St. Joseph’s Healthcare System Celebrates 150 Years

(r) Sister Francis Raftery, Patient Relations Coordinator, St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center.

(r) Sister Mary Pauline Hogan, Chaplain, St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center.

(c) Sister Diane Dillon, Nurse Coordinator-Home Bound Program, The De Paul Center.

(l) Sister Jo Ann Bromley and (r) Sister Elizabeth Noonan, Volunteers, St. Vincent’s Healthcare and Rehab Center.
Welcome

Our faith is all about hope and light...hope in the life of Jesus and light in his resurrection. Jesus was a real person who became a turning point in human history. He came in humility, without power or wealth, in a world marked by strife and terror. He was born a refugee...one whose life involved work and rest, friendships and betrayals, delight and sorrow and ultimately faith in the darkest hour of his life. Jesus's birth dignified the everyday...his life elevated and sanctified the human experience...revealing the good and holy within us... He did not come to deliver prosperity and success...or an end to suffering.

Jesus came to fulfill the promise that God can bestow mercy amid our struggles, and repair the broken areas of our lives. He came to make God's love known in the world. This New Year let us treasure our wonderful gift of faith. Let us embrace this positive path of love. Let us remember each day that we, too, are called to follow the way of Jesus in our own lives. This issue of NEW Dimensions focuses on Charity, God's love, lived in our lives and around us.

Our feature story this month highlights St. Joseph's Healthcare System, in Paterson, Wayne and Cedar Grove. On its 150th Anniversary this wonderful work, founded by the Sisters of Charity to meet the needs of those working in the mills of Paterson, continues its vital, dynamic, compassionate presence meeting the emerging needs of one of the most diverse populations in the country with no one left behind. Sister Angelica Doris, hospital administrator and health care specialist, who worked to meet the health care needs of the people of New Jersey for many years shares her perspectives on this work.

You will meet our 2016 Sister Jubilarians and receive an update on the Villa at Florham Park (now owned and run by the Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey) including how the transition is proceeding for our sisters and new lay residents.

You will encounter Arlene and Gary Horan and Evy Jarzabek honored at the Harvest Festival...Gary for his brilliance and steadfastness in leading the wonderful collaborative work that is Trinitas Regional Medical Center in Elizabeth, NJ. Arlene for her unflagging generous commitment to Trinitas and to volunteering in health care over many years, and Evy, a Seton Associate, who embodies creativity, compassion, selflessness and a generous spirit of Charity in the works of the Congregation and beyond.

The Mission of Charity is vibrant and growing in new and dynamic directions. Mother Seton Regional High School, Clark, NJ, is instituting a new engineering program geared to developing the skills of young women today. Finally, from New Mexico, seven women of the Navajo Nation traveled to commit themselves as Seton Associates to strengthen and continue the mission of Charity among their people! We are so most blessed by the faith and goodness of so many who actively seek this Mission of Love.

Many blessings,

Sister Rosemary Moynihan - General Superior

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On the cover:
Background photo of St. Joseph's Hospital, Paterson, NJ. Original building -1867.
It was the legendary Dean William McNulty, pastor of Saint John parish in Paterson, N.J., who requested that Mother Mary Xavier Mehegan send Sisters of Charity to begin a hospital in Paterson, N.J. Thousands of immigrants flocked in the 19th century to tiny Paterson, America’s first planned industrial city that manufactured a wide range of products from locomotives to textiles. While great fortunes were made by some, no provisions were made for the workers and their families when disease, hunger or accidents befell them.

In September 1867, Sister Anne Cecilia led a small group of nuns to establish Saint Joseph’s Hospital on Church Street. In a modest frame building that held 12 beds, they began to meet the needs of immigrants and factory workers. “The Sisters’ hospital” was the only hospital in Paterson and one of only four Catholic ones in the state. The Sisters were challenged during the first few decades to care for their patients, while also enlarging the facility and making the improvements strongly recommended by the physicians. Sister Hildegarde would make the rounds of the markets along Main Street each day, accepting donations of food for the hospital. Other Sisters stood outside the gates of the mills and factories on payday, requesting spare change from the workers as they left their jobs. Traveling as far as Sussex County seeking donations, those early pioneers established a healthcare facility that cared for the poor people of their time.
On Friday, Nov. 11, 2016 at St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center, Paterson, St. Joseph’s Wayne Hospital, Wayne and St. Vincent Healthcare and Rehab Center, Cedar Grove, simultaneously hosted the Flag Raising and Blessing ceremonies as part of the 150th anniversary celebration. Pictured here is Ken Morris, Jr., VP, External Affairs holding the 150th Anniversary Flag while Sisters Patricia Mennor, Diane Dillon, Eileen Clifford and Beatrice Guider prepare to hoist the Flag in celebration!

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Kevin J. Slavin, a Seton Associate, is President and CEO of St. Joseph’s Healthcare System, whose sole sponsor is the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. St. Joseph’s is the largest employer in Passaic County, the provider of choice for healthcare services in the region and – faithful to its founding vision – the largest provider of charity care in New Jersey. The healthcare system’s Mission, articulated afresh in 2016, would resonate with Sister Anne Cecilia and her companions: to provide exceptional quality care that sustains and improves individual and community health, with a special concern for those who are poor, vulnerable and underserved.

Expenditures and Receipts from 1867-1868

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Let the Celebrations Begin!

A Kick-Off event began a series of year-long celebrations for the 150th anniversary. It was billed as the 150th Anniversary Inaugural Event and was held on Sept. 8, 2016 in Paterson.

At this event, a historic marker, unveiled by Kevin Slavin, President and CEO of St. Joseph’s Healthcare System, and Sister Marilyn Thie, Assistant General Superior, SC and Chair of the Board, was blessed by Msgr. Tillyer, Sr. Marilyn Thie, and Sister Patricia Mennor, SC, Vice President, Mission at St. Joseph's Healthcare System. The marker, which will be placed on the original location of St. Joseph's Hospital on Church Street, between Ellison and Market Streets on May 1, 2017. It reads:

St. Joseph's Hospital was founded at this Church Street location on September 8, 1867.
Sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, they tirelessly tended to the City’s ill, injured and poor in the 12-bed wooden structure.

This marker recognizes the 150 years that St. Joseph's, now St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center, a member of St. Joseph's Healthcare System, and located at 703 Main Street, Paterson, has served the healthcare needs of its community.

Monday, May 1st -
Feast of St. Joseph the Worker
150th Anniversary Church Street Marker Ceremony

Saturday, September 9th
150th Anniversary Closing Liturgy
1:00pm Holy Family Chapel, Convent Station, NJ
Reception to follow in Academy of St. Elizabeth Study Hall

FOR UPCOMING EVENTS
The Living Memory of Healthcare Ministry

In many ways Sister M. Angelica Doris is the living memory of the healthcare ministry of the Sisters of Charity, although she began her religious life teaching fifth and sixth-grade students. In 1949 she was assigned to St. Joseph’s Hospital and Medical Center in Paterson as the business manager and office supervisor.

“I hated to leave teaching, but I may have been chosen because I had worked in business before I entered the community,” she explains.

In Paterson, Sister Angelica rose to Associate Administrator before being named Administrator of All Souls Hospital in Morristown in 1967. When the Sisters of Charity relinquished control of that hospital, Sister Angelica worked within the congregation as a trustee of many our sponsored works, as the consultant for healthcare and the Director of Corporate Affairs, and in leadership on both the provincial and generalate levels.

Reflecting on 70 years of Catholic healthcare, Sister Angelica notes how much it has changed.

“It’s not just the advances in medical technology and the changes in clinical care; it’s the way that the Sisters influence the whole hospital.

In the past the administrator was always a Sister of Charity and there were Sisters throughout the hospital: at the patient’s bedside, in the offices and operating rooms, and on the nursing floors. How we Sisters of Charity care for the sick was transmitted easily to the nurses and doctors and the other employees because we worked beside them each day. Even as an administrator, I didn’t stay in my office, but I worked with people, too.”

While Sisters of Charity continue to work in each of our hospitals and to serve in governance on the Boards of Trustees, much of the responsibility for transmitting the Sister of Charity charism falls to the Vice Presidents for Mission. Sister Angelica believes that, “Our Sisters who serve as VPs for Mission are great women. They infuse our Mission of Charity throughout the hospitals, so it “gets caught” by our employees, our administrators and our Boards. In our hospitals every patient is treated with respect and compassionate care.”
I am here today to share a few thoughts on how the Ladies Hospital and St. Joseph’s Hospital are connected, and they are connected in many ways. I would suggest that what connects them is the common mission of the two groups of women who founded these ministries in the late 1800s.

Both the hospitals in their early days mirrored each other closely. They began in downtown Paterson, the Ladies Hospital on the corner of Southard and Market Streets, and St. Joseph’s, otherwise known as the Sisters Hospital, on Church Street. Although history is sketchy in terms of exact locations, the two ministries were probably about one mile apart from each other. They both probably served the same population, which as we know were the poor immigrants of Paterson.

Although stated differently, both hospitals were founded with the same mission. The Ladies Hospital articulated its mission as providing “quality care to all races, creeds and color regardless of ability to pay” while St. Joseph’s stated that the “Institution” was founded for the “relief of the sick, especially the sick poor.”

Both ministries began and ran successful nursing schools. Paterson General began the first school of nursing in the state in 1882 and St. Joseph’s in 1894. Although the primary reason to begin these schools was to supply nurses to the hospitals, there were also wonderful opportunities for the ministries to shape skilled caregivers in the way of compassion and charity.

What really connects these two groups was that they both were guided by their faith. Although belonging to different Christian denominations, their sense of mission was deeply rooted in the Gospel: to go out to the world and spread the Good News. This is evidenced by the fact that religious services marked the founding of the Ladies Hospital in 1871 and St. Joseph’s began on the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, Sept. 8, 1867.

Finally, these two religious groups share the symbolism of $5. The Ladies Hospital was said to have opened with two blankets and $5 and it is said that when the Sisters of Charity moved from Newark to Madison in 1860, they carried a statue of the Blessed Mother and $5.

So, here we are today, celebrating two wonderful hospitals that were begun as true ministries of the church. They have deep connecting threads that are the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the Ladies Benevolent Society, two groups of faith-filled women starting out with $5 in hand, with the same sense of mission and values.

Let us continue to celebrate this common mission, today and throughout our 150th Anniversary year.
Magnificent stained glass display

Saints Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac were innovators in bringing God's love to people. Together they devised a new form of religious life to aid the neediest of God's people, founding the Daughters of Charity in 17th-century France. Their Daughters left the cloister for the streets of Paris, caring for the sick in their homes, ministering in hospitals, and caring for the imprisoned, the foundlings and orphans, as well as for mentally ill and homeless people.

Three hundred fifty years later, St. Vincent's Healthcare and Rehab Center in Cedar Grove, N.J., a division of St. Joseph's Healthcare System, stands as a testament to that inventive love. Entering the lobby, the visitor encounters a magnificent stained-glass display. Each of the three panels, crafted in the late 1920s for the chapel of St. Vincent's Hospital in Montclair, bears a liturgical symbol set against a ruby shield. The upper left panel is the tree of life, depicting Christ as our foundation as we move through life's stages. Baptism, the sacrament by which we enter the family of God, is depicted in the middle panel. The symbol in the lower right panel represents the Holy Eucharist and contains the ancient symbol of the pelican, symbolizing Christ's sacrifice for our salvation and representing the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Tying the three panels together is a timeline that depicts the inventive love which led to this contemporary facility.

St. Vincent's roots go back to 1875, when the Sisters of Charity opened Saint Vincent Foundling Asylum in Immaculate Conception parish in Montclair to care for abandoned children under the age of 2. While it closed temporarily when an epidemic spread among the babies, it reopened in 1908 with a name more suggestive of a wider aim and goal: Saint Vincent Nursery and Babies' Hospital. In 1916 *The Montclair Times* reported that “the purposes of the corporation were enlarged...so as to empower the hospital to treat and care for maternal and orthopedic cases in addition to its powers to receive and care for infants and foundlings.”

In 1930, another adaptation was made to meet the needs of the community. While focusing primarily on maternity cases and the medical and surgical treatment of women and children, St. Vincent's General Hospital admitted men for the first time.

The mid-20th century brought the need for more specific training for healthcare professionals. In the 1950s and 1960s, St. Vincent's General Hospital opened the only hospital-affiliated school for practical nurses in the state, a school for infant care technicians and a laboratory technology program. Emergency services were initiated, a five-bed Intensive Care unit was opened and dentistry services were added as St. Vincent's was fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals.

But responding to the needs of the times involves closings, as well as openings. As social services developed to aid vulnerable families, no longer was there a need to care for foundlings. The foundling nursery and the School for Infant Care Technicians were discontinued in 1965. The School of Practical Nursing graduated its last class in 1970. A few years later the maternity unit was closed, which reduced patient capacity to 100 medical-surgical beds. It was becoming increasingly clear that a small community hospital could not stand alone.

St. Vincent’s administrator, Sister Mary Alicia Mullins, and Sister Jane Frances Brady, the administrator of St. Joseph Hospital and Medical Center in Paterson, began to discuss an affiliation between the two hospitals. The decision was made to merge St. Vincent’s with St. Joseph’s Hospital and to adapt its mission. After extensive remodeling, St. Vincent Nursing Home in Montclair opened in 1982 as a long-term care facility under the administration of Sister Mary Alicia. The status of the 135-bed facility was unique, a nursing home directly managed by a hospital.

While St. Vincent’s Nursing Home remained in Montclair for the next two decades, a larger, state-of-the-art facility was envisioned and in 1998 ground was broken for its new home in Cedar Grove. Finally, on a bitterly cold day in February 2001, all the residents were moved to their new home, a modern 151-bed nursing home in a park-like setting. This year’s name change – healthcare and rehab center – indicates that once again this early work of the Sisters of Charity is adapting to meet society’s changing needs. From 19th century foundling asylum to 21st century rehabilitation center, St. Vincent’s embodies another saying of its patron: “It is essential to continue well, because to begin is nothing.”

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"Love Is Inventive, Even to Infinity"

– Saint Vincent de Paul

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Congratulations to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. We celebrate these 62 faithful women for continuing the mission of Christ in the world for 3,445 cumulative years.

If you recognize one of the Sisters and would like to send a correspondence to her, please mail it to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Communications Office, P.O. Box 476, Convent Station, NJ 07961-0476 or e-mail it to escharity@scnj.org. If you would like to make a donation in their honor, contact the Development Office at srcharity@scnj.org or 973-290-5480.
JUBILARIANS

The former who have celebrated milestones in their religious life.
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70 YEARS

Sister Ursula Mary Kendig
Sister Kathleen Koerner
Sister Kathleen Murphy
Sister Maria Anne Palkovics
Sister Margaret Annina Confoy
Sister Mary Walter Dwyer
Sister Marie Gilligan
Sister Thomas Mary Salerno

60 YEARS

Sister Margaret Hewitt
Sister Marie Urma Kessler
Sister Maeve McDermott
Sister Julia Scanlan
Sister Maria Magdalena Studer
Sister Marie C. Tansey
Sister Rose Marie O’Brien
Sister Margaret Ann O’Neill

50 YEARS

Sister Barbara Garland
Sister Nancy Anne Haarer
Sister Regina Hudson
Sister Barbara Jenkins
Sister Mary Louise Moran
Sister Maureen Mylott
Sister Jean Ann Trainor

25 YEARS

Sister Marilyn Thie
Sister Carol Williams
Sister Joan Granville
Sister Merris Larkin
Sister Kathleen Mirenda
Sister Joan Repka
Sister Noreen Holly
“WE THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX!”

by Sister Noreen Neary

“I love this class.”

“This is how real engineers work.”

“This course lets us be very creative.”

“The ratio of men engineers to women engineers in 7:2, but that’s going to get better.”

“I’m going to be a chemical engineer someday.”

The 24 young women – all juniors or seniors – in the “Engineering Design Process” class at Mother Seton Regional High School in Clark, N.J., are developing 21st-century skills as they design, build and test their innovative solutions to real-world problems. Their teacher, Katherine Sullivan, a Seton Associate and the mother of a Mother Seton alumna, has taught physics at MSR since 1994. Prior to that she was employed as a mechanical engineer for New Jersey Bell; she holds a master’s degree in Engineering Management. As the class begins each new unit, she changes the make-up of the teams of four students and each assumes a specific role on her team.

The students work in the bright, spacious classrooms of the Sister Regina Martin Engineering Center. Sister Regina Martin Keane, SC, came to Mother Seton in 1964 as a math teacher and later chaired the Math Department. In 1975 she became Mother Seton’s second principal, a position she held until her unexpected death on Christmas Day 2013, and always encouraged “her girls” to think big and to work hard to achieve their goals.

Around the perimeter of the classroom are the engineering teams’ successes. Flight was the first topic they tackled and windowsills hold colorful prototypes that have taken to the air: balsa wood planes, a boomerang plane, devices made of Styrofoam cups powered by elastic bands. While the students designed and tested their projects, they researched Newton’s Laws of Motion, potential and kinetic energy, and the Law of Conservation of Energy. The budding engineers noted that, while they enjoy their successes, they learn just as much from their failures, as they analyze and revise their creations.

A real-world element was introduced as they designed towers (made of plastic straws, paperclips and tape) to hold a maximum load at the lowest cost. Fiona, an international student from China, a noted proudly that her team’s project utilized triangles for stability and that their cost-to-load ratio was the lowest in the class. When asked how classes at Mother Seton compare with those in China, Fiona said, “Education in China is too standardized. Here I can explore my interests.” She enjoys living with her host family, whose daughter also attends Mother Seton, and hopes to continue her education at Brown University.
This year, all 9th and 10th-grade students will be exposed to computer programming in "Exploring Engineering," a quarter-year-long course taught by Louella Estillero, a 2010 graduate of MSR. The students learn to code in Java, a programming language. By her fourth class, each girl is importing images of birds and animating the birds to "fly" across her laptop screen. Next September the new 9th grade students will learn coding, while the Class of 2020 – then sophomores – will learn electronics. Ms. Estillero, a math teacher, participated in intensive training last summer to prepare herself to teach this course. She coded in a variety of languages, built and tested circuits, and programmed electronics to perform various tasks.

This inaugural year of engineering education, an initiative of the Archdiocese of Newark, is successful due to many factors. The Sears chain of stores has provided tools and storage carts for the engineering center. An alumna, Nicole Telleri Simpson ’06; her husband, David, and her parents donated two 3-D printers to the program. And surely the enthusiasm and competence of the teachers have ignited a spark in these young women that will lead some of them to careers they hadn’t considered previously.

For more information about Mother Seton, visit its website at www.motherseton.org

Fiona demonstrates her prototype to the class.

Jubilarian

Q & A

Sister Kathleen Miranda
50 years

Q: Sisters often have several careers or serve in multiple roles over the years. What has been your favorite?

A: ...be a daughter of the church...
I would have to say my favorite was chaplain.

Sister Noreen Holly
25 years

Q: As you reflect on the last 25 years, what does being a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth mean to you?

A: The draw that the charism of charity has for me is even bigger than being Irish! Being a Sister of Charity is the most important thing in my life. It defines me, it gives me positive energy and I hope to be around for 25 more.

Sister Joan Granville
50 years

Q: As you reflect on your 50 years as a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, what is one experience that stands out?

A: I find this question difficult to answer. Not because I don’t have significant experiences, but that I have been blessed with so many. I have been blessed with ministries that energized and challenged me. I have so many significant experiences that help me to continue to say “yes” each day to God’s call to live my life as a Sister of Charity. I am truly blessed.

Sister Merris Larkin
50 years

Q: As you reflect on your 50 years as a Sister of Charity, how has the community changed from when you first entered?

A: Fifty years ago our community was a very large community with many actively working sisters. Today, fifty years later, our numbers are down and the percentage of working sisters is as well. However, it is amazing to me that we still find ways to answer the needs of God’s people with new ministries and initiatives.

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Sister Joan Granville
50 years

Q: What can you say about the past 50 years as a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth?

A: These 50 years as a Sister of Charity have been the happiest years of my life. With God’s help, I’ve persevered through the ups and downs.
The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth welcomed 24 new Seton Associates during their Liturgy to Honor Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton on Saturday, Jan. 7, in Holy Family Chapel.

Established in 1990, Seton Associates are lay women and men who commit themselves to a life of charity. They serve the poor in various ministries throughout the region and in other states and countries where they live. They total 300.

Among the new Seton Associates are seven women from the Navajo Nation, inspired by the work of Sister Maria Magdalena Studer, SC, who has served a parish on their reservation in New Mexico for many years. The new Associates also include five Latinas from the congregation’s storefront ministry to immigrant women, Josephine’s Place, in Elizabeth. The Latinas were inspired by the welcome and support they received from the Josephine’s Place Director, Sister Judy Mertz, SC, who founded the ministry 13 years ago.

General Superior Sister Rosemary Moynihan said the Sisters and Seton Associates are “truly blessed” with our new members, especially the Navajo women and the Latinas. “They bring their unique commitments and gifts to the Company of Charity,” she said.

Speaking to the candidates she said: “As you make your commitment, I ask you to remember the words of St. Vincent de Paul who said, ‘He who from all eternity has chosen you to assist the poor will preserve you as the apple of his eye.’”

Rev. James Manos, pastor of St. Luke Parish in Ho-Ho-Kus, celebrated the Liturgy, and Rev. Martin D. Rooney, Chief Experience Officer at St. Joseph Hospital and Medical Center in Paterson, concelebrated. William Myers of North Arlington served as Deacon. All three are Seton Associates. Sister Kathleen Quigley, SC, directed the Choir.

The new Seton Associates from New Jersey include: Joseph Arminio, Lynn Berhalter, Cloris Bustamante, Dawn Colapietro, Roxann D’Alessio, Christine Danelson, Laura Marie Flammia, Genevieve Kowalski, Susan Matlosz, Eugene Thornton, Mary Ryan-Thornton and Corinne Wnek.

The new Seton Associates from Josephine’s Place: Migdalia Allende, Lourdes Chimpay, Amanda León, Maria Llantín, Flor Ortega and Elba Ramirez.


Four Seton Associates made a Lifetime Commitment to live in charity: Susan Butler, Denise Jesby, Coleen Ognissanti and Matthew Schiller.
“Why do you want to become a Seton Associate of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth?”

To validate my life in the charism and to learn more and do more in charity. I want to be an energetic force for goodness and charity extending from my heart into places where I serve in my parish and mission.

Julia Gorman, 
Fort Defiance, AZ

To do prayer meetings which are needed and to take the Eucharist to the sick at the hospital and those in prison. I will continue to do what I am doing now at St. Berard – participating and helping.

Leona Laughing, 
Sawmill, AZ

I wish to know more about Elizabeth Seton and her works of charity. I love what I do and where I am. I will continue all of the services I am already part of for my people, and recruit more of my people back to church.

Rita Bia, 
Sawmill, AZ

God is calling me. It is a way of life and it is important to meet and support one another. I will continue to do what I am doing, but I will learn and grow and learn more about the Seton Associates of the Sisters of Charity and emulate them.

Amanda Milford-Joe, Window Rock, AZ

At St. Berard there are a number of us who gather through the year but mostly in the summer for Vacation Bible School. I like it that we will meet once a month to grow spiritually and pray and be with these wonderful women of grace. Together there are many things that we can accomplish year-round.

Rita Ellen Yazzie 
Window Rock, AZ

To continue my journey of faith by strengthening my knowledge of Christ/God and sharing this with others.

Juliana Nez, 
Navajo, NM

I want to be a Seton Associate and I commit myself to helping others. I fix breakfast for the children and work with Echo of Faith and Builder of the New Earth ministries.

Evelyn Vanchee, 
Navajo, NM

I truly enjoy your fine publication, NEW Dimensions. I have strong ties to Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. As a proud graduate of Seton Hall University and the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, my medical school is located only a few short blocks from Mother Seton’s home on Paca Street. I visit her home on my trips to the Charm City. I have been an attending physician at St. Joseph’s Regional Center, Paterson, sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, for over 40 years. Keep up the good work. Your publication is excellent!

John, MD, FAAP, Clifton, NJ
What a difference a year makes!

by Sheila Tracy, Director, Choose Charity Volunteers

In January 2016, we launched Choose Charity Volunteers with one concrete goal: to give people the opportunity to experience the charism and mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth up close through volunteer experiences. Like any new initiative, the program we now have bears little resemblance to the program we thought we would have.

Early on, we got an intern to help us to develop the program. Then we got another intern. And then another. (You get the picture). Before we knew it, the interns were the program. To date, we have had 15 interns in the Motherhouse, representing eight different colleges, totaling close to 1,500 hours of service and learning. The interns all have individual projects and have helped out in ways including doing research, working with Sisters on computer skills, and writing for social media and NEW Dimensions.

I like to say that the air shifts when the interns are in the building. Undeniably, the students bring an energy and enthusiasm that you can almost feel, but it is the relationships between the interns and the Sisters, often forged at lunch in the dining room, that make me catch my breath. One day during midterms an intern arrived exhausted, with hair literally standing on end. I asked her how she was doing and she looked at me and sighed: “All day I couldn’t wait to just come here and be with my Sisters.” In her face I saw an outcome of the program that I couldn’t begin to measure.

Many of our interns are from the same types of communities the Sisters of Charity have been dedicated to serving for so many years. They are often the first in their family to go to college; they wait tables or work retail to pay for their books. They walk through our doors knowing that they are in something called a Motherhouse, but have no idea what that means. Every day I see their confidence grow, largely because of the generosity of Sisters who take the time to get to know and mentor them, and even on a day where everything goes wrong, that is pretty incredible.

In conjunction with National Catholic Sisters Week, the Vocation Office of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is launching its own podcast.

From March 8 to 14, Sisters around the country will tell their stories of what it means to be called to religious life. The podcast will be a new way for the Vocation Office to engage the community in this nationwide celebration. Indeed, creative social media that speaks to both the community and the public has energized the call to religious vocations.

According to a recent article in FAMVIN News, podcasting has proven to be a highly effective means of online marketing. For the Vocation Office, this means that podcasting has great potential for generating new interest, as well as informing the community of ongoing developments. Vocation’s initial podcast will be a kick-off for NCSW; it will introduce a few ideas to get the community thinking about how it might participate. Podcasting is an excellent tool for sharing ideas both large and small: in a two-minute format, a listener can pick up a lot of new information. An added benefit of listening to a podcast is its convenience. It can be done just about anywhere, with an Internet-enabled cell phone and earbuds the only requirements.

Social media has become essential to the mission of the Vocation Office. Daily posts on Facebook and Twitter are regular sources of generated interest for Vocation, which has seen a growing response to its variety of online offerings. Social media that captures wide interest, such as Vocation’s ever-popular Throwback Thursday postings, has the ability to start discussions that might not happen otherwise. There are ever-new possibilities for technology to share the stories of the Sisters of Charity, and the podcast is just one more exciting dimension.

Visit the Vocation Office on Facebook @ChooseCharityAlways and follow us on Twitter @sisterpelican.
Congratulations to Sister Margaret Tierney who received the Jack Richardson Award for 2016 from the Manasquan River Group of Artists at an art display during October/November at the Brielle Library.

In September 2016, the Hawthorne Library featured a two week Art Show. Sister Winnie Kelly entered a painting created by Sister Dorothy Mastrian (RIP) called “Saint” Mother Theresa. ( pictured left) When the committee presented the Ribbons, guess who was awarded the first place ribbon? Yes, Sister Dorothy Mastrian! Sister Winnie accepted the ribbon on her behalf.

In Memoriam

Please visit “Remember our Deceased Sisters in your Prayers” at www.SCNJ.org for reflections on the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth who died between August 15, 2016 and January 15, 2017. May our sisters enjoy the fruits of their labor as well as peace with their God.

Sister Francis Devlin
September 16

Sister Helen Gregory Cotter
September 27

Sister Mary Agnes Hanley
November 3

Sister Eileen Dolan
November 5

Sister Joseph Marie McManus
November 14

Sister Catherine Shea
November 18

Sister Mary Georgette Lingle
November 29

Sister Catherine Macaulay
December 8

Sister Anne McDonald
December 17

Sister Maureen Matthews
December 17

Sister Agnes Vincent Rueshoff
December 19

Sister Maureen Killough
December 21

Sister Monica Vinges
January 12

Miraculous Cure of his Eyesight Led to the Beatification of Blessed Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, SC in 2014

When he was just eight years old, doctors confirmed that Michael Mencer would become totally blind within a few months due to an irreversible and incurable condition brought on by bilateral juvenile macular degeneration.

His teacher, Sister Maria Augustine at St. Anastasia School in Teaneck, N.J. gave him a prayer card with a tiny relic of Sister Miriam Teresa’s hair which he remembered holding as he walked home from school. He remembered looking up at what he thought was the sun and when he looked at the prayer card and its tiny relic of hair, he saw it clearly. Somewhere between school and home, he was cured! After his miraculous cure many doctors confirmed that his vision was 20/20 and that this was medically unexplainable. After this endorsement by medical specialists, Vatican theologians validated it as a miracle attributed to Sister Miriam Teresa. Pope Francis agreed.

At the beatification of Blessed Miriam Teresa at Sacred Heart Basilica in Newark, Michael carried a reliquary containing locks of Sister Miriam Teresa’s hair - similar to the tiny clipping given to him by his teacher.

We regret to announce that Michael Mencer died in Lincoln, N.E. on December 13, 2016. He will be sadly missed.

The shrine that contains the remains of Blessed Miriam Teresa is located in Holy Family Chapel in Convent Station, N.J. If you are interested in visiting the shrine or if you would like further information about Blessed Miriam Teresa, please call 973-290-5467. Also, visit us at www.SCNJ.org and follow us on Facebook @ sistermiriamteresaleagueofprayer.
Sources of Funds Raised
Total: $2,027,826

Use of Funds Raised
Total: $2,027,826

A Time of Transition at The Villa

For so many years our sisters have enjoyed the peace, security and love that is so much a part of living at The Villa. With great gratitude we happily affirm that though the name and ownership have changed, the same spirit permeates the halls of The Villa at Florham Park. The new administration team has made it a priority to assure that the sisters are comfortable and content during this time of transition and that daily mass and loving pastoral ministry continue. The visits, cards, and concern shown by so many sisters, Seton Associates, family and friends evidence the power of community and have immeasurably helped the Villa sisters to adapt to new circumstances.

While relinquishing the administration of The Villa has eased the financial burden of operating expenses, the help of our friends and loyal supporters continues to be vital to the health care of our retired sisters, including those who reside in The Villa and those who live at the Motherhouse. Quality long-term care is a great expense borne by many families. The Sisters of Charity are a family.

The care of our retired sisters has always been and continues to be a priority for the future. In the past, your generous financial support has been an invaluable help not only to meet the needs of our sisters in the Villa but also to pay for medications, hearing aids, dental care, and other health care expenses for all our retired sisters. We look forward to your continued prayerful and financial support and, with gratitude, the Sisters of Charity promise you and your loved ones a remembrance in their daily prayers.
Once again, the highlight of the autumn season, the annual Harvest Festival, was celebrated by the Sisters of Charity and their guests at The Madison Hotel.

The Oct. 27 event was a special night honoring special people. Arlene and Gary Horan received the Caritas Award and Evlynn Jarzabek was presented with the Mehegan Award. These awards are given to persons who have demonstrated an extraordinary personal commitment to the mission of Charity. The happy faces and genuine heartfelt camaraderie that filled the Madison Hotel reflected the joy shared by all who came to celebrate these honorees.

The atrium of the hotel provided the opportunity for everyone to chat over drinks and a variety of unbelievable hors d’oeuvres. The delicious dinner, followed by dancing to the music of Tim McLoone and the Shirleys, made the Harvest Festival a night to remember.

Congratulations to Arlene, Gary and Evlynn!

We hope to see you all at the Harvest Festival in 2017. If it’s October, it’s Harvest Festival time!
Upcoming Events

Winter 50/50 Raffle
Drawing takes place on
Tuesday, February 28, 2017
There will be 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners!

Spring Lake Luncheon
Spring Lake Bath & Tennis Club
Tuesday, June 6, 2017

10th Annual Golf Outing
Echo Lake Country Club, Westfield, N.J.
Monday, June 26, 2017