

# Seton Associate Newsletter

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## **Commitment Liturgy Will Take Place Now at Feast of Elizabeth Ann Seton Mass**

Assistant General Superior Sister Marilyn Thie, S.C., who serves as the Connector between the Seton Associates and the congregation's Council, told the Seton Associate Advisory Board on March 20 that the Council has agreed to combine the Annual Seton Associate Commitment Liturgy with the Feast of Elizabeth Ann Seton Mass held each year on the first Saturday of January. Sister Marilyn's announcement came in response to a letter sent to her by Advisory Board Chair Anne Marie Civinkas saying that the Advisory Board unanimously recommended the two liturgies be merged as one. Because of Super Storm Sandy, the Commitment Liturgy scheduled for last November was postponed and took place during the Seton Feast Mass on January 5. All who attended the Mass agreed it "was beautiful and inspiring" and a more fitting time to hold the commitments. Sister Marilyn said the Council agreed.

The next Commitment Liturgy will take place on Saturday, January 4, 2014, the actual Feast Day of our patron, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

## **30 Attend Lenten Day of Reflection**

About 30 Seton Associates gathered in the Multi-Purpose Room at Saint Anne Villa on Saturday, March 2 for a Lenten Day of Reflection led by Father Terry Moran to the theme: "Savoring Lent." Father Terry proved to be an excellent retreat master as he led our members in a spiritually uplifting consideration of living the Beatitudes and to be "almond blossoms, a sign of life in the face of pain, raising hope in people's hearts." Attendees brought a gift to donate to one of the Sister of Charity ministries. Seton Associate Rita Prezioso took a carload of gifts to Sister Johanna Quinto for her Tricky Tray fundraiser to benefit St. Augustine School in Union City. Sister Maryanne Tracey filled her car's trunk with bags of food for the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless. Checks were given to support Sister Peggy O'Neill in El Salvador, Sister Magdalena Studer in New Mexico, and our Sisters in Haiti.

## **Bonnie Lynch Makes Commitment During Prayer Service**

Evelyn "Bonnie" Lynch made her Commitment as a Seton Associate in a special Commitment Prayer Service during the Convent Area Seton Associate Group Meeting on Monday, March 11 in the Multi-Purpose Room at Saint Anne Villa. General Superior Sister Rosemary Moynihan, S.C. led Bonnie in the Rite of Commitment. Bonnie was surrounded in prayer by her Sponsor Sister Carol Johnston, S.C., Assistant General Superior Sister Marilyn Thie, S.C., the Seton Associate Connector with the Council, Sister Julie Scanlan, S.C., our pioneer Director of Seton Associates, Seton Associates, and members of her band. Bonnie was away at the time of the Commitment Liturgy on January 5. Sister Julie later told the story of the Seton Associates and attendees enjoyed a luncheon celebration. About 45 people gathered the program.

## **10 Planning Trip to Paris**

As we “go to press” we have ten people practicing their French in preparation for our pilgrimage to Paris July 27-August 8 to visit many sites associated with Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Louise de Marillac and Saint Catherine Laboure, D.C. The 10 include: Fran Guastello, Jackie Crane, Mary Ann Motiuk, Catherine Wehrer, Sister Francis Cordis Bernardo, S.C., Sister Carol Ann Lockwood, S.C., Sister Margaret Tierney, S.C., Helen Relation, Linda Faucetta, and Rosemary Carroll. If you wish to join the pilgrimage, contact the Seton Associate office at 973-290-5336.

## **MSRHS Student Updates Us on *Toward Boundless Charity* Program**

We received the following report on the *Toward Boundless Charity* Program at Mother Seton Regional High School from participant Joanna Derisse: “Since the initiation and ceremony of the *Toward Boundless Charity* Program, our group has met together several times to discuss upcoming projects. We have assembled together during our lunches and right before our first classes of the school day. At our last meeting, we discussed a few different topics, one of which was a local carnival that is taking place to raise money. A few of the girls in our group will be attending the carnival. We also discussed fixed dates for our meetings, which will take place monthly. At a more recent meeting, Sister Jacqueline Balasia, S.C. distributed books to take us through the season of Lent; these books consist of prayer and reflection.”

Seton Associates Olivia Olson and John Uriarte, who oversee the ministry, and Rosemary Carroll will meet soon to discuss the on-going program. *Toward Boundless Charity* is a way of life for high school students who choose to develop their spirituality and ministers to those in need as preparation to embrace and live the charism of charity as lay adults. There are 19 participants at MSRHS.

## **Sister Elena Francis Launches Saint Anne Villa Book Club**

Sister Elena Francis Arminio, S.C. launched the Saint Anne Villa Book Club on Friday, February 22 for several Sisters and Seton Associates who participated. Meeting in the Third Floor Lounge, all discussed *The Elephant’s Journey* by José Saramago. Sister Jean Young led the discussion. The Club met again on Friday, March 22 to discuss *The Ragamuffin’s Gospel*. The final session is set for Friday, April 19 to review *Silent Night* by Mary Higgins Clark.

The Seton Associate budget underwrote the purchase of eight copies of each book for the Sisters in the Villa.

## **DVD on Saint Vincent de Paul Sent to Area Groups**

We purchased copies of “Charity’s Saint,” a 63-minute DVD that provides an historic look at Saint Vincent de Paul, and distributed one to each Seton Associate group to own and to show/discuss at an upcoming meeting or lend to members to view at home. We sent a copy in Spanish to Sister Peggy O’Neill in Suchitoto, El Salvador for our three Seton Associates there and to share with others members of her community.

## **Convent Group Associates Host Musical Medley for Josephine's Place**

The Convent Area Seton Associates will host their third annual fundraiser to benefit Josephine's Place with a reception and musical medley at the Cedar Hill Golf and Country Club in Livingston on Sunday, April 14 from 3 to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$75 per person. This is always a delightful afternoon, the setting lovely and serene, and the hors d'oeuvres exceptional. Best of all is the wonderful gathering and conversations of Sisters, Seton Associates and guests all to benefit the women and programs of Josephine's Place, a space for women. Send your reservation to Josephine's Place, 622 Elizabeth Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey 07206.

## **Sister Rosemary Sends Note of Thanks**

General Superior Sister Rosemary Moynihan, S.C. sent a note of appreciation to Seton Associates for the flowers and many cards sent to her during her recent recuperation from knee replacement surgery:

“Dear Rosemary and Seton Associates,  
Your beautiful roses and many warm and supportive cards were tremendously helpful during my recovery. You are so wonderful – gifts from God to me and to all the Sisters of Charity. Please know that you remain especially in my prayers. Many blessings and love,

Sister Rosemary”

## **Mississippi Associates Seeking to Make Lifetime Commitments**

Seton Associates in Mississippi expressed a desire to become Lifetime Seton Associates and are getting ready to submit Letters of Intention. We are in discussion with the area facilitator Carlos Ann Sanders to assist the members in the process. Sister Marilyn Thie and Rosemary Carroll will travel to Mississippi once all of the requirements are fulfilled (letters and approval by the General Superior and Council) to lead the members in a Lifetime Commitment Service.

## **Facilitators Provide Updates on Area Meetings**

- 1. Paterson/Passaic/Essex**, under the leadership of Judy Rosenberg, met recently at the rectory of Seton Associate Rev. Jim Manos in Fairfield. Among the many topics discussed were call to ministry, the election of a new pope, and changes in the church. The group will meet again for its annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Prayer Service at the home of Jim and Mary Smith on March 14. Mary and Jim outdid themselves!
- 2. Hudson/Jersey City** Seton Associates, led by Pat Lynch, met on Thursday, March 21 at the home of Lucille Sproules in Bayonne at 7 p.m. for a prayer service that concentrated on our call to serve the poor.

3. **Convent Area Group**, facilitated by Mary Ann Burgess Motiuk, met on January 14 and the guest speaker was Sister Anita Constance, S.C., who spoke on “Gratitude.” The Group met again on March 11 for the Commitment of Bonnie Lynch and a celebration. They will meet May 13 and the guest speaker will be Sister Barbara Conroy, S.C. The members will gather at Mary Ann’s home in July for their annual picnic.
4. **Morristown Area** (evening group) Seton Associates, led by Jeanne Nicholls, met on February 6 at Xavier Center for a meeting followed by a Taisé Prayer Service in the Chapel. They will meet again on April 3 at Saint Anne Villa.
5. **Monmouth/Ocean** group, directed by Carol Ernst Thrun, met on February 13 and March 13 at Saint Catharine’s Convent in Spring Lake. Carol has been instructing the members in *Lectio Divina* and leading them in Scripture readings and discussion. The group sends donations every month to the Sisters in Princess Anne, Maryland.
6. **New Haven (CT)** Seton Associates, led by Lisa Guerrieri, met on November 28 in the Community Room at Sister Ann Matthew’s residence for the best New Haven pizza and to hear Chaplain Barbara Morrison, RN, M.Div. discuss “Faith – Our Own Personal Journey.” The group plans to meet again this spring.
7. **Trenton Area** Seton Associates, led by Jacqueline Crane and Carmela Smith, met in January for a pot luck dinner and prayer service and on March 17 for a prayer service and discussion of “what’s going on in the world.” The group will meet in July for its annual swim party and picnic.
8. **Boston Area** Seton Associates, directed by Mildred Greenler, are hoping to meet in late April to view and discuss the DVD on Saint Vincent de Paul.
9. **Mississippi Seton Associates**, led by Carlos Ann Sanders, work as a group in serving the poor. Member Christie Wilson of Amory sent the following email on February 8, 2013:

“A group of about 30 women from northeast Mississippi converged on the Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman, AL, the first weekend of February for our annual women’s retreat. Led by Sisters of Charity Kathy Quigley and Marie Gilligan, the retreat’s theme was “Soul Light Shine Bright.” Most of the women who attended the retreat are Seton Associates who have forged a lasting and committed relationship with the Sisters of Charity.

“The Mississippi Setons live 1,068 miles away from the Sisters of Charity Motherhouse and it is not logistically possible for them to attend regular Seton Associate gatherings in New Jersey. That is why the annual women’s retreat is so vital to helping them keep their soul lights burning bright.

“This year’s retreat emphasized the fact that there are many Marys in our midst. Women also are called by God to say “yes.” The retreat looked not only at Mary’s annunciation, but at each person’s own annunciation or soul announcement to go out into the world and be God’s light to others. Using Scripture, art, song, meditation and dance, the retreat gave the women time to analyze their lives and to rekindle the fervor needed to answer God’s call.

“Many of the Seton Associates who participated in this retreat are doing incredible works in their community. Several are working in the Armory Food Pantry, some with Meals on Wheels, others visiting the sick, lonely and elderly.

“The food pantry ministry was started in Amory years ago by Sisters Kathy and Marie and is now run totally by lay volunteers. What started out as a small operation has turned into a major ministry of serving the poor. It takes nearly 25 volunteers on Tuesdays to distribute food from the pantry. This year it fed more than 17,000 people. In a typical week, about 130 families seek food there. Literally tons of food passes through its doors and the Seton Associates are there screening the clients who turn to it for help, filling the grocery bags with food, ordering food, stocking shelves, cleaning and doing everything it takes to feed hungry people on an increasingly large scale.

“The Associates also have enlisted the help of their husbands at the food pantry to do the heavy lifting! This food pantry has evolved into more than a nutritional program. The Setons pray for each person who turns to the pantry for assistance and often steer them towards other help they need, depending on their circumstances. The Seton Associates are feeling led to counsel the poor and to look into their hearts, while also providing them food for their families.

“Serving the poor is no easy task. The work can take its toll and volunteers can find their lights going dim with the stresses of finding more money, more food and more laborers for the pantry. However, the women’s retreat rekindles the flame in the Setons and empowers them to go out and make an even bigger difference in lives. Mississippi is a place with many opportunities for serving the poor. Poverty is abundant.

“The women’s retreat allows this group of women to be among other like-minded women in a sacred space and to share one another’s love for God.

“The Mississippi Seton Associates are forever grateful for the Sisters of Charity and for their generosity in tending to the spiritual needs of women in Mississippi. Sisters Kathy and Marie continue to feed the spirits here and allow the Associates here to shine brighter.”

### **Upcoming Events for Seton Associates**

Thursday, June 20 – Annual Seton Associate Picnic, 5 – 8 p.m. on the Motherhouse Patio

Wednesday, June 26 – Annual Memorial Mass for Deceased Seton Associates, 6:30 p.m. in Saint Anne Villa Chapel.

October 11 – 13 – Annual Seton Associate Retreat at Maris Stella

\*\*\* Please note that the dates for the Picnic and Memorial Mass have been changed. The Picnic was set for June 6 but the Development Department made plans for a Luncheon in Spring Lake for that date and we want to be sure Sister Rosemary Moynihan and members of the Council are available for our Picnic. The Mass was moved one week so that the Mass and Picnic are not in the same week.

**And in the end...**

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton gives us the perfect prayer for our Holy Week meditation: “Oh my God, *forgive* what I have been, *correct* what I am, and *direct* what I shall be.”