclables, make up 80% of office waste. Despite the introduction of paperless offices, workplaces continue on an upward trend in paper use. This can be true in our homes



as well. To reduce wasteful consumption, do not automatically print out the emails you receive. Organize your computer to file your email electronically and only print it out when it is essential.



Book Discussion: Wake Up with Purpose!

Participants in last book discussion shared:

"I loved sharing in the wisdom and life of others."

"I feel closer to each member after meeting and sharing."

Join us, from near or far, for a one-session discussion of *Wake Up with Purpose! What I've Learned in My First Hundred Years* by Sr. Jean Dolores Schmidt—a joyful and wisdom-filled memoir from the beloved Loyola Chicago matriarch and basketball icon. The book is available at online retailers and some libraries.

Click [HERE](#) to register and receive the Zoom link for:

☐ May 13, 2026 | 6–8 PM or

☐ May 15, 2026 | 1–3 PM (repeat of May 13 session)

The Zoom link will be sent the week of the meeting to those who have registered. If you have difficulty registering, please send your name, email address and date(s) you wish to participate to mchrymko@hotmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE! Special Fall Weekend Event!

***Let Us Sing as We Go:
Dreaming the MORE
for Us and the World***

September 25-27

The Program Committee is planning an awesome fall weekend that will include prayer, reflection, music, and fellowship, focusing on the charism and the mission with special guests:

***Sr. Kathy Sherman, CSJ
and Sr. Pat Bergen, CSJ***



More details to follow.

Shamrock Showdown 2026

On behalf of the St. Patrick's Haven Board of Directors, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported our second Shamrock Showdown trivia competition! Your participation, enthusiasm, and generosity made this event an incredible success!

From brain-busting trivia rounds to spirited raffles and standout costumes, the energy in the room was electric, and all for an amazing cause.

Mark your calendars for the second annual Shamrock Showdown on Saturday, April 3, 2027. Get ready for another exciting night of trivia, fun, and community as we come together to support St. Patrick's Haven. We can't wait to see you there!



First Place: The Mutants at Table 9
John Russell Hospitality Co.



Second Place: Luck O' the Pipeline
National Fuel

Congratulations!



Third Place: Lucky Guessers
Deacon Ray & Deb Sobina

Best Dressed: Freight Minds Think Alike
Logistics Plus



Board of St. Patrick's Haven



Sisters, Agrégée, Associates, Friends
Join us for the
2026
Conference
Retreat



NURTURING HOPE
in Our Beautiful and Wounded World
June 14 - 19, 2026

Presenter: Sister Melannie Svoboda, SND

The retreat will include:

- daily morning Mass
- meditation & quiet time
- two conferences a day with prayer & meditation
- optional evening events;
- delicious meals and snacks;
- peaceful, quiet environment
- a lively, spirit-filled, humorous presenter

Meals and rooms at CLC available by reservation
 Reservations due Friday, May 29, 2026
 RSVP@ssjerie.org or call 814-836-4040

SSJ community
May Birthdays

- 1 A. Carol Hermann
- 2 A. Rebecca Flynn
- 2 A. Rose Jones
- 5 A. Barb Olon
- 6 A. Mary Ann Jankowski
- 6 S. Michele Healy
- 8 S. Martha Howick
- 9 A. Marlene Lyda
- 14 A. Francine Ballard
- 15 A. JoAnne Sprickman
- 16 A. Wendy Sadlier
- 18 S. Phyllis McCracken
- 19 A. Mary Ellen Brown
- 20 S. Margaret Pellerite
- 21 A. Rosmari Graham
- 22 A. Irene Danko
- 23 A. Jodi Andres
- 25 A. Susan Colvin
- 26 A. Lisa Austin
- 30 S. Linda Fusco
- 30 A. Debra Hamilton



Let us know what you're up to!

Send your life updates and happenings to SSJNews@ssjerie.org

SSJ & As Relay for Life

We are working hard to defeat Cancer...will you help?

Every year for the past 26 years, the SSJ & As Relay for Life Team has raised funds, walked, and prayed to find a cure for cancer. Each year we learn of new ways to treat and survive this horrible disease, but there is still work to be done. Please come and spend some time with us.

WHEN: June 20, 2026 **WHERE:** Prep Event's Center, 501 W. 12th St. **TIME:** 11am until 5pm.

There will be more information in future publications. In the meantime, if you are not already a team member and would like to join or you would like to donate to the SSJ & As Relay for Life Team, please contact: tammyvanburen32@outlook.com; s.mfromknecht@ssjerie.org

Donations can be received:

CASH Please leave envelope at the front desk of the CLC.
 Attn: Sr. Mary Fromknecht & Agrégée Tammy Van Buren

CHECKS made payable to AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY.
 Mail to: SSJs & As RELAY FOR LIFE TEAM,
 Attn: Sr. Mary Fromknecht & Agrégée Tammy Van Buren
 5031 W. Ridge Rd., Erie PA 16506

PAYPAL: @TammyVanBuren

VENMO: @Tamela-VanBuren



Thank you for your support!

What is Ours to Do?

by Deb Seng, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

Almost everyday I hear that question. It could be asking that question about a variety of social justice issues. There are so many. On Earth Day, we held a prayer service that answered that question in a variety of ways. First, we listened to an address from Pope Leo who said, "We must shift from collecting data to caring; and from environmental discourse to an ecological conversion that transforms both personal and communal lifestyles. For believers, this conversion is in fact no different to the one that orients us towards the living God. We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures. Nor can we call ourselves disciples of Jesus Christ without participating in his outlook on creation and his care for all that is fragile and wounded...I would like to conclude with a question that concerns each of us. God will ask us if we have cultivated and cared for the world that he created (cf. Gen 2:15), for the benefit of all and for future generations, and if we have taken care of our brothers and sisters (cf. Gen 4:9; Jn 13:34). What will be our answer? "

What will your answer be?

During the prayer and reflection, we collected clothing that participants brought with them to donate. We also signed letters to our congressmen to prioritize policies that lower energy costs for families, strengthen essential assistance programs, and invest in clean, affordable energy solutions that benefit all communities- especially those on the margins. As Pope Francis reminds us in Laudato Si, care for creation is inseparable from care for the poor. If you would like to send a message to your congressmen, use this link to send them an email. We can all do something.

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.salsalabs.org/energizingourfaithearthday2026advocacy>