interim

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

November 2026
Volume 44, Issue 11

Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania

A Season of Thanksgiving

Dear Friends,

As I wrote last month's article for Interim, I focused on the changing colors of the leaves and the beauty of the autumn season. It seems as if the beauty of this season is still very much with us. In fact, the leaves are now more vibrant than at the beginning of October. Not only have the leaves become more colorful but God has graced us with delightful fall weather and beautiful blue skies which the weather forecasters promise will be with us into November.

This month invites us to recall our cherished loved ones who passed from this life to eternal life. (Take some time to recall them and the gift they have been in your life.) As the month goes by, we also celebrate the wonderful feast of Thanksgiving.

For those connected with the Sisters of St. Joseph, it often causes us to reflect on our 37th Thanksgiving dinner which fed over 1700 people last year. (Take some time to reflect on the many people who help make this possible because of their willingness to give, to share, to help in any way possible.)

May the Thanksgiving meal that we share with family and friends be doubly blessed because of our generosity, kindness, and prayers.

Happy Thanksgiving and blessings in abundance.

Sr. Mary



Celebrating Advent with Our Lady of Guadalupe



Join Sisters, Associates, and Agrégées for an afternoon of reflection, where we will look to Our Lady of Guadalupe on her feast. We will see her prophetic vision, actions for justice, and compassionate presence. The Marian apparition at Tepeyac brought dignity and agency to the indigenous peoples, challenged their oppression, and became a tangible reminder of God's constant presence. We will celebrate her feast and the Advent season, with an afternoon of story, reflection, sharing, poetry, and song.



Our presenter, Anne McCarthy, OSB, is the Director of Benetvision, an organization committed to promoting Sister Joan Chittister's works and Monasteries of the Heart. Long involved in peace and justice ministry nationally and locally, Anne coordinates Benedictines for Peace and is a Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace. A Benedictine Sister of Erie, and a nurse, she is involved in health services for her monastic community.

Saturday, December 12th, 2026
2:00 – 4:00 PM
Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center

Click HERE to Register!

MISSION: POSSIBLE

Thanks for Making the Mission Possible

Ann Marie Cappello, SSJ, Mission Integration Coordinator

As I was pondering about what I could share with you this month, I began thinking about how my life has been evolving this past year. I am spending quite a bit of time with my sister who is having a challenging time trying to adjust to living at Saint Mary's Home rather than at the house that she called home for many years.

Since I visit her every day, I have become acquainted with many of the residents in her unit as well as their family members who visit often. I have also been able to get to know many staff members and employees at Saint Mary's Home.

As I interact with all these people, I realize that my new ministry is that of presence to the people I meet at Saint Mary's each day. I began thinking and praying about this. As I was praying, I thought about the maxims, and I started praying with those that pertained to reaching out to the dear neighbor without distinction.

When I began thinking of the maxims, the **modern version of Maxim 55** especially spoke to me this past week - "Serve others unselfishly with no thought of reward." The student adaptation to this maxim is, "Be in service to the dear neighbor without reward/Love's design has its own reward." And the haiku version of the maxim is, "Assist all with love, seek no reward for helping, except pleasing God."

Which maxim speaks to you about reaching out to the dear neighbor without distinction?

This reaching out to the dear neighbor without distinction is what makes the SSJ Mission Possible!

Dear Mother Superior...

by Pat Marshall, SSJ Congregational Archivist

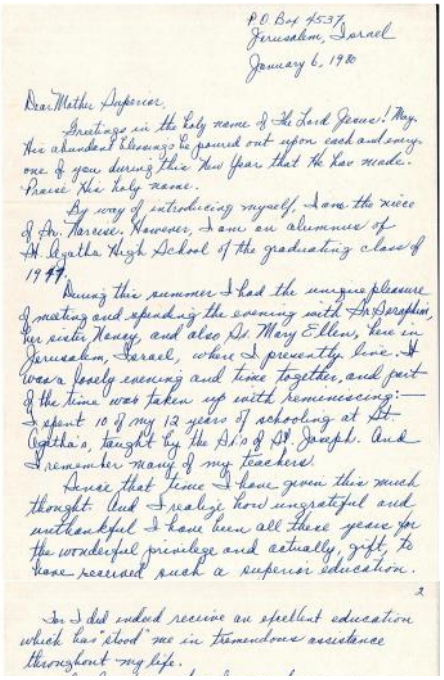
Have you ever wished you could go back in time to thank someone? Audrey Sorren, a 1947 graduate of St. Agatha High School, did the next best thing.

I came across a letter written by Audrey in 1980 while she was living in Jerusalem, Israel. She had spent an evening with Sisters Seraphim and Mary Ellen, and she began reminiscing about the excellent education she had received from the Sisters of St. Joseph, and how that education had given her tremendous assistance throughout her life.

She wanted to thank the Sisters and so wrote a letter to "Mother Superior."

In the letter she mentions seven Sisters by name and the specific impact each of them had on her. Of Sister Angelica she wrote that Sister "blessed my life in so many ways I could never recount them. But she was so kind to me those tender years when my mother died. How I loved her."

You can read this beautiful letter in its entirety on the SSJ website by visiting: **ssjerie.org/letter**



P.O. Box 4537
Jerusalem, Israel
January 6, 1980

Dear Mother Superior,

Greetings in the holy name of the Lord Jesus! May the abundant blessings be poured out upon each and every one of you during this New Year that He has made. Praise the holy name.

By way of introducing myself, I am the niece of Mr. Forrest. However, I am an alumnus of St. Agatha High School of the graduating class of 1947.

During this summer I had the unique pleasure of visiting and spending the evening with Sr. Seraphim, her sister Nancy, and also Sr. Mary Ellen, here in Jerusalem, Israel, where I presently live. It was a lovely evening and time together, and part of the time was taken up with reminiscing: — I spent 10 of my 12 years of schooling at St. Agatha's, taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph. And I remember many of my teachers.

Since that time I have given this much thought. And I realize how ungrateful and unthankful I have been all these years for the wonderful privilege and actually, gift, to have received such a superior education.

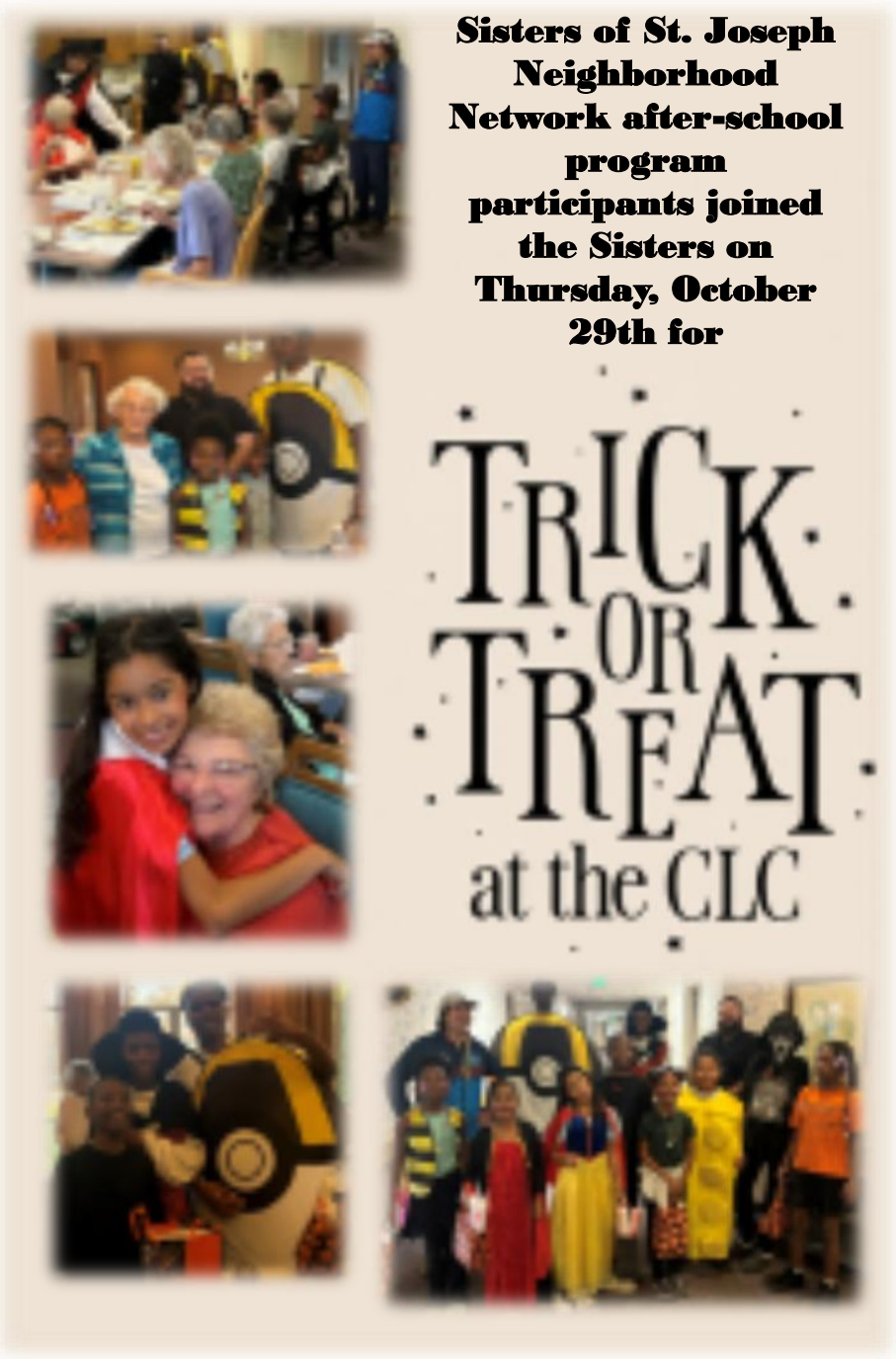
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So I did indeed receive an excellent education which has stood me in tremendous assistance throughout my life.

Click Here to view the entire letter.

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.





1	A. Sueann Wiest
2	A. Shirley Mack
2	A. Timothy Natale
3	A. Joy Sherred
4	A. Patti Sullivan
4	A. Brenda Villa
7	A. Mary Lou Rathers
7	A. Marti Michael
8	A. Betsy Williams
9	A. Debbie Thompson
10	S. Catherine Manning
11	A. Linda Kuhn
11	A. Ted Wright
13	A. Frank Mariella Jr.
17	A. Frances Skobieranda
17	S. Carol Morehouse
18	A. Rev. Dennis Martin
19	A. Sandy Clark
21	A. Sue Ann Wisniewski
23	A. Patricia J. Marshall
24	A. Mitzi Banister
26	A. Edith Benson
28	A. Cynthia Berarducci
30	A. Jeanne Brim
30	A. Rose Ronzitti

Associate and Agrégée News



In Memorium

Associate Margaret “Lani” Reinwald, 100, died October 16, 2026 at UPMC Hamot. Lani became an Associate in 1987. She was a founding member of Our Lady of Peace Church and its Rosary Altar Society.

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

SSJMMF Thanksgiving Appeal

In 1988, Sister Teresa Marie Bohren, Sister Mary Fromknecht, and Peter Lyons (owner of Marketplace Grill in Erie) came together to serve 140 neighbors a Thanksgiving Dinner. In the following 37 years, the impact of this event has only continued to grow, delivering 1,700 dinners in 2025.



Following our first dinner, a handful of agencies received the remaining donor gifts, after dinner expenses were paid. In 2026, the SSJ Mission & Ministries Foundation continues this tradition, with remaining funds being gifted to over 60-area food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, college-campus stores, and other agencies that feed the hungry every day.

1988 THROUGH 2025:

DONATIONS RECEIVED:

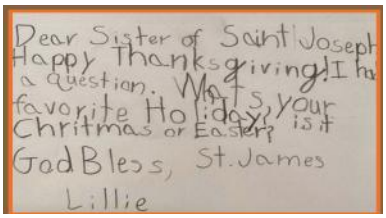
$1,404,692

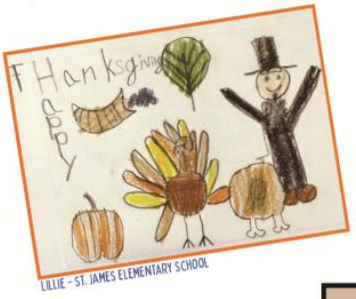
GIFTS DISTRIBUTED TO NONPROFITS THAT FEED OUR NEIGHBORS YEAR-ROUND*:

$1,223,750

*IN 2025, 62 ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED FUNDS.







THANKSGIVING BY THE NUMBERS:

FOR THE PAST 37 YEARS,
4,630 DONORS &
4,713 VOLUNTEERS
HAVE SERVED OUR NEIGHBORS:

36,887 MEALS
29,476 POUNDS OF TURKEY
28,455 POUNDS OF POTATOES & CORN
686 GALLONS OF GRAVY
37,952 SLICES OF PIE & COOKIES

PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT AT THESE SPONSORSHIP LEVELS:

TURKEY SPONSOR - $2,400
ALL-THE-FIXINS - $1,200
SOMETHING SWEET - $600
SPECIAL DELIVERY - $300

SPONSORS WILL BE THANKED IN EVENT MEDIA & ALL 1,700+ MEAL DELIVERIES.

Scan the code below, or visit ssjmmf.org to give today!

GOD'S BLESSINGS & OUR PRAYERS TO YOU THIS & EVERY DAY!

THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH & THEIR

MISSION & MINISTRIES FOUNDATION
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE ERIE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM & MOTHER TERESA ACADEMY STUDENTS & FACULTY FOR THE UNIQUE CARDS SENT TO OUR 1,700 NEIGHBORS!

Thanksgiving Dinners Through The Years

As we anticipate our 38th Thanksgiving Dinner this year, here are some photos from the past of our Sisters & volunteers making this effort a reality!



Living Laudato Deum

by Deb Seng, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

Use Your Vote and Buying Power

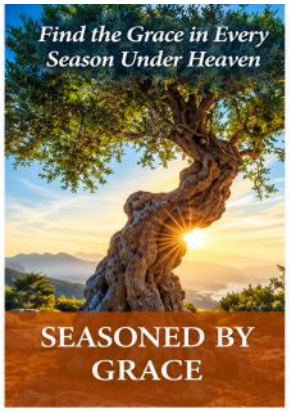
Voting is the best way to make your hopes and needs known. Our power as citizens includes the election of people who represent us, and whose job it is, in theory, to set an example. Find out the environmental policies of all the political parties and vote accordingly.

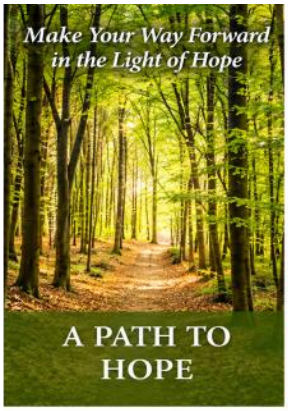
Do not forget that you also cast votes several times every day by what you buy and by your choices as a consumer. These choices influence, sometimes even more than elections do, means of production and the way the economy is organized, and they contribute to the way in which society develops.

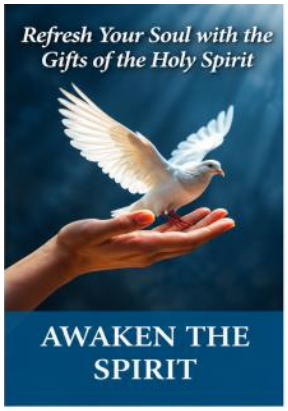


Nourish Your Spirit

Click for retreat opportunities.











God Is Better Than Santa Claus: A Book for Adults

By: Christine Kresho, SSJ, Book Discussion

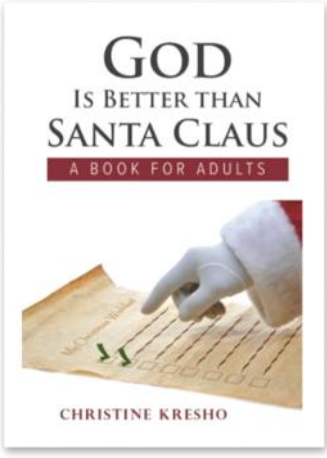
Join us for a meaningful and inspiring discussion of *God Is Better Than Santa Claus: A Book for Adults* by Christine Kresho, an SSJ from Baden, PA. This 70-page book invites us to reflect on our faith and explore how we grow in our understanding of God's unconditional love. Come share your thoughts, insights, and perspectives with us!

Wednesday, November 18, 2026 from 6:00–8:00 PM on Zoom.

Click Here to register.

The book is available through online retailers and some libraries. Those who register will receive the Zoom link the week of the meeting.

Having trouble registering? Please send your name and email address to mchrymko@hotmail.com.



SSJ Soirée Fills the CLC



On Saturday, October 24, 2026, the annual SSJ Soirée open house, organized by the SSJ Mission & Ministries Foundation, took place at the SSJ Community Living Center. The afternoon was filled with great food, laughter, and conversation among Sisters, Agrégées, Associates, donors, board members, friends, and families of the Sisters.

"The Foundation is thrilled to organize the Soirée for our Sisters ... it's a chance for us to bring the Sisters together with the people who love them," said SSJMMF Executive Director Almi Clerkin.



A centerpiece of this year's theme were caricatures of each Sisters, displayed at the center of the tables where visitors were seated. Guests also had the opportunity to have their photos taken to create their own personalized caricatures, which will be illustrated and mailed to them at a later date.

In addition to food, conversation, and photos, visitors had the opportunity to view a new, $95,000 accessible van that the Foundation secured for the Sisters, thanks to $40,000 in grants from the Norbert H. Hardner Foundation and Supporting Our Aging Religious Inc. (SOAR). Although the new van has not yet been delivered, the Foundation is grateful to Erie Homes for Adults and Children (EHCA) for lending a display van identical to the one being acquired for the Sisters.



"We're very excited for the Sisters to have this form of transportation to take them out and about, and we're just so grateful for the support of the Norbert H. Hardner Foundation and SOAR," Clerkin said.

The SSJMMF remains thankful for all of our Sisters, donors, and Board members who helped to make this event a success. To view a video from the event, click here.

Be sure to turn-off the automatically generated closed captions on YouTube, which are inaccurate for this video.







Extreme Risk Protection Orders: A Life Saving Tool

by Deb Seng, SSJ Social Justice Coordinator

I never thought it would happen here in Erie.

That we would be on the world news with the horrific story of a mass shooting. It hurts my heart every time I think about that family and what the last few minutes of their life must have been like. I also think about the perpetrator and how desperate he must have felt that killing was his only option. The whys will never truly be answered and all we can do now is to continue to pray for the family, friends, and neighbors who knew them.

There is something else we can do. I consulted the Cease Fire PA's website to see if they had any suggestions. Cease Fire PA is a non-profit gun violence prevention organization whose goal is that everyone in PA live in a safe community. I found out that in 2023-24 the Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) legislation was introduced in the PA House of Representatives. This legislation would have created a process for family members or law enforcement worried that someone might hurt themselves or others to petition the courts for a civil (non-criminal) order to temporarily suspend a person's access to firearms, including removing any existing firearms for up to one year, giving time for the individual to get help.

For three years ERPO has awaited action in committee. Your voice can change that. We need to take a stand and ask our legislators to pass ERPO. Email your Representative and your Senator and ask them to get this legislation out of committee and vote to pass ERPO. Twenty-one states have passed this legislation and PA should be next.

Pre-Chapter Update

Chapter delegates and participants will gather for the pre-chapter meeting on November 7 at 9:00 a.m. & November 8 at 10:30 a.m. at the Community Living Center to continue preparation for the Chapter. Sr. Kelly Connors, PM, Canon Lawyer, and Sr. Sherryl White, CSJ, will facilitate the process.

Please keep the chapter delegates, participants, and the ongoing process in your prayers. Below is the prayer chosen for this Chapter.



"The charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph
sends us into the world as continuous acts of love,
a love that is active and inclusive,
a love that is patient, enduring, fearless and tender,
a love that is forgiving and giving,
a love that is steady and steadfast,
a love that forms bridges and makes connections easier;
a love that facilitates life for others,
enabling them also to stir up love in our world."

- Marcia Allen, CSJ
The Charism in Time of Conflict

"Likewise, be very faithful for the grace of the Holy Spirit, Listen attentively . . ."
Maxim 15