



JUST Love



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH

2018 Mother Xavier Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity Award

Every year at the Fall Congregation Day, the SC Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity Committee confers the Mother Xavier Award on a sister, Seton Associate, or partner in mission who exemplifies the “conviction that a life of charity requires a faith that does justice,” (*Toward Boundless Charity*, C20). The recipient demonstrates a notable commitment to the values of peace, justice and ecological integrity and the Vincentian focus on systemic change of unjust structures. This year we were pleased to confer the award on Jean Semler and her husband David Thelen for their work with an organization they founded *ChangeALife Uganda* <http://changealifeuganda.org/>. *ChangeALife Uganda* is dedicated to improving the lives of orphaned and disadvantaged children and their families in Migyera and Nabbingo, Uganda through quality education, healthcare and income-generating programs. We are delighted that through the work of Jean and David, the charisma of Boundless Charity reaches to Uganda!



left to right, David Thelen, Jean Semler,
Fr. Terrence Moran, Sr. Roberta Feil,
Sr. Rosemary Moynihan

Living Our Public Stand on Climate Change/Global Warming

In 2015, after a Congregation-wide process of reflection, study, and prayer, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth took a Public Stand on Climate Change/Global Warming <https://www.scnj.org/images/justicepeace/globalwarmingpostcard.pdf> Sister Jacquelyn Balasia reports on how the students at Mother Seton Regional High School in Clark, NJ are learning “a life of reverence for the sacredness of Earth.”

Farm to Table Garden at Mother Seton Regional High School



Mother Seton Regional High School is the proud recipient of a Union County Kids Dig In! Grant Award for 2018! This was a part of the 2018 Moving Union

County worked with Groundwork Elizabeth to facilitate these gardens. Through Union County and Groundwork Elizabeth, Mother Seton Regional High School received four raised beds in which to grow a variety of produce, namely squash, cucumbers, kale, eggplant, tomatoes, ground cherries, peppers, thyme, rosemary, lavender, basil, and milkweed. These have produced bountiful harvests that continue to provide hands-on education in horticulture, farm to table,



Forward “Plant a Seed” Chairman’s initiative. Mrs. Carolyn DeMaio, Family and Consumer Science and Health teacher, attended a kickoff meeting in May, 2018, to officially receive the grant from Freeholder Sergio Granados.

environmental awareness and giving, as over 45 pounds of our harvests were donated to St. Joseph's soup kitchen in Elizabeth. Now that it is fall, new vegetables such as lettuce and radishes will be planted!

This was also a dream come true for senior Mikaela Orange. Mikaela had a wish for MSR to "Go Green," which she shared with Sr. Jacquelyn. Little did she know that Mrs. DeMaio had just received the application for the Garden Grant. What an opportunity for Mikaela and MSR to share their passions and goods with our school community and that of St. Joseph's! Mikaela also wanted ensure that Sr. Jacquelyn used fresh basil from the garden when she made the sauce for the Junior-Senior Retreat! (Of course she had already planned for that!)

Stopping Climate Change is Hopeless. Let's Do It!

A most provocative title for an op-ed piece in the New York Times by Auden Schendler and Andrew Jones (Read the whole piece here <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/06/opinion/sunday/climate-change-global-warming.html>) It calls each of us to something that religious people are very familiar with – a daily practice of ecological virtue:

"To save civilization, most of us would need to supplement our standard daily practices — eating, caring for family and community, faith — with a steady push on the big forces that are restraining progress, the most prominent being the fossil fuel industry's co-optation of government, education, science and media.

This practice starts with a deep understanding of the problem, so it will mean reading a little about climate science. Our actions must be to scale, so while we undertake individual steps in our lives, like retrofitting light bulbs, we must realize that real progress comes from voting, running for office, marching in protest, writing letters, and uncomfortable but respectful conversations with fathers-in-law. This work must be habitual. Every day some learning and conversation. Every week a call to Congress. Every year a donation to a nonprofit advancing the cause. In other words, a practice."



For the many SCs and Seton Associates in the Madison, NJ area: The Madison YMCA has partnered with TerraCycle to collect hard to recycle waste, e.g. Brita pitchers and filters, toothbrushes, floss containers, toothpaste tubes, deodorant containers, glass and plastic vitamin bottles and much more. Check out this link for details: <https://www.madisonareaymca.org/about-us/announcements/2015/07/30/recycle-with-us>

1 All Saints Day "I like to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God's people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile. In their daily perseverance I see the holiness of the Church militant. Very often it is a holiness found in our next-door neighbors, those who, living in our midst, reflect God's presence." Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 7.

3 St. Martin de Porres, Patron of Social Justice and Inter-racial reconciliation

13 St. Frances Cabrini, "My thoughts run to our many immigrants who arrive annually on the shores of the Atlantic, moving into the already overcrowded cities



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of the East, and there they encounter many difficulties and meager wages. In our small sphere we are helping to solve important social problems."

19 World Toilet Day Learn how good sanitation is a way to social justice <http://www.worldtoiletday.info/wtd2018/>

22 Thanksgiving – Make this a day to educate yourself about indigenous rights. Educate yourself by reading Vine Deloria's 1969 *Custer Died for Your Sins*, or Dunbar Ortiz's *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, or Dee Brown's classic *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*.

25 Feast of Christ, King of the Cosmos, "Christ has a cosmic body that extends throughout the universe." Teilhard de Chardin