

● Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

JOURNEYS



2021
foundation
report

ssjerie.org

philanthropia

Dear Sister:

No doubt, from your personal observation, you have noticed the necessity of a new organ for Villa Maria Chapel.

The present organ has been in service since the erection of the Villa, and by constant usage has now really become unfit for Divine Service.

Owing to the immense debt already on our Institution, which I am endeavoring to lessen, I feel obliged to ask each Sister to help defray the expense of the new organ by giving or collecting ten dollars (\$10), to be sent to me on or before St. Joseph's Day, 1909.

This sum is not much for each, but by contributing the same you will be instrumental in promoting the honor and praises of God, and lessening the anxiety such a debt occasions me.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Mother M. Eugenia



J. M. J.

Villa Maria Academy,
Erie, Pa., October 7, 1909.

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the fervent prayer
you with health
ace of soul.

M. Eugenia



SISTERS OF
ST. JOSEPH
OF NORTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA

Connecting with God ✚ Connecting with You

our mission

The mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, SSJ agrégées, and associates, is to unite all people with one another and with God by responding to the ever-changing needs of the world and serving the neighbor without distinction.

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of Northwestern Pennsylvania, Inc.
5031 West Ridge Road
Erie, Pennsylvania
16506-1249

Phone: 814-836-4100 **Fax:** 814-836-4277

Email: publicrelations@ssjerie.org
www.ssjerie.org

Editor: Stephanie Hall,
Director of Communications and Public Relations
Contributing Writers: Jim Bird, Stephanie Hall,
Dotty Hanna

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message from leadership

I always said I'd work on almost anything for the congregation, but please don't ask me to assist with fundraising and development. Yet, I find myself right in the middle of it as the leadership member responsible for public relations and development. My dreaded fear became a reality, but it was not as difficult as I assumed. Meeting with people who love the Sisters is a privilege, not a chore. Hearing their stories is a delight because it is an opportunity to see how our charism is lived out in varied ways.

We have been blessed with many women over the years who have quietly—or not so quietly—carried out our mission of unity. We honor them and give thanks for their witness to the love of God and the love of neighbor without distinction.

As we move into an unknown future, we do so with hope and trust that the God who has brought us to this moment in history will move us into a future filled with hope. We reach out to you, our friends, neighbors, partners in mission, and ask you to walk with us as we move forward, knowing that our work is not yet finished. Our God should be praised and thanked every day and our neighbor, whether near or far, needs to be served with love and grace.

We thank you for partnering with us on this journey of radical love.

Blessings,

Mary Drexler, SSJ
SSJ Leadership



*SSJ Leadership: (L to R)
Sisters Carol Morehouse,
Mary Drexler,
and Phyllis McCracken*

called for times like these

In 2021, I gave a presentation on St. Joseph at a parish day of renewal. The premise of that talk was that Joseph developed a faith and trust in a God who could do the POSSIBLE even in the midst of situations and circumstances that seem impossible.

Hold on to that. Cling to it like an anchor when the boat of life is rocking—storms pass. Earthquakes come and have aftershocks, but the ground settles. Fires become smoldering ash, and from the ash, a sapling will rise.

Like Joseph, they listened intently and responded faithfully to God's call to serve the needs of the era and area.

Here is a truth that will level the spiritual playing field: Joseph was made of flesh and blood, just like you and me. He was called by God in a very particular time and place. He was called to listen to the prompting of God in his life and respond with steadfast obedience.



Jim Bird
Chair, Sisters of St. Joseph
Mission & Ministries Foundation

As I reflect on this level of attentiveness and devotion, I can't help but think of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who stayed the course in good times and bad. Like Joseph, they listened intently and responded faithfully to God's call to serve the needs of the era and area. And they're still at it—feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, revitalizing neighborhoods, and reaching out to the most vulnerable.

That excites me in my role as chair of the Sisters of St. Joseph Mission & Ministries Foundation. Where some see impossible challenges, the Sisters see what's POSSIBLE. They inspire us with their tireless passion and invite us all to share in the call. After all, we are all here in this time and place for a reason.

On behalf of the foundation, I thank every one of you who has joined us in serving the neighbor this past year, and I encourage you to continue alongside us. Whether you say a prayer, volunteer, or make a gift, you are answering the call.

And here is my final request. No matter what is going on right now in your life, or in the life of someone you love or know, remember it is temporary. Hold on to the anchor, Christ Jesus. And know that "all things are POSSIBLE with God." 

philanthropy and the SSJ mission

by Stephanie Hall, Director of Communications and Public Relations

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph is rooted in initiating change as a response to need. Marius Nepper, S.J. described the Sisters of St. Joseph as *“Standing on tiptoe, eyes alert, ears attentive, sleeves rolled up”* because of their willingness to take on tasks others didn't. However, it wasn't always easy and they often depended on the philanthropy of others.

In its earliest form, philanthropy, from the Greek philanthropia, meant love of mankind. The meaning has evolved, but human civilization has long depended upon kindness directed towards strangers (National Philanthropic Trust). Philanthropy has always played a significant role in the Sisters' mission and service in the Erie Diocese.

Marius Nepper, S.J. described the Sisters of St. Joseph as *“Standing on tiptoe, eyes alert, ears attentive, sleeves rolled up”* because of their willingness to take on tasks others didn't.

Following the Civil War, Mother Agnes Spencer wanted to use her family inheritance to purchase land and build an orphanage and convent in Meadville, PA. However, because of discrimination against Catholic immigrants, the bank refused to deal with a woman wearing a religious habit. Undaunted, she put on lay clothes and returned to complete the transaction. Soon after the orphanage and convent were established, there was a train wreck, and the sisters opened their doors to the injured. Seeing the need for a hospital, Mother Agnes received permission from Bishop Joshua Young to canvas the city seeking funds to build St. Joseph Hospital.

Philanthropy was essential to the establishment and operation of Villa Maria Academy. Father Thomas Casey, Vicar General of the Erie Diocese, gave the Sisters a parcel of land and provided funds to construct a school to provide young women with a Christian education. Later, Mother Eugenia Quirk encouraged the Sisters to ask 20 relatives or friends to give five cents a week for one year, or \$2.60, and to ask an additional ten people to do the same. The money would help fund an addition to Villa Maria Academy. In addition, the donor was assured of prayers and monthly masses as long as the school stood. More than \$100,000 was collected.

The chapel at Villa Maria Academy was named in memory of Bishop John Mark Gannon's mother in gratitude for his many gifts to the sisters.

Another gift to the congregation was the former Reed estate. Mary Bateman, sister of Mother Helena Dillon, donated the property to the Sisters, and in 1938, it was blessed by Bishop Gannon and christened Maryvale. Throughout the years, it was used as an extension of the elementary school, Villa Maria Academy, and the Villa Maria Conservatory of Music. It was also home to Maryvale Pre-school. In the mid-1990s, it became a vocation/formation house and hosted novices from throughout the U.S.

Saint Mary's Home of Erie has endured because of philanthropic support. The original skilled nursing building was possible because of donations from the Erie Diocese and the community. In addition, significant gifts funded a dedicated Alzheimer's unit at Saint Mary's East (now Nightingale Nursery and Rehab Center). Numerous rooms and wings, including the chapel, library, and exercise room at Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge, are named for individuals and families who have generously given to the ministry. A donor's bequest established a benevolent care fund.

In 1993, a gift from Edna Londregan allowed the Sisters to establish Bethany House ministry. Londregan donated a home in Erie with the provision it be used for ministry. At the time, there was great need

for women's transitional housing. The ministry was designed to help women regain self-esteem and re-enter society following treatment.

The Sisters held fairs to raise funds for the orphans at St. Joseph Orphanage. Sisters also asked family and friends for money to purchase needed items for the children. The fairs continued for many years.

Though not specifically for ministry, generous gifts also provided vacation and retreat locations for the Sisters. In 1916, Reverend Joseph M. Cauley presented the Sisters with ten acres of lakefront property near North East, PA. An additional gift helped fund the construction of a modest cottage on the property. It was named Villa Joseph in honor of the donor. In 1946, the congregation was given a nine-acre country estate in McKean, PA, from Dr. G. W. Schlindwein. The estate was named Villa Rosa in honor of his wife, Rose. In 1967, a bequest from the Estate of Thomas J. Dillon deeded a parcel and cottage across from Villa Rosa to the Sisters; it became known as Villa Regis. These gifts provided wonderful places for spiritual retreats and relaxation.

Philanthropy makes it possible for the Sisters of St. Joseph to continue responding to needs just as they did during their earliest days in the Erie Diocese. Ministries including the SSJ Neighborhood Network, St. James and St. Patrick's Havens, and Saint Mary's Home of Erie serve the dear neighbor because of donations and philanthropic support. In addition, initiatives such as the SSJ Annual Thanksgiving Appeal, Erie Gives, the SSJ Mission and Ministries Foundation Appeal, and the Mission Haiti project generate thousands of dollars in gifts each year. SSJ

partners in mission—the benefactors who support these ministries and offer their time, prayers, and financial resources—ensure that the SSJ mission endures. 



ABOVE (top to bottom) 1) The original Villa Maria Academy, built on land donated by Fr. Thomas Casey. **2)** Maryvale, a gift from Mary Bateman. **3)** (l-r) Dr. Joann Painter with Srs. Dorothy Wilwohl, SSJ, and Mary Claire Kennedy, SSJ. **4)** The Sisters of St. Joseph and its sponsored ministries benefit from the generosity of many each year through Erie Gives Day. **5)** A resident is welcomed in the early days of Saint Mary's Home of Erie, a ministry that has been supported through philanthropic efforts.



Patron Saint of Philanthropy St. Katharine Drexel (1858-1955)

Mother Katharine Drexel of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament came from an affluent family that gave generously to her congregation. She was the sole heiress to the Drexel family fortune.

The newly established federal income tax was a graduated one and led to exceedingly large tax bills for her order. Concerned about the effect on the congregation's charitable work, in 1924, she and her family successfully lobbied Congress to establish what was known as the Philadelphia Nun Provision. The provision allowed anyone giving 90% of their income to charity for the previous ten years to be exempt from paying income tax. Ironically, she was the only U.S. citizen who qualified for the provision. According to "Sharing the Bread in Service: Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament 1891-1991 — Volume 1," the "Philadelphia nun provision" was essential to the operation of the order in the years after the provision became part of the law. Although the Philadelphia Nun Provision no longer exists, it is credited as the precursor to the present-day charitable deduction.

news

laudato si' action plan updates

On the fifth anniversary of his encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (On Care for our Common Home), **Pope Francis** launched the **Laudato Si' Action Platform**. He challenged everyone to create a seven-year plan to work toward seven integral ecology goals. We are in the process of creating our plan and have participated in various educational webinars and a thorough self-assessment. As a result, we realize that energy efficiency is always a priority whenever we make changes or improvements. Our participation in the Erie 2030 project and our commitment to cut our carbon footprint in half by 2030, have given us a good start in achieving the goals of the *Laudato Si'* Action Plan. In the next several months, we will develop a plan to address



each goal. Working toward these goals will not be a change in direction for the community, rather a deepening of purpose.

ssj unity award

Each year, the **Sisters of St. Joseph** present the Unity Award to an outstanding **Villa Maria Academy** senior. The **Unity Award** is given to the student who best exemplifies living the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Nominations are submitted by VMA faculty and staff. **Sr. Mary Drexler** presented this year's Unity Award to **Margaret Mary McGovern '22**.

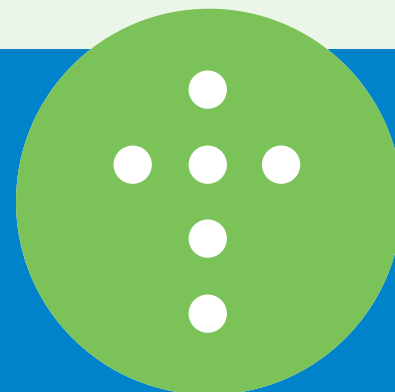


with heartfelt thanks

Another successful Erie Gives Day 2022

Special thanks to everyone who supported the **Sisters of St. Joseph** and our sponsored ministries. Collectively, the Congregation and ministries received **681 donations** for a total of **\$88,332** – and that's before the prorated match from **The Erie Community Foundation** and its generous partners. On **Erie Gives Day** and throughout the year, your acts of love change lives. You feed the hungry and shelter the homeless. You build community in inner-city neighborhoods. You welcome the immigrant. You stand with, support, and most important – love our dear neighbors. Thanks for all you do on Erie Gives Day and every day. If you missed out on Erie Gives Day but would still like to donate, visit www.ssjerie/.org.

Sister Mary Drexler (l) presenting Margaret Mary McGovern with this year's Unity Award



we remember deaths

Sisters

Sister Mary Rose Romeo

Formerly Sister Mara Joseph

January 19, 2022

Sister Mary Kevin Palazzetti

December 11, 2021

Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ

Formerly Sister Josita

September 5, 2021

Ann Donohue, SSJ

Formerly Sister Mary Timothy

August 29, 2021

For Sisters obituaries
or to make a memorial gift,
visit **www.ssjerie.org**

Associates

Mary Margaret Jones

August 5, 2022

Dolores Miller

June 15, 2022

George D. Dufala, Sr.

January 19, 2022

Linda Gier

November 22, 2021

Barbara Schlosser

November 10, 2021

Celebrations!

Sisters jubilarians

75 YEARS

Rose Marie Chisholm, SSJ
James Francis Mulligan, SSJ

70 YEARS

Ann Patrice Murnock, SSJ
Mary Arnold Tann, SSJ
Ricarda Vincent, SSJ

*More information about our
Jubilarians is available at
ssjerie.org*

Celebrate SSJ Associates Milestone Anniversaries

40 years

Elaine Clyburn
Patricia Marshall

35 years

Kirsten Beall
Diana Mikula
Margaret Reinwald

30 years

Margaret Alloway
Patricia George
Ginny Hughes
Donna Nicholas
Uta Smith
Patti Sullivan

20 years

Rebecca Flynn
Stephanie Hall
Suzanne O'Connell
Mary Lou Rathers

15 years

Margaret McCraey
Marlene Scully
Ann Semler

10 years

Jodi Andres
Frank Mozdy
Elaine Mozdy
Brandon Vogt

5 years

Stephen Branton
Tina Branton
Joan Fels
Marvin Ridgeway
Clarice Sidun

Celebrate SSJ Employees Milestone Anniversaries

20 years

Cynthia Olesky

15 years

Cynthia Polesnak

5 years

Janice Barron
Marcia Calabrese
Sister Mary Fromknecht
Susan Hoag
Sheila Mack
Jessica Perez



www.tripsforkids.org

drawing strength from the community

by Sarah Packard, Trips for Kids National Chief Storyteller and Communication Volunteer. Reprinted with permission.

Bikes were an important part of Margarita Dangel's life at a young age. Growing up in Kirchheim/Teck, Germany, she experienced bikes being used for transportation. She remembers her female high school math teacher biking to work each day or even the elderly going shopping with their bikes. Bikes in Germany have been an integrated means of transportation. Margarita credits these experiences with instilling in her a lifelong respect for the bicycle and a deep appreciation for bike repair and maintenance.

Perhaps that's why Margarita is the perfect person to manage the bike program with the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network in Erie. The organization's Pedal Mettle program, which enables youth to earn a bike after attending a workshop to learn about bike repair, safety, and maintenance, utilizes Trips for Kids resources and programming. The bike recyclery operates by word of mouth, served 402 children, and has given away 547 bikes for free in its seven

years of operation.

"We have the perfect location," Margarita shares. "We open our garage doors and have a big sign that says 'Bike Program' so everyone walking by can see what's going on. It's one of the few programs that's been able to thrive throughout the pandemic."

And it is not just kids participating -- adults have also benefited from the program.

"For many immigrants in the area, our earn-a-bike program is the first step toward having transportation," explains Margarita.

Veterans and the homeless can also participate, with Margarita typically asking for three hours of volunteer work in exchange for a bike. The program has expanded to include a recyclery, with more than 200 used bikes currently in the shop; during the pandemic, the volunteer group dwindled to four but is going strong again with 11 volunteers.

Throughout it all, bike repair remains a

constant focus -- for both youth and adult participants of the program.

But Margarita's responsibilities do not end with the bike program. As the Neighborhood Network site director, Margarita's days are busy and full of diverse experiences -- organizing community gardens, building relationships with neighbors through neighborhood programs or community events, and listening and caring for those in need. All the while, Margarita works to conduct outreach and networks to link people between services. 

The Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Since 2018, the neighborhood network has also been a recipient of more than **\$162,700** in **SSJ Mission & Ministries Foundation** grant funding. Thanks to our donors, lives are being changed in inner-city Erie neighborhoods.



"If there's a flat tire, kids will throw the bike away - unless they have the knowledge to fix it,"

Margarita Dangel

around the table

"Much more happens at a meal than satisfying hunger and quenching thirst. Around the table, we become family, friends, community..."

Fr. Henri Nouwen may have penned these words, but an amazing group of Meadville area neighbors delivers on them. These generous neighbors – individuals, organizations, groups, clubs, and schools – have made it their mission to feed the men at St. James Haven every night.

According to Samantha Stump, executive director of St. James Haven, this wasn't always the case.

"When I started in 2018, Wesbury United Methodist Retirement Community and Meadville Medical Center were our main sources of food donations for meals. Then COVID hit, and those arrangements were understandably suspended. So after cooking meals onsite for months, I reached out through Facebook requesting meals, and the response was overwhelming."

"We are blessed to be able to serve a hot, nutritious meal nightly. We also send a lunch with the working men and have snacks available in the morning before they leave and in the evening before bed," she continued.

More often than not, donors drop the meal off before 6 p.m., but some community members stay and share a meal with the guests.

"Each of our guests comes to our doors broken and in desperate need of love and acceptance," Samantha explained. "Receiving this from our staff, volunteers, and donors means as much as the meal, if not more."

Unlike many homeless shelters, St. James Haven offers a "guarantee."

"Most shelters operate on a first-come, first-served basis nightly – with no bed guarantee. Once our guests check in the first night, a bed is held for them every night as long as they show up. This is a huge weight off their shoulders, which allows them to focus on rebuilding their lives without wondering when they'll eat or where they will sleep," Samantha added.

"We are the landing pad where they can be assured there is a place to lay their head at night and know they will have a hot, nutritious meal when they get here. We set them up for success by encouraging them to save money while with us to prepare for independent living. Our model is to house them and connect them with other social service agencies that will help them find jobs, housing, and support for other issues,



Volunteers arriving at St. James Haven, in Meadville.

including addiction if they are interested."

"I have seen some amazing transformations in the lives of our guests. And it all starts with the basics – food, shelter, and acceptance, made possible by loving neighbors," she adds. "It's proof that love goes a long way." 🙏

St. James Haven is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Since 2018, St. James Haven has received more than **\$110,000** in **SSJ Mission & Ministries Foundation** grant funding. Thanks to our donors, lives are being changed in the Meadville area.



Dr. Chris Clark, president and chief executive officer of AHN/Saint Vincent Hospital, was elected to the board in April 2022. Before taking the helm at Saint Vincent, Dr.

Clark served as a family physician, senior vice president of medical affairs, chief quality officer, and director of medical education at Saint Vincent, and medical director for Highmark Inc.

Chris holds a medical degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and a master's in health administration from Penn State University. Chris also serves on the board of directors for Penn State Behrend, Erie Catholic Preparatory School, the United Way, VNA of Erie County, the Erie Downtown Development Corporation, and the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership.



Also elected in April was the **Hon. Ernest DiSantis**, retired president judge of the Erie County Court of Common Pleas. Judge DiSantis earned his undergraduate degree

from Gannon University and his J.D. from the University of Akron Law School. Before being

welcome board members

elected to the bench, he served as deputy attorney general, first assistant district attorney, and assistant U.S. attorney.

Ernie – as he's asked us to call him – has a long history of volunteerism in the Erie community. He served as president of St. George's School Board and on the Parish Council. In addition, he held board or committee positions with Erie County Rape Crisis, the House of Healing, Stairways Behavioral Services, Emerge 2040, and the JEM Foundation.



Meghan Fuhrman,

Meghan, a science teacher with Millcreek Township School District/McDowell Intermediate High School, is rounding out the

slate of new foundation trustees.

After earning a biology degree from Penn State Behrend, Meghan committed her life to education. For years, Meghan taught alongside the Sisters of St. Joseph at Villa Maria Academy. At VMA, she served as a science teacher, department chair, director of the student assistance program, and dean of students. In addition, she has experience as a gifted support teacher and caseworker. 

SSJ Mission & Ministries Foundation Board

James Bird, Chair
Scott Whalen, Vice Chair
Robert Cox, Secretary/Treasurer
Dr. Chris Clark
Eric Consiglio
Hon. Ernest DiSantis
Sr. Mary Drexler, SSJ
Meghan Fuhrman
Sr. Mary Herrmann, SSJ
William Hilbert Jr.
Sr. Catherine Manning, SSJ
Sr. Phyllis McCracken, SSJ
Tina Mengine
Sr. Carol Morehouse, SSJ
Deb Seng
Cynthia Stone
Brittany Taylor

SSJ Mission & Ministries Staff

Dotty Hanna	Executive Director
Cathy Fresch	Campaign Manager/Major Gift Officer
Carol Hermann	Development Associate
Carleen Onuschak	Staff Accountant



one job

Believe it or not, we have one job – many responsibilities, seemingly endless pressures and too little time – but one job. “Love one another as I have loved you.”

It sounds simple enough, but to love like Jesus is radical. It’s transformative. It’s a come-as-you-are, no boundaries kind of love. It’s given freely to friends, family, neighbors, strangers, and especially “others” – those who live or believe differently, or who live on the margins of society. It’s action, not emotion. And it has the power to change everything.

Radical love has always been at the heart of the [Sisters of St. Joseph ministries](#). Love inspired us to build orphanages, hospitals and homes for the elderly. It moved us to teach, to counsel, to feed and to shelter. And today, it inspires us to respond to the ever-changing needs of our neighbors – especially the lonely, the hungry, the homeless and those worn down by poverty and limited opportunities.

many responsibilities

This work has never been ours alone. Since the very beginning, friends like you have loved – and served – right alongside us in every ministry. And our work is far from done. That’s why we encourage you to keep up the good work. Welcome the stranger. Include the excluded. Offer a smile or extend a hand up. Volunteer or say a prayer.

Whatever you choose, know that your act of radical love will change lives.

We also ask you to consider a gift to the [Sisters of St. Joseph Mission & Ministries Foundation](#). The challenges of the past few years have heightened the needs of our dear neighbors. And our resources — especially those required to care for our aging sisters — will be exhausted long before our work is done.

To make a gift, visit us online at www.ssjerie.org or use the enclosed envelope.

Your gift, of any size, is an act of love that will help more than you know.

With Gratitude –



Someone once said, "Blessings come in many ways, but the best come as friends." We couldn't agree more.

Again in 2021, we were humbled by the many good friends who furthered our ministry through prayer, presence, and financial gifts. Due to this outpouring of support, we are acknowledging all donors by name only. Listing donors by area of giving would take many more pages and many more dollars in printing and mailing costs. And we're sure you'd rather we spend all we can serving the neighbor.

Whether you made one gift or several, whether you supported our work or the care of our sisters, please know that we are truly thankful. You bless us beyond measure.

2021 Benefactors

Monica Abbate

in memory and in honor of the Sisters of St. Joseph and members of the Abbate family

Vickie and Don Abbott

in memory of Carol Quinn Portenier

Judith Abel

in memory of William Reiser

Gretchen and Tom Ackerman

in memory of Sr. Mary Joan Beauseigneur, SSJ

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in honor of the Most Rev. Bishop Donald Trautman

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in memory of Marie J. Pears

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in honor of Srs. Maria Onuffer, SSJ, Lucille DeStefano, SSJ, Mary Rose Romeo, SSJ, Nancy Fischer, SSJ, Claudia Dombrowski, SSJ, and Rosemary O'Brien, SSJ

Sr. Marjorie Adams, SSJ

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Amy and Shaun Adrian and family

in memory of Barrie B. Adrian

Advanced Surgical Hospital

in memory of Terry Pfeiffer

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in honor of the Sisters of St. Joseph

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Anonymous

in memory of Linda Gier

Anonymous

in memory of Mary Grace Lattanzi

Anonymous

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Veronica Antoske

in memory of Mary and Elwood Antoske

Kathy Anysz

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Heidi A. Arnold

Art's Grocery and Bakery

Lisa Arutyunyan

Mary Anne Ashworth

in honor of Nancy and Chuck Donnelly's 50th wedding anniversary, and in memory of Sr. Marie Paul Ashworth, SSJ, and deceased members of the Ashworth family

Judith and Thomas Astolfi

Athena Circle of Trust

in memory of Benny Dabrowski

June and Donald Auer

in memory of our parents, Leona and George, our brother, Jack and our sons, Brian and Dave

Lisa Austin

Nancy Babarsky

in memory of Linda Moody and Ralph F. Babarsky Sr.

Mary Lou Babay

in memory of John Babay and Cindy Hess

Ann M. Bach

in honor of James Bach, II, on his birthday

Debbie Baer

Linda Baginski

in memory of Theresa Baniszewski

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Jennifer and Gregory Baker

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in memory of George Banister

Rose Marie Banister

in memory of Alice Shaffer and Jenna Walker

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 Jody and Chuck Banjak
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 and in honor of Sr. Susan
 Getting, SSJ*
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 Battles Village
 Barbara E. Bauda
*in honor of Sr. Ricarda Vincent, SSJ,
 on her 90th birthday*
 Mary Jo Baumann
in memory of Mary Grace Lattanzi
 Nancie and Gary Bauschard
*in honor of Sr. Claudia Dombrowski,
 SSJ, on her 50th jubilee*
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 SSJ, and in memory of Sr. Rebecca Ann
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Donor Profile

Mary Jo Cherry ...extended family

(l-r) Sr. Joseph John McDonald, Mary Jo Cherry, Nelle Cherry, and Sr. Mary Irene Lung-
er.



Sr. Joseph John McDonald holding Nelle Cherry after her christening. Nelle is one of more than 120 infants cared for by Sr. Joseph John during her 20 years as a foster mother.

It all started with a simple lunch.

Mary Jo Cherry's search for a college brought her to Erie. She was taught by the Sisters of Mercy in DuBois, Pa., so, of course, she planned to visit Mercyhurst College. But, in addition, she decided to look at Villa Maria College.

"Mom, dad, and I went to Villa first," she recalled. "We were at lunch with Sr. Lucille, Sr. Lucy, and Sr. Teresina, when Sr. Lucy, who was from St. Marys, said, 'Shall I tell them who I am?'"

"Then she turned to my father and said, 'I'm Lucy Woods, Paul Woods' sister.' And my father, a long-time friend of Paul's, shouted, 'Well, Lordy sake!'"

"It was like home... and we all agreed it would be Villa."

Like most college students, Mary Jo knew that this would be the start of building her life's work. What she didn't realize was that the Sisters of St. Joseph would help her build a family – and, in the process, become cherished members of her extended family.

Mary Jo's lifelong commitment to education took her away from Erie. Still, she always returned between earning degrees – a bachelor's from Villa Maria College, a master's from the University of Maryland, and a doctorate from Kent State University. First, she taught at Villa Maria College; then, she was director of Maryvale. Finally, she served as dean of the College of Education, a joint program between Villa Maria and Gannon.

These roles, of course, made Mary Jo a member of the SSJ family, but that's not the best part of the story.

In 1983, Mary Jo decided that she wanted to adopt a child. After much prayer, she contacted Catholic Charities and was placed on the waiting list. Four years and a month later, she got the call.

"I received the call on Monday, and on Tuesday, I went to Erie to meet Nelle," she said. "I walked up to the third floor of the old motherhouse, and there she was, with Sr. Joseph John."

Nelle was nine months old and had been in the loving care of her foster mothers, Srs. Joseph John McDonald and Irene Lung-er, for two months.

Two weeks later – when it was time to bring Nelle home – one of the sisters cautioned Mary Jo. "Be ready," she said. "We don't talk to Joseph John on the days when she places a baby. They are her heart."

That day would not end Nelle's relationship with the sisters. Mary Jo and Nelle visited often.

Mary Jo reminisced. "I would carry her up the stairs at the mother-house and ask, 'What do you have to do, Nelle?' And she would say 'kisses!' And as soon as they heard her voice, all the sisters' doors would open."

"She'd yell, 'Joe John, I'm here!' then barely get her hugs and kisses in because Sr. Irene would be waiting with a chair on wheels to roll Nelle up and down the hallway."

For Mary Jo and Nelle, family is forever.

"We don't get back often anymore, but the sisters who taught me, taught with me, and were a part of Nelle's life will always be family," she said. 🙏

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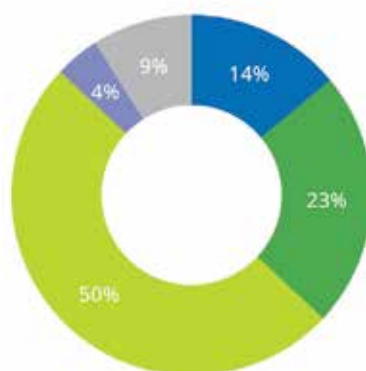
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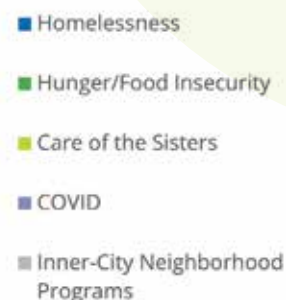
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Carol and Patrick Mingarelle
Deborah and John Mingey
Constance and Frank Minichelli
Judy Minichelli

Lillian and Robert Minichelli
in honor of living and deceased members of the Minichelli and Rufini families
Linda and Thomas Mish
in memory of Srs. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ, and Peggy Ballizet, SSJ, and all sisters who made our grade school education a treasured memory
Evelyn D. Miskiel
in memory of Jeanen Hall
Barbara Mitchell
in memory of Sr. Marie Paul Ashworth, SSJ
Josephine and Earl Mittelmeier
in memory of Catherine Pirrello and Kelly Mittelmeier
Lisa and Mark Mittelmeier
Mary Mobilia
Carolyn Mohr
in memory of William Reiser
Peggy Montag-Liebel
in memory of Beranar Montag
Kelly Montefiori
Angela and Louis Monti
in memory of Fortunata and Carmelo Mobilia
Patricia A. Montifiori
in memory of Ben Montifiori
Julianne and Christopher Moore
Rita and Charles Moore
in memory of Sr. Mary Kay McNelis, SSJ
Lien Moorehead
in memory of Sr. Marie Eileen Moyer, SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Martha Ann Rinderle, SSJ
Mary E. Moroco
Mary Morris
in memory of all deceased Sisters at Villa Maria and in honor of Mildred Heubel
Mary A. Mosher
in memory of Francis V. Kloecker and deceased members of the VMA Class of '55, and in honor of Sr. Mary Carol Hoke, SSJ
Julianne Mosora
Betty Motsch
in memory of William H. Motsch
Maureen and James Motter
in memory of Mary A. Motter

Joanne Mowrey
in memory of Sr. Lawrence Antoun, SSJ
Harriet J. Moyer
Patricia Moyer
in memory of Shirley Izbicki
Elaine and Frank Mozdy
in memory of Pam Mozdy-Allen and Sr. Kathleen Kirsch, SSJ
Carolyn and James Mraz
Kathleen and Henry Mroczkowski
in memory of Margaret and Richard Bohrer
Cynthia and Daniel Muccio
in memory of Amy Lund
Mary E. Mullen
in honor of my niece, Susan Roessner, for 70 years of love and kindness
William Mullen
in memory of Joann Mullen
Patricia and Thomas Mundy
in memory of Dorothy and Del Tully
Municipal Revenue Services
Debbie and Michael Murnock
Mary and Thomas Muroski
Ellen and Curtis Murphey
David J. Murphy
Dorothy Murphy
in honor of the Zoom Cyber Circle of Friends 2021
Patricia Murphy
in memory of Sr. Rebecca Fogelbach, SSJ
Joan Murray
Patricia Murray
in memory of Sr. Marie Eileen Moyer, SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Martha Ann Rinderle, SSJ
Anne and Thomas Murtagh
in memory of Jonathan Pears
Nancy and James Musarra
in memory of Marian Scolio Musarra
Deborah and Donald Musolf
Thomas Myers
in memory of my mother
Mary Alice and Dennis Nagoski
Marie Namey
in memory of Victoria and Michael Namey
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in memory of Thomas E. Shaw

Bea Natale and Timothy Natale
Kathy Ann and Angelo Natalie
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matching gift on behalf of Jeffrey Felix

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in memory of James Connors

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in memory of Sr. Clarice Ritzel, SSJ, and deceased members of the Nicklash family, and in honor of Ana Nicklash

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Theodore J. Niebauer Jr.
in memory of Winifred and Theodore Niebauer Sr, and Sr. Lois Marie Niebauer, SSJ

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in memory of Theresa and Ben Reeger and Sr. Leonella Gingenbach, SSJ

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Eileen and Peter Nill
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in memory of Joanne Noonan and Sr. M. Gerarda Tiernan, SSJ

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in memory of Eileen Murphy Miller

Sally and Paul Nunes
in memory of Bob Bille and Jerry Uht

Eileen and James O'Brien
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Sr. Rosemary O'Brien, SSJ
Maximilian J. Obuszewski

Rev. Terry Odien
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Rev. Mark O'Hern
Elizabeth and Karl Ohmer
in memory of Sr. Mary Albert Yates, SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Marilyn Zimmerman, SSJ

Frank Ohmer
in memory of Kristin Anderson and Steve Ohmer

JoAnn Ohmer
in honor of Sr. Marilyn Zimmerman, SSJ

Marlene Ohmer
in honor of Sr. Marilyn Zimmerman, SSJ

Mary L. Ohmer
in memory of Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ

Nettie and Thomas Ohmer
in memory of Ann and Bob Ohmer, and Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ

Penny and Joseph Ohmer
in honor of Sr. Marilyn Zimmerman, SSJ

Sheila and Tim Ohmer
Marlene Okel
in memory of Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ

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in memory of Ella Marie Olcese Bledsoe

Ruth and Arthur Oligeri
in memory of Marian Gleisner

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in honor of Sr. Geraldine Olon, SSJ

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in memory of Emily Taylor

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Barbara A. Onofrey
in memory of Joseph Onofrey, Johanna and John Halas, and Jackie Halas

Marge and Deacon Ronald Onslow
in honor of Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ

Sr. Maria Onuffer, SSJ
Robert Onuffer and Miriam R. Thomas
Carleen Onusach
Christine and George Opron
Margaret Orchard
in memory of Mary Lou Orchard

Joe Oregia
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Richard Orzepowski
in honor of Sr. Jean Baptiste DiLuzio, SSJ

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in memory of Joyce Osiecki

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in honor of Sr. Millicent Zimmer, SSJ

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in memory of Srs. Agnes Clare Krepcho, SSJ, and Seraphim McCafferty, SSJ

Rev. Walter E. Packard
in honor of Sr. Jean Baptiste DiLuzio, SSJ

Erin and Michael Paglione
in memory of Sr. Mary Ellen Dwyer, SSJ

Mary Beth and Daniel Pais
in memory of Sr. Mary Ellen Dwyer, SSJ

Sr. Colette Palmer, SSJ
in memory of deceased Sisters of St. Joseph and their family members, and in honor of Sr. Mary Fromknecht, SSJ

Dorothy and Douglas Palmer
in honor of Sr. Colette Palmer, SSJ

Herb Palmer
in memory of Constance M. Palmer

Shauna Pandolfino
in memory of Margaret Deter Corrairie (Sr. Camilla)

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Philip Papotnik
Joseph Parlak
Audree A. Parr
in memory of Sr. Ann Donohue, SSJ

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Mary and Gary Pasqualicchio
Rev. Gregory P. Passauer
in memory of Emma and Willard Passauer

Suzanne and John Pastorini
Charles Patterson
in memory of Andrea Patterson

Anna and Wade Patton
in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Nelson



Pathways to Wellness

Thanks to a grant from the **Catholic Sisters Initiative of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, SOAR! (Support Our Aging Religious)** is launching Pathways to Wellness. We are delighted to be one of 14 congregations selected to participate in this pilot program. While still in the early phase, we are moving forward with a program that will provide wellness opportunities for our sisters, including videos, seminars, and ZOOM presentations, and by hiring a wellness coordinator who will engage our sisters with new ways of moving forward and collaborating. In addition, grant funding opportunities will also be available to participating congregations. 

Loretta and Timothy Patton
Elvera Payne
Linda Payne
PDQ Pest Control
Robert Pears
in memory of Marie J. Pears
Douglas Pelkowski
in memory of Sr. M. Adrienne Pelkowski, CSFN
Mary and Vincent Pellegrini
Paul Pellerite
Karen and Pierre Pelletier
Geraldine and John Pendill
Jane and Lewis Penna
Nancy L. Penner
in memory of Bob Penner
Laurene and Tom Peterman
Jean Petersen
in honor of Sr. Marianne Stuckert, SSJ
Jacqueline and James Peterson
in memory of Sr. Gertrude Marie Peterson, SSJ
Jean M. Peterson
in memory of Sr. Gertrude Marie Peterson, SSJ, Thomas Peterson and deceased members of the Peterson family, and in honor of the Sisters of St. Joseph
Lynette Petruska
Betty and Sam Petruso
Kristen and John Petulla
Ellen A. Pfadt
in memory of Judge William Pfadt and Jeanne Maley Pfadt
Joyce Pfadt
Mary D. Pfadt
in memory of Judge William Pfadt and Jeanne Maley Pfadt
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Mary Kathryn and Robert Piccirillo
Gerri Piecuch
Marius Piecuch
Mary and Gerald Pierzynski
Judy Pietrasiewicz
Michael J. Pietrowski
in memory of Carol, Dolores and Chester Pietrowski

Janet and Joseph Pilewski
in honor of all the good news at Holy Rosary
Carol and Joseph Pillitteri
in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brownyard and Mr. and Mrs. Carmen Pillitteri, and deceased members of the Brownyard and Pillitteri families
Sara Pineo
Anne Pirrello
Mary Frances Pirrello
in memory of William Reiser
Barbara and Edward Pisarchick
in memory of Margaret (McGinnis) Burton, VMC '59, Lucille Christopher, VMC '57, Sr. Ann Donohue, SSJ, VMC '65, and Mary Frances Sweterlitsch, VMC '59
Doris Pitzer
Christine and Leon Piurkoski
The Pockey girls
in memory of our aunt, Sr. Marie Claire Kearney, SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Rachael McGuire, SSJ
Esther and Alvin Pohl
Marilyn Pol
Dolores and Robert Polak
Mary A. Poli
in honor of Sr. Lucille DeStefano, SSJ
Jacqueline M. Pollack
in memory of deceased members of the D'Aurora, Savelli and Pollack families, and in honor of Sr. James Francis Mulligan, SSJ
Barbara Pollock
Jamie and John Poltrack
in memory of Robert Monkowski
Rebecca and Lee Pomeroy
in memory of Sr. Mary Kay McNelis, SSJ
Kathleen Pomorski
in memory of Sr. Leonie Shanley, SSJ
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in memory of Virginia and Hugh Pompeani
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Stephanie Powers
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in memory of Deacon David Pratt
Mary G. Pratt
in memory of Glenn W. Pratt and Sr. Caroline Extein, SSJ
Jane and Deacon Frank Pregler
Janet Price
Virginia Price
in memory of Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ
Karen Prizinsky
Marie A. Przepierski
in memory of Edward Przepierski
Sarah Purvis
Margaret Pyle
in memory of Genevieve, Jacob and Roger Farrell, and in honor of the Farrell family
Bobbette and Al Pyne
in memory of Theresa Baniszewski
Mary and Thomas Quinn
in memory of William Reiser
Robert Quinn
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Mary Lou and Michael Rathers
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Janet and John Raup
in memory of Sr. Kathleen Kirsch, SSJ
Jennifer Rautine
Raven Sound
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Doris Redmond

Bonnie Reed
in memory of Tomas and Sr. Mary Alice Reed, SSJ
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in memory of our parents, Mary and John
Marilyn Regan
in honor of Sr. Mary Claire Kennedy, SSJ
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Margaret A. Reinwald
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in memory of William Reiser and Sr. Mary Kevin Palazzetti, SSJ
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Eileen and Keith Reynolds
Mary Rezsutek
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in honor of Sr. Marilyn Zimmerman, SSJ
Marvin Ridgeway
Daniel E. Riley
in memory of Mother Bernard Sheridan, SSJ
Mary Lou Rimpa
Marie Rinderle
in memory of Frank and my parents
Mary Rinderle
in memory of Marjorie Carroll
Dianne and Dennis Ringwelski
in memory of Sr. Antonia Domeracki, SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Colette Palmer, SSJ
Rev. Gerald Ritchie*
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in memory of Srs. M. Clemenza Mazzei, SSJ, and Doloretta Thorn, SSJ, and in honor of Sr. James Francis Mulligan, SSJ

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in memory of John Mares Jr.

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*in memory of Sara and
Charles Zortman*

Rebecca S. Roberts

in memory of Dr. James F. Roberts

Christine Robison

Mary and William Robson

Margaret and Robert Rodak

Linda and Charles Rohrbach

*in memory of Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa,
SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Jean Baptiste
DiLuzio, SSJ, and all the wonderful
Sisters of St. Joseph*

Mary and Frank Rojek

Dorothea and Carmen Romeo

Carol and Carmen Romeo

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Peg and Robert Romeo

*in memory of Sr. Seraphim
McCafferty, SSJ, and in honor of Sara
and Andy Romeo*

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in memory of Rita Rose

Linda and Pat Rossi

in honor of Sr. Ann Marie Joint, SSJ

Kathryn E. Rote

Theresa Rotunda

Sally Rouch

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in memory of Jane Mientkiewicz

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*in memory of Sr. Rebecca Costa, SSJ,
and deceased members of the
Costa family*

Dolores F. Rudolph

in memory of Robert Rudolph

Richard Rudzinski

Rebecca Ruprecht

Peggy Rusnak

in memory of Anthony Rusnak

Janet Russell

Ann Marie C. Russo

in memory of Mary T. (Walsh) Considine

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Mary and James Rutkowski Jr.

in memory of William Reiser

Olivia Rutkowski

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Mary Ryan

Susan and Peter Ryan

*in memory of deceased members of
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Christine and Joseph Rys

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Wanda and Anthony Salvia

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*in memory of Janet Lindell and
members of the Blood and
Sammartino families*

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*in memory Srs. Rebecca Ann Costa,
SSJ, and Mary Karen Crawford, SSJ*

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in memory of Sr. Mary Francis Becker, SSJ

Laura Savelli and Caryn Wolfe*

Joyce Savocchio

Joan Savoy

Jennifer Scalzo

*in memory of Bernard, Rita and Gina
Scalzo, and Alice Davis, and in honor
of my parents, baby sister
and grandmother*

Carmelita M. Schaaf

*in memory of Chuck Schaaf, June
Smith, and Srs. Ann Donohue, SSJ, and
Mary Kevin Palazzetti, SSJ*

Joan M. Schaaf

in memory of James H. Schaaf

Rosemarie and William Schaaf

Liz and John Schell

*in memory of Mary and John Schell,
and Carl Tulanko*

Kathleen Scheppler

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*in memory of Norma Jean McGill, and
Srs. Miriam Doyle, SSJ, and Joseph
Doyle, SSJ*

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in memory of Sr. Mary Kay McNelis, SSJ

Claudia Schneider

in memory of Sr. Mary Kay McNelis, SSJ

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*in memory of deceased members of
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*in honor of the education received
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in memory of Jacqueline Scutella

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*in memory of Sr. Margaret Joseph
Mokes, SSJ*

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Bette and Leo* Shanley

*in memory of Sr. Mary
Kevin Palazzetti, SSJ*

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*in memory of Ronald Fontaine
and Sr. Ann Donohue, SSJ*

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SSJ, Mary Thomas Downing, SSJ, and
Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ*

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in memory of my sister, Donna R. Shreve

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SSJ, and in honor of Sr. Jean Baptiste
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*in memory of Pamela Mozdy Allen,
and Srs. Brenda Marie Vines, SSJ, and
Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ*

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Rev. Jerome S. Simmons

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honor of the Sitzler children and
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Donna Smith

in memory of Frank J. Smith Jr.

Elaine L. Smith

*in honor of all the women who taught
and formed young lives*

Evelyn Smith

in memory of Sr. Kathleen Kirsch, SSJ

Gail Smith

James J. Smith

*in memory of my mother, Catherine,
and all of her Schrock sisters and
brothers; my wife, Norene and Srs.
Regis Schrock, SSJ, Damion Schrock,
SSJ, and Generosa Schrock, SSJ*

Jennifer and Edwin Smith

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Mary Lou Dossert Miller*

Laurie Smith

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Pat and Earl Smith

Rev. Robert J. Smith

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in memory of Catherine and Robert Keim

Uta Maria Smith

in memory of all deceased sisters

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*in memory of Daniel, Sara, Mike and
Jean Snow, and Olive and Jack Carper*

Mary Ellen Snyder

*in memory of Paul Snyder and in
honor of the Clancy and
Snyder families*

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in memory of Sr. Ann Donohue, SSJ

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*in honor of the good Sisters of St.
Joseph and the Jenny Speice
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in memory of Kathleen Spiegel

Mary Ellen Spinks

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*in memory of Richard Squeglia and
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*in memory of Associates Arlene
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George Strenio

in memory of Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ

Mary Strenio

in memory of Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ

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Seraphim McCafferty, SSJ, and Rita
Grace McNamara, SSJ, and in honor of
Sr. Ann Stephanie Stano, SSJ*

Marlene and John Stuckert

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Reiser and Srs. Mary Kevin Palazzetti,
SSJ, Ann Donohue, SSJ, Rebecca Ann
Costa, SSJ, and Helen Claire Sullivan, SSJ*

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Downing, SSJ*

Mary Pat Sullivan*

*in memory of Sr. Mary Kevin
Palazzetti, SSJ*

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*in memory of Sr. Ann Donohue, SSJ,
and in honor of the Sisters of
St. Joseph who served at St. Bernard
School and BCCHS*

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*in memory of Sr. Mary Thomas
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in memory of William Reiser

Nancy L. Thomas

in memory of Ronald C. Thomas

Rosemary A. Thomas

*in memory of Rita Davidson, Kathryn
Stewart and Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ*

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Judy Tiano

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in honor of Sr. Marie Timmons, SSJ*

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in memory of Trish Sinnott Hardner

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Mary Ree Travers

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Kearney, SSJ, Mary Francis Becker,
SSJ, and Elise Ann Haener, SSJ, and in
honor of Sr. Rachael McGuire, SSJ*

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*in memory of deceased members of
the Tssario, Green and Scherrer
families, and in honor of all the
wonderful sisters who taught at
Blessed Sacrament School*

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in memory of Josie and Bob Tullio

Pam Tylwalk

Judith Tymchyn

Audrey and David Urban

Rev. Bernard J. Urbaniak

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in memory of Theresa Baniszewski

Connie and Robert Valimont

in memory of Eli Valimont

Tammy Van Buren

Mary Jo and Erik Van Der Kaay

Mary Beth Van Winkle

in memory of Sr. Mary Ellen Dwyer, SSJ

John Vanco

Joni and Mark Vatauvuk

Joanne and Martin Vavreck

in honor of Sr. Barbara Ann Vavreck, SSJ

Clarice Vayda

*in memory of Sr. Clarice Ritzel, SSJ,
and in honor the Ritzel and
Branzel families*

Jean Ann Verdecchia

Bettie Veshecco

*in memory of Christina and Felix
Bartone, Msgr. Richard Stack, Michael
J. Veshecco Sr., Keith R. Veshecco, and
Michael J. Veshecco Jr.*

Robin and Richard Vicary

**Villa Maria Academy/Cathedral
Preparatory School**

Villa Maria Academy Class of 1965

in memory of Levi Fulton

Mary R. Villa

in memory of William Reiser

Mary and Eugene* Vinca

in memory of Sr. Bernadine Pais, SSJ

R. Michael Vincent

in memory of Kathleen M. Vincent

Patricia and Michael Visnosky

Columbia J. Vlahos

Darlene M. Vlahos

Carol and John Vogel

Theresa Vogel

Connie and Gerald Vogt

Dolores B. Vollmer

**Bharathi and Sam Voora/The
Dr. Sambasivarao & Dr. Bharathi
Voora Fund of the Erie
Community Foundation**

Shelley Vybiral

James Wagener

in memory of Sally Ann Wagener

Gretchen and Kenneth Wagner

*in memory of Srs. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ,
Mary Kay McNelis, SSJ, and Ann
Donohue, SSJ, and in honor of
Sr. Nancy Prenatt, SSJ*

Marilyn Wagner

in memory of Mary Grace DeGeorge

Deacon Owen Wagner

in memory of Ellen Wagner

Sr. Stephanie Wagner, SSJ

Ruth E. Waidley

Ann Marie Waite

in memory of Claire A. Roman

Aniko Walker

Eleanor L. Walker

*in memory of Deacon Robert Walker
and in honor of Sr. Jean Baptiste
DiLuzio, SSJ*

Theresa A. Walkiewicz

Cheryl Ward

in memory of Dr. Sam Ward

Christa Ward

in honor of Ron Blose

George C. Ward Jr.

in memory of Adrienne Ward

Renee and James Warden

Erin and Scott Washburn

*in memory of Bill Sullivan,
American hero*

Nancy and Richard Washek

Raymond Wasielewski

in memory of Betty Wasielewski

Kathleen Watson

in memory of Sr. Kathleen Kirsch, SSJ

Mary Alice Watson

*in memory of Amanda
Lochner Yochim*

Mary Ann and Wendell Watters

*in honor of Srs. Ricarda Vincent, SSJ,
and Phyllis Hilbert, SSJ*

Elizabeth Way

Wendy and Charles Weber

Mary Jane Weed

Ruth and Deacon Robert Wehrer

Margaret Wehrle

in memory of Sr. Mary Ellen Dwyer, SSJ

Marguerite M. Weibel

in memory of Richard Weibel

Marjorie and Leonard Weidner

Patricia and Patrick Weimer

Mary Anne Weiner

in memory of Mary Grace DeGeorge

Richard S. Weiser

Brenda and Ronald Weismiller

Patricia and Robert Wellington

Lori Wellman

in memory of Mary Grace DeGeorge

Charley Wells

Donna and Donald Werle

Linda and Scott Whalen

Julie and Alvin Whan

Patricia C. Wheeler

*in memory of Robert M. Wheeler and
Sr. Mary Pascal Gray, SSJ*

Lorre White

Sr. Mary Ann White, SSJ

William White and Benjamin Hetrick

in honor of Sr. Mary Ann White, SSJ

Gayle Whitman

Rev. Glenn R. Whitman

Diane Whitney

Rena Wierbinski

Betsy and David Wiest

*in memory of Srs. Kathleen Blair, SSJ,
and Mary Joan Beauseigner, SSJ, and
in honor of Srs. Mary Fromknecht,
SSJ, Nancy Fischer, SSJ, and Marianne
Stuckert, SSJ*

Terese Wieszczyk

in memory of Raymond Wieszczyk

Anna and David Wiley

William C. Wilhelm

Betsy Williams

*in memory of Srs. Carol Wilcox, SSJ,
Joyce Lowrey, SSJ, and Agnes Hughes,
SSJ, and in honor of Srs. Phyllis Hilbert,
SSJ, and Mary Herrmann, SSJ*

Carmen Williams

in memory of Barbara Coughlin

Cynthia and George Willis

Sr. Dorothy Wilwohl, SSJ

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Nancy Campagne*

Linda Winters

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Annette and Thomas Wittmann

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Vincent Woeppel*

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in memory of Bobbie Wood

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and Carmela and Joseph Travaglione*

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Sr. Rebecca Ann Costa, SSJ*

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in memory of Wilda Yakish and Nancy Rawlings
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Kathleen A. Yochim
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Janet M. Yoke
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in memory of Robert Aiello
Mary Ann Zarnick
in memory of Gene Zarnick and deceased members of the Wojtkielewicz and Zarnick families
Bonita and Michael Zatorsky
in memory of Sr. Mary Alacoque Buck
Emil Zaunick
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Jane and Robert Zawadzki
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George Zehner
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in honor of the Romeo family for past kindness
Jamie and Brian Zewe
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in memory of Anita M. Keenen
Adm. Sue Zich
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Marcella Zill
in memory of Cynthia Manna
Fay and Wayne Zimmer
Carrie and Allen* Zimmerman
in honor of Sr. Marilyn Zimmerman, SSJ
Jane Zimmerman
in memory of deceased members of the Zimmerman and Mooney families
Helen Zipper
Betty Zito
Carolyn C. Zur
in memory of Eleanor Niewiedomski, Sr. Miriam Fuhrman, SSJ, and Zeline Euler, SSJ associate

Estate Gifts

Dolores Adams
Jean Coco
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Mary Motter

Gifts In Kind

AHN/Saint Vincent Hospital
Bombas Giving Program
Erie Parking Authority
Gannon University
GFS – Gordons Food Service
Metz Culinary Management
Wegmans

Grants & Foundation Gifts

The Behan Fund of the Erie Community Foundation
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The Bloomstine Family Fund of the Erie Community Foundation
The Jeffrey Cohen Charitable Gift Fund
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SOAR! – Support Our Aging Religious
The Spaeder/Sisters of St. Joseph Fund of the Erie Community Foundation
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thanksgiving donors set a new record

Our Thanksgiving donors are AMAZING!

For 33 years, we've asked, and you've answered. But in 2021, you answered with a resounding, record-shattering **\$82,406** – a 15 percent increase over our previous (2020) record of **\$72,000**.

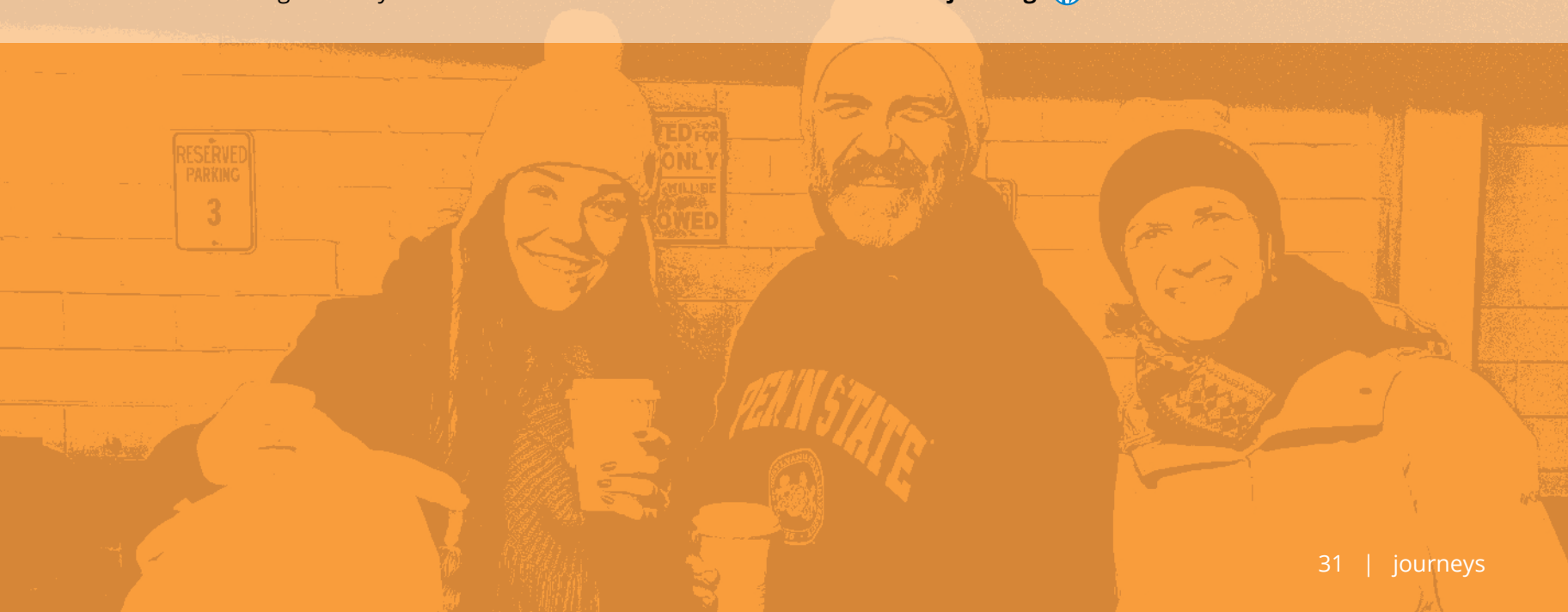
Of course, it's great to set a new record. But what's truly remarkable is the impact of these gifts.

Thanks to nearly **700 generous donors** and **97 volunteers**, the Sisters delivered **1,100 holiday meals** on Thanksgiving Day and distributed more than **\$65,000 to 44 area organizations** that fight hunger and poverty throughout the year.

Our plans for this year are not quite complete. But, again, COVID and public health concerns will determine whether we offer in-person dining.

But this we know – for the **34th consecutive year, the Sisters of St. Joseph** will serve Thanksgiving meals to our dear neighbors in need. And with your help, we'll feed more, raise more and distribute more funds to fight hunger year-round.

To make an early gift to the **2022 SSJ Thanksgiving Fund**, visit us at **ssjerie.org**. 





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smart move

Avoid taxes on your retirement account



Do you have a retirement account? Smart move! Many people wisely take advantage of tax incentives to contribute to IRAs, 401(k)s, and similar plans. But did you know there are considerable tax advantages to making charitable gifts with retirement plan assets?

The IRS considers any remaining balance left in your retirement account untaxed income. If you bequeath that balance to your heirs, the IRS will subject it to income and estate tax.

You have options to reduce this potential tax hit without depriving your loved ones. You can create a meaningful legacy by naming a nonprofit organization, such as the Sisters of St. Joseph Mission & Ministries Foundation, as the beneficiary of your retirement plan and using other tax-advantaged assets to make gifts to children

and family, and friends. A nonprofit organization won't pay income tax on the distribution (nor will the plan balance be included in your taxable estate). In addition, your heirs can receive more of your estate because the tax-advantaged assets you leave to them will not be subject to income or estate taxes.

And when you name the foundation your retirement plan beneficiary, 100% of the funds will support a cause you care about – the sisters' ongoing ministries to neighbors in need or the care of our aging sisters. So whatever you choose, it's a great way to maximize your assets and make a powerful impact.

We'd love to talk more about ways to leave a legacy. If you'd like to have a conversation, please contact **Cathy Fresch** at

814-836-4253 or **cathy.fresch@ssjerie.org** 