Dear All,

The theme of this month’s NEW Dimensions is Healthcare. National Healthcare Reform efforts are highlighting the limitations and problems in the existing programs and the serious difficulties in changing such a complex system. The broad, complex dimensions of healthcare touch almost every aspect of our lives, impacting the physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of individuals, families, and the common good.

This issue of NEW Dimensions provides several snapshots of our diverse, collaborative healthcare ministries in which sisters, associates and colleagues in the Mission touch the lives of others and participate in making God’s love known in the world. You will learn about sisters in various urban and rural healthcare works. Seton Associates reflect on their commitment to the Mission, one as a physician in urban practice caring for those most in need, and another by bringing her expertise in finance to the Sisters of Charity fundraising efforts. From a different venue, a Partner in the Mission of Charity speaks about the continuation of the Mission through the integration of one of our hospitals with a large university medical center.

There are countless possibilities to do God’s work in healthcare. We believe it is important to continually listen to those most in need and to probe our own individual and congregational commitments to respond as fully as possible in this critical ministry. As an example of such consideration, four sisters reflect on how their unique works foster human dignity and embody their commitment as Sisters of Charity.

Please continue to pray for all of us in the Company of Charity as we do for you.

Many blessings,

Sister Rosemary Moynihan - General Superior

On the cover:
Sister Kathryn Clementz visits 16-month old Sarah as her mother, Linneda, looks on.
Many years ago Sister Anne Virginie Grimes, SC, wrote:

“In the past, the question was ‘Is there a need here?’ Today, the question has become, ‘Is the need in this particular place greater?’”

In some ways, that was the question that brought Sister Ellen Farrell from New Jersey to the rural, underserved area of Virginia’s Eastern Shore. Sister Ellen has ministered as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner for more than 30 years, providing medical care to vulnerable children. Her experiences have included a wide cross-section of health care for children from Pediatric Intensive Care to Primary Health Care and many venues in between.

At the heart of all her professional ministries, a constant has been her love for children and their wellbeing. She is tireless in doing everything possible to respect them, heal them and build their self-esteem. There is remarkable diversity and need in the patients Sister Ellen cares for daily. It includes the local rural population, Hispanic and Haitian children, and migrant farmworker children. Each group has its own unique set of health and wellness issues and realities.

Overcoming the barriers to good health experienced by these children and their families is a challenge that Sister Ellen meets each day. Her patients must handle issues like poverty, resources, language, transportation and cultural differences. Creativity in overcoming such barriers is a part of her everyday activity. Over these years, Sister Ellen has treated generations within some families. She has the longest tenure on staff at the Franklin Community Health Center and is a significant person in providing continuity and delivering much needed care.

Bringing the Charism of Charity to her place of ministry involves a 65-mile trip each day to the Center in Franktown, Va. This is done with a steady calm and seeming ease. Her caring professionalism, experience and attention to detail benefit many. Her presence in Franktown is another example of how our Mission continues in many places by committed Sisters of Charity, Seton Associates and our valued lay co-workers.
As an infusion service nurse at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Paterson, NJ, Sister Madeline Fahey cares for adults who need chemotherapy. Sister Madeline has seen a lot of change during her 30 years at the medical center, but one thing at “St. Joe’s” hasn’t changed – the respect shown to each patient.

“The pace is rapid, the drugs are potent, and the patients are vulnerable. I’m humbled by the response of the patients. They are grateful for the slightest deed done on their behalf because they know the staff at SJRMC cares about them.”

When she began, Sister Madeline says, “The pace was a bit slower. There were many Sisters of Charity on staff who visited patients at their bedsides. Some were patient advocates, while others were physicians or nurses, but we all understood the human person in four interrelated ways – biological, psychological, social and spiritual. Patients looked forward to having the sisters visit them because they recognized that they were respected as human beings.”

Sister Madeline recalls with gratitude Sister Jane Frances Brady, the former president and CEO of the medical center, “who impressed me with her intolerance for anything but total respect for each patient. She taught me so much about the God-given dignity of each person. That spirit continues today as the glue that keeps the patients and staff coming to St. Joseph.”
As she travels from one end of Essex County, New Jersey, to the next, Sister Kathy Clementz, a visiting nurse employed by Barnabas Health Home Care, provides nursing care in her patients' homes to adults and children.

“I’ve come to see this as truly the work of Sts. Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac in France and later Mother Seton in the U.S. By treating patients in their homes, you have a strong sense of the patients' needs and not all of them are medical needs.”

Sister Kathy notes that her younger co-workers often will ask her to see a patient receiving palliative or hospice care near the end of life. Sister Kathy is able to reassure a frightened patient that she or he is on a journey to the God of love.

Sister Kathy has a strong love for her pediatric patients with special needs. In addition to providing medical care for a child, she works with the parents, educating them, providing support and reassurance, and encouraging them to become advocates for their child, to see that the child’s needs are being met. She encourages families to come together so the children can play with one another and the parents can support others in a similar situation. Thanks to a ministry grant from the Sisters of Charity, Sister Kathy has been able to supply formula, playpens, and clothes for the poorer children.

“I’ve even provided stethoscopes so parents learn to listen for ‘lung sounds’ that will catch a respiratory problem early. If left untreated the child might be placed on a ventilator. This way the child continues to develop without backsliding.”

She has been visiting Sarah (cover photo), a 16-month old who has feeding and swallowing issues. She cannot take oral feedings, so receives formula from a gastronomy tube into her stomach. As a result, she is prone to bouts of bronchitis and pneumonia. Sister Kathy is teaching Sarah’s parents to listen to “lung sounds” – normal/clear vs. congested, so they can give her nebulizer treatments and take her to the doctor to prevent pneumonia. Sister Kathy has been able to help Sarah’s parents feel more at ease in their caring for Sarah and, in turn, that has been making Sarah feel more comfortable.

*Sister Kathy gears up for another home visit.*
Think of the main street of your town or city: the shops and businesses you pass each day – beauty and nail salons, restaurants, children selling candy in front of stores. Did it ever occur to you that you may have seen a victim of human trafficking there?

Slavery is not a 19th-century past reality but a contemporary industry. The transferring of people for purposes of sexual abuse is the most obvious example. But many of the cheap goods that we import and buy were produced by people in situations of forced labor, often children.

Seton Associate-in-formation Leslie Penny gives voice to the shock many people feel on hearing about human trafficking for the first time. “I had no idea how widespread and insidious this whole nightmare of a situation was. It became clearly apparent to me how great the need was to step in and do whatever small part, besides prayer, that is humanly possible to do to help these poor people.”

Studies show that there is often an uptick in human trafficking around major sports events. With Super Bowl 2014 coming to the New Jersey Meadowlands, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are working with other religious congregations and civic groups in the tri-state area to raise consciousness about the realities of modern day slavery. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are members and active participants in the New Jersey Coalition against Human Trafficking (www.njhumantrafficking.org). Sister Patricia Mennor remarks, “I am truly inspired and grateful to be part of a religious community that is committed to working with others on various anti-trafficking projects targeted towards the 2014 Super Bowl.”

A number of sisters and Seton Associates have received training from the AMISTAD program sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to help new immigrants recognize and respond to trafficking in their communities. The Congregation Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity has produced a card with a prayer against human trafficking, trafficking facts and a hotline number. These cards, available in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole, will be made available in Sister of Charity ministries as an information and advocacy tool.

In addition to advocating for victims of trafficking, the Sisters of Charity are working to eliminate trafficking at the source. Sister Barbara Aires, in her work with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (www.iccr.org), engages with corporations to ensure that their goods and services are not products of trafficked workers. Through the hard work of its member Catholic Health East, ICCR was invited to place its ad “Abolishing Slavery and Trafficking is Everyone’s Responsibility” in US Airways’ in-flight magazine, seen by millions of travelers.

The Sisters of Charity and Seton Associates see the fight against human trafficking as a way to live the gospel call of Jesus, “to proclaim release to the captives, to let the oppressed go free.” If you would like to join with us in the fight against human trafficking, contact the Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity at tmoran@scnj.org or visit www.SCNJ.org.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING:
MODERN DAY SLAVERY

By Fr. Terrence Moran, Director of the Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity
“In each generation, the Sisters of Charity have found ways to incarnate Charity in our world. Invigorated by our renewed sense of mission we take up the task anew.”

In reflecting on these words and the Sisters of Charity I have known, I realize that a strong sense of mission impelled them over their years of service. Sisters who have served, or are serving in the healthcare ministry, have experienced many changes. But I believe that through all these changes they have found creative ways of continuing to incarnate Charity through the years.

Now we have many more sisters serving in volunteer capacities than in the past. In our healthcare institutions and in others, sister volunteers give varied services. Some of these women have served in healthcare for years. Others have ministered in education or other fields. Now they find new ways to incarnate Charity- probably not in direct patient care, but in the many tasks necessary for providing service to the patients or residents.

Here are just a few examples. At the Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Elderly in Totowa, Sister Clare Mary Roden, formerly a parish pastoral minister, helps in the chapel, assists with feeding disabled residents in the Infirmary Dining Room, and visits residents. Several sisters and Seton Associates volunteer at St. Anne Villa. Besides visiting and assisting with feeding residents where needed, the sisters and associates are able to assist with some special needs, as well as with the Pastoral Care Department. Other sisters and Seton Associates serve at St. Vincent Nursing Home in Cedar Grove, providing services like those at the Villa. Two sisters provide service to St. Vincent’s from their place of residence – one caring for linens used at Mass, the other visiting residents via telephone, as well as caring for Mass linens at St. Joseph Hospital.

Now we have many more sisters serving in volunteer capacities than in the past

Sisters also volunteer at Trinitas Regional Medical Center in Elizabeth, St. Mary’s Hospital in Passaic, and at St. Joseph’s Medical Center in Paterson. They provide varied services including visiting patients, spending time with families waiting for news of a loved one’s condition, or helping in offices.

Sister Mary Patricia Hooper started her ministry as a teacher. But, as several sisters did if they had a summer vacation or some free time, she volunteered at St. Raphael Hospital in New Haven and elsewhere. Sisters serving in the hospital would note that the “school Sister” was there to help out. Later Sister Mary Patricia became a nurse and served as a hospital nurse until she ministered as a school nurse in Linden. More recently she began volunteering as a school nurse in St. Vincent Academy, Newark.

As you can see, volunteering is alive and well in the healthcare field. New ways of incarnating Charity continue to unfold.
Charity Afire
by Sister Noreen Neary

Let the footsteps of the past create an understanding of today’s journey.

The theme of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton is carried through in its new exhibit, Charity Afire, which opened on June 28 in Emmitsburg, Md. Commemorating the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War, it is a testimony to the service and compassion shown to Civil War soldiers by Mother Seton’s daughters. The Daughters of Charity and five congregations of Sisters of Charity cared for the soldiers of the Union and Confederate armies, meeting both their medical and spiritual needs.

While our early history is somewhat sparse, the three volume history of the congregation by Sister Mary Agnes Sharkey, S.C., describes how our sisters cared for soldiers in both Newark and Trenton. In the center of the new exhibit is a map of the USA, displaying the presence of Daughters and Sisters and we are represented in the two cities. Included in the exhibit is an excerpt from The New Jersey Sisters of Charity (Volume I, p.106) that describes Sister Anne Vincent Hartigan’s efforts to relieve the distress of the soldiers in Trenton:

Sister Anne Vincent…was something of a cobbler in those days, and mended more than one pair of boots for the soldiers. Nor did her usefulness stop with attention to footgear, for frequently, after having tidied up the hospital shack as required, she took a razor and an old strop and went along the line of wounded-laden cots as if it were a tonsorial parlor, and skillfully shaved the men and cut their shaggy hair. No electrical appliances, no fancy shampoo, no massage treatment, no scientific dryers in those matter-of-fact days, just the tender heart of a woman, the sympathy of a child, the hand of a nurse, and the courageous spirit motivating loving labors of a real Sister of Charity, become for the nonce a true soldier of Christ.

Congregational leadership – both past and present – was represented at the opening in Emmitsburg, Md. While Mother Mary Xavier is included in a display of the founders/ foundresses of the six congregations, Sister Deborah Humphreys, councilor, opened the exhibit with a ribbon-cutting ceremony; she was joined by Sister Donna Geernaert, Congregational Leader of the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, and Sister Clarisse Correia, Daughters of Charity of Saint Louise.

More information about the shrine and the exhibit can be found by calling 301-447-6606 or at www.setonheritage.org/projects/civil-war-project.
Dr. Lee Perlmutter calls herself a “dinosaur” – one of a dying breed of primary care physicians in solo practice. She has been a teacher at New York Medical College and New Jersey University of Medicine and Dentistry, a researcher in AIDS medications, medical director of a center for HIV care, and caregiver to thousands. An internal medicine specialist, she currently cares for the developmentally disabled, those with HIV disease, the mentally ill, and the frail elderly in Hudson County, New Jersey.

Q: You have been practicing medicine for more than 30 years. What has changed for the better?
A: Thanks to new technologies, such as magnetic imaging, PET scans, angiography, complex blood tests and genetic tests, we can “see” disease early enough to provide successful treatment. With minimally invasive surgery, we treat everything from heart valve replacement, to debulking herniated discs, to removal of diseased appendices and gallbladders via tiny incisions. New treatments for diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, multiple sclerosis and HIV, that are not yet curable, have enabled those afflicted to lead full, long, and satisfying lives.

Q: What has changed for the worse?
A: On the downside, medicine has been changed from its charitable roots into a profit-making industry. The United States spends more per person on health care with poorer results than most other developed countries. More hospitals, nursing homes, homecare agencies, dialysis centers, and even hospice programs have been bought up by for-profit organizations. We have a dysfunctional and wasteful system of private health insurance for those who can afford it and an overwhelmed and underfunded system of Medicaid for the poor. Medicare falls somewhere in-between.

We are losing the art of therapeutic touch and listening in caregiving. Placing one’s hand on an ailing body and listening to the broken-hearted conveys concern, care, determination, caritas.

Q: If you could make one change, what would it be?
A: I hope and pray for two changes: a new health care system in our country that would be a universal, single-payer plan, similar to Medicare, and that everyone in the world could share in the medical achievements of the richest, most advanced countries.

Q: How do you foster human dignity in your practice?
A: The physician-patient relationship is unique. Patients get undressed for their doctors, tell them things they would never tell another, and trust them with their lives. It is the respect we show patients that allows this access. I show concern, fully discuss findings, and allow them to make the ultimate decisions regarding their care. I treat them as I would want my mother, brother or child to be treated.

Q: What keeps you going?
A: I love my work. It is a calling. The ability to heal is a gift, meant to be given to others. Once as an intern, exhausted, I listened to a patient’s story of struggle, loss and hardship. I forgot how tired I was. I saw another person in great need and it was a privilege to help him. It was a moment of grace for me and it has kept me going for more than 30 years.

Q: How do you pray?
A: I relate to Jesus, the full, total, and complete expression of God’s overflowing love for us. Sometimes prayer changes things, but usually prayer changes us. So I carry on a running conversation with Jesus as I go about my day. This gives me strength and direction as I try to respond to God’s call. We must love not just those who are attentive, cooperative, and appreciative, we must also love the unlovely and the unlovable. That is our heroic call. In the words of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton: “The charity of our blessed Lord in the course of his ministry had these distinct qualities which should be the model of our conduct. It was gentle, benevolent, and universal.”

Dr. Perlmutter makes a housecall to Florence, who is always so happy to see her.
I am a Psychiatric Adult Advanced Practice Nurse at Project Live Inc., a Supportive Housing Program. My professional role is to prescribe medications, complete psychiatric evaluations and offer psychotherapy when it is needed. Most of my patients are diagnosed with Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, Major Depression, and Dual Diagnosis (Mental Illness and Substance Abuse). To focus on the human dignity of the person, I have forefront in my mind that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. Every human being has the inherent right to be treated with respect, compassion and empathy.

My first role, before I sit down with the patient to complete any of my professional roles, is to focus on the human dignity of this person rather than the symptoms of the medical entity. I am not with the patients to put labels on them; I am here to empower each person with positive self-regard no matter where he/she is in the journey of life, living with certain disabilities. It is my responsibility, as a nurse and as a Sister of Charity, to meet persons where they are, at this particular moment. Yes, of course my professional role is to improve the person’s quality of life by drawing on my expertise, but I must first focus on exhibiting charity to this person or persons. Having the ability to offer a personal touch of love and care is crucial. Many of these people have experienced rejection from their families, friends and society, so it is essential for them to feel special in our relationship; otherwise, it wouldn’t be therapeutic for them. If it is therapeutic, the persons will eventually feel they are okay, they are good enough, and they don’t need to be perfect; they will have self-worth. This doesn’t happen overnight and sometimes it fails, but the most important aspect for me is to never give up ministering to these people. These patients are all too familiar with others giving up on them.

Fifty-seven years ago I felt called to be a Sister of Charity. I was originally motivated to be a teacher and principal, but then empowered to healthcare in taking care of the elderly. I was inspired by our founders St. Elizabeth Seton and St. Vincent De Paul to serve the poor. I am still in the ministry of healthcare, but it is who comes home at the end of the day, having been enriched by the people whom I serve. I am enthused everyday to go to my place of service because the men and women give meaning to my life and my ministry.

In 2004, after Mt. St. Andrew, Paramus closed after 113 years of serving the terminally ill and aged, and where I had been for 23 years as administrator, I continued to do what I had done before its closing. I moved to St. Vincent Nursing Home, Cedar Grove, part of St. Joseph’s Hospital Pastoral Care, Paterson, and continued what enlightens my life – “the privilege of giving meaning to the elderly” as they find joy in being alive from the care started by our sisters and continued by the followers of our traditions, to live life to the fullest with love and respect and with dignity as the human beings they are with the peace and comfort they deserve.

Sister Jo Ann Bromley
Part-time Coordinator of Volunteers
St. Vincent Nursing Home, Cedar Grove, NJ
There is a slogan that is used often in the hospital: “Not just healthcare but human care.”

Caring for others has always been a value of mine. As a young girl growing up in Salem, Mass., I recognized in others the importance of treating people, not only fairly and justly as I was taught at home, but also to notice those who might be of a different religion or culture and realizing that all must be treated as God’s children.

Because I work with an urban population, immigrants have always been a part of my ministry. As a young girl, I chose Mother Cabrini as one of my “models.” Much closer to home were the Sisters of Charity whose “humanness and care of the poor” were the true motivation for my becoming a sister.

After spending most of my life working in traditional educational settings, I took the risk, as many of us do today, to use school skills in a hospital setting. Working at St. Mary’s Hospital in Passaic as the Director of Community Outreach, I have realized that health is defined as a quality of mind, body and spirit, and the thinking “an ounce of prevention...” means more today than ever. In many ways the work of Community Outreach can be compared to the schools without walls. We think of ourselves as ministering in a hospital without walls.

The work of the department in the promotion of developing good health habits is truly the work of the Church. We embrace the Vincentian way of going out to the people of Passaic and the surrounding areas. As a member of the Community Health Needs Assessment team, I was able to network with community leaders. When the task was completed under the leadership of Sister Marion Scranton, I seized the opportunity to re-form that group into a new community advisory group that meets monthly. This group takes the findings of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and makes every effort to respond to the unmet needs that have surfaced.

“What children of the church” ~ Mother Seton’s prayer is on my lips daily. What we do with and for the people we serve is a work of the church. We believe that strengthening families and the role of the mothers, most especially witnessed in the Madre á Madre program, are our most effective outreach programs. We have worked with mothers in four local churches. This program is in many ways the heartbeat of our ministry. Many of these women will become health promoters (promotoeres de salud). I learn with them. My work for the church is a blessing.

Sister Anne Marie Moroney

Director of Community Outreach
St. Mary’s Hospital, Passaic, NJ

Each morning I say a prayer that includes the following:

“Lord, be with me in my dealings with each soul with whom I come in contact today. And grant that each may know, love and serve you better for having passed me by.”

This has much meaning for me as a Sister of Charity. I believe my ministry at St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center in Paterson is a ministry of presence.

Healthwise, I can do nothing for the many patients who come to the Emergency Room, but I can help to ease their anxiety and stress in some small ways as the nurses and doctors care for them. Small ways are listening to the patients, talking and praying with them, getting them a warm blanket, if cold, asking a nurse to visit a patient who feels neglected, and bringing food to those who are allowed to eat. Sometimes all it takes is holding a patient’s hand or giving a hug when requested, but always with a smile.

Sister Lawrence Mahon

Emergency Room Patient Advocate
St. Joseph’s Regional Medical Center, Paterson, NJ
If the future of the Sisters of Charity rests with friends like Maria Cianci, then that future is bright indeed.

Maria is a graduate of the College of Saint Elizabeth, a Seton Associate, and an active member of the Sisters of Charity Development Advisory Board. She is passionately committed to furthering the mission of the Sisters of Charity and giving back to help those sisters who selflessly give to others.

Maria began her association with women religious when she entered Holy Family School in Florham Park. As a first-generation American, Maria spoke little English when she began kindergarten. The sisters gave Maria extra attention, affirming and welcoming her while helping her to learn a new language. “My teacher kept saying to me, ‘You’re going to be proud one day that you have two languages under your belt,’ and to this day, I’m very proud of having two languages.”

Maria also acknowledges that the sisters were demanding and exacting teachers, for which she is now grateful. “People say I have beautiful penmanship, but if the sisters hadn’t insisted that I follow the rules, I wouldn’t have that. That’s just a very small example of what was instilled in me by the sisters.”
When it came time to look at colleges, Maria chose the College of Saint Elizabeth. She stresses that it was her decision, not that of her parents, and that it is one of the best decisions she ever made. Maria’s education at the College of Saint Elizabeth, culminating in a degree in finance, prepared her for a highly successful career in banking. She developed particularly meaningful relationships with her advisor and professor, the late Sister Mary Kapinos, and also her beloved professor and mentor, Sister Elena Francis Arminio.

Upon graduation from the College of Saint Elizabeth, Maria rapidly moved up the corporate ladder in banking. Currently, she is Vice President of Private Banking at Two River Community Bank. As Maria’s career progressed, she stayed in touch with the sisters, often inviting them to professional and social events. She found that she was always telling people about the Sisters of Charity. “When I talk to people about the Sisters of Charity, the first thing I talk about is the missions. Many people do not know about all the missions and causes that the sisters support. They may only think of the sisters as teachers and I tell them about all the other missions that the sisters keep continuing. People need to know about these selfless women who do so much.”

In her time outside of work, Maria started visiting the elderly sisters who live in Saint Anne Villa. “I draw so much strength from them. They are amazing.” She also became very active with other volunteer work, including a continuing commitment to read to and visit with children at Children’s Specialized Hospital.

Maria’s personal dedication to service and her connection with the Sisters of Charity made it almost natural for her to become a Seton Associate. “I actually never knew who the Seton Associates were until Sister Elena sat down to explain them to me and to tell me that I was a perfect candidate.” With Sister Elena as her sponsor, Maria has now been a Seton Associate for five years. She will soon make a lifetime commitment to the Seton Associates.

I’m so grateful to have the Sisters of Charity in my life. I say all the time that the sisters are truly my second family.

Though Maria’s busy schedule of work and volunteer activities keeps her constantly on the go, she makes it a priority to spend time with family and friends. “I’m so grateful for my parents.” With family and friends, she enjoys traveling, gardening, cooking, antiquing, golfing, swimming, and biking.

Maria says, “I thank God every day for what I have and I try to give back by doing something every day for other people. I’m so grateful to have the Sisters of Charity in my life. I say all the time that the sisters are truly my second family. I adore them, I am inspired by them, and I pray for them and with them.” She says that she has been particularly blessed to have Sister Rose Vincent De Prinzio, as her prayer partner.

She feels strongly that her generation needs to come forward to help the sisters. “My generation needs to know that the future depends on us. The sisters have given so much of themselves without any expectation back – you don’t realize that at the time. Giving back, or volunteering some time, is the nicest way to say thank you to them for all they have given.”

Maria wants people to know “there are many causes out there for which you can give money but not really know where it goes. When you give to the Sisters of Charity, you can see it, feel it, and touch it.”
Spring Lake Luncheon

Friends of the Sisters of Charity had a wonderful time on June 6 at the annual Spring Lake Luncheon. This event was held at the Spring Lake Bath and Tennis Club.

We were delighted that this year’s guest speaker was Sister Francis Raftery. Sister Francis spoke on “Great Women in Our Midst,” recounting stories about the inspiring and sometimes unlikely people who make an impact on our lives. All the guests marveled at her humor and insights. We especially appreciated that Sister Francis accepted the invitation to speak on the same day that the College of Saint Elizabeth had an evening event to honor her upon her retirement as College President. Thank you and best wishes as you embark upon new adventures, Sister Francis!

Top: (l to r) Michael Romeo and Jean Romeo and Sister Francis Raftery
Middle: Sister Francis entertaining her audience.
Bottom: (l to r) Patricia Begley Thelander, Sister Rosemary Moynihan, Alix Ann Arlinghaus, Sister Geraldine O’Brien and Wynn Markell Johanson.

Sixth Annual Golf Outing

The Sisters of Charity’s Sixth Annual Golf Outing was held at Echo Lake Country Club on June 17. Thanks to the diligent work of Co-Chairs Ellen Kelly and Vince Gilligan, the event was a huge success.

Over 100 guests, including longtime benefactors as well as delightful new friends, enjoyed a great day. Golfers started off with brunch on the patio, followed by a round of golf on the beautiful course. A passing summer storm was only a brief interruption to an afternoon of blue skies and sunshine.

Following golf, guests returned to the patio to relax with cocktails and to meet with friends who joined us for the evening. The event ended with a delicious buffet dinner, the awarding of prizes, and a lively auction to further support the Sisters of Charity.

Top: (l to r) Stephanie Hensal, Kathie Beggans, Kathy Celli & Charlotte LoBuono
Bottom Left: John Laezza lining up for a putt.
Bottom Right: Vince Gilligan and Sister Thomas Mary Salerno
The Salesians, faculty, administration and staff of Don Bosco Prep honored Sister Mary Culhane at a luncheon at the Ramsey Country Club on June 14th. They roasted her and presented her with a plaque which will be placed on the Wall of Honor in the school. The plaque reads “Sister Mary Culhane, 31 years at Don Bosco Prep, 1982-2013. She drew forth the creative talents of students and imparted an appreciation for beauty. As a Sister of Charity, she was a special friend to those who faced family, health or personal challenges. We are grateful. June 14, 2013.”

Sister Patricia Codey will be receiving the 2013 Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award from SOAR! at a dinner at the New York Athletic Club in Manhattan on October 2, 2013. Sister Patricia is the President of Catholic HealthCare Partnership of New Jersey.

Sister Mary Louise Moran, President of the Good Samaritan Foundation, received the Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center Medal Honor in April of this year at the Spring Ball. Sister Mary Lou has been a presence within the Good Samaritan/Tri-State Health System/Bon Secours Health System community for over 20 years.

Happy Birthday to Sister Regina Rose Palkovics who celebrated her 100th birthday on June 7th! Some of Sister Regina Rose’s past ministries included teaching in Newark, Plainfield, New Brunswick, Bloomfield and Belleville. She also worked in the office at United Hospital Medical Center in Newark. Sister has since retired to Saint Anne Villa and continues her ministry of prayer each day.

Holy Name School, East Orange, NJ, greeted more than 100 first graders in September 1955. It was Sister John Marie’s first class, so they have been a special memory for her over the years. Forty-seven members of this class came together on June 6, 2013 to celebrate their 50th anniversary of graduation from the eighth grade in 1963. They had grateful memories of Sister Jean Ruppel (formerly Sister John Marie). She is now the only living Sister of Charity or lay teacher who had taught them. What a wonderful experience of remembering entwined with appreciation for the Sisters of Charity who served at Holy Name School from 1955-1963! In Sister Jean’s words, “I always considered them a special class. Even now they are special people for me and for each other.”

The St. Joseph’s Healthcare System Employee Recognition Committee honored Sister Jo Ann Bromley as the AWL Star for June 2013. The AWL Star is an honor bestowed by the SJHS employee family in recognition of a high level of professionalism and efforts on behalf of the System. Her nomination form read, “Sister Jo Ann has shown her spirit of excellence by her full-time commitment to St. Vincent’s Nursing Home even though she only works part-time as the Volunteer Coordinator. She embraces excellence beyond her job description.”

If you know of a sister or an associate who was honored or recognized in any way, please pass it on to Donna Sartor at dsartor@scnj.org or 973-290-5345. Thank you.
Q: The acquisition of the Hospital of St. Raphael by the Yale-New Haven Health System will mark its first full year in September – how has the experience been for you?

A: While there is no doubt in my mind this transaction was in the best interest of our employees, patients and the community, there is a sense of loss and so many memories and feelings. I am optimistic about the future, as the economic stability of Yale-New Haven was felt early on in our new organization with major reimbursement reductions from Medicaid taking place. These reductions would have been devastating for St. Raphael’s but with the efficiencies and scale of Yale-New Haven we were able to absorb those reductions without impacting access to the most vulnerable patients. Overall, while there is much to be done, we have made significant progress and I am proud of where we stand today.

Q: You were sort of “brought up” in your healthcare career at HSR; who or what experiences influenced you as you moved along your career path?

A: Being born at Yale-New Haven and growing up as a member of the St. Raphael family, this transaction was very personal. St. Raphael’s became more than an employer to my family and me. My mother’s 35-plus years at St. Raphael’s and my three distinct employment opportunities all helped shape my understanding of health care and specifically Catholic health care in New Haven. While there is no doubt my preference would have been to continue the long-lasting service to our community, the financial pressure and changes in the health care environment just would not have allowed that to continue. For me, the leadership of the sisters and icons like Sister Anne Virginie have guided and inspired me to lead in a manner that put those most vulnerable first. I have treasured my time at St. Raphael’s and feel strongly committed to assisting in the development of our new organization to ensure the Mission and Values of St. Raphael’s live on.

Q: Were there specific activities/practices to continue the Sister of Charity legacy of care?

A: There were several components built into the purchase agreement including the ongoing support of religious symbols, the creation of a Catholic Heritage Committee to oversee the adherence to the Ethical and Religious Directives as well as the celebration of Founder’s Day. In addition to those activities and practices negotiated as part of the agreement, a key initiative was the culture integration committee that was launched immediately following the September 12th closing. This committee is focused on the integration of the two campuses as well as the blending of what is best between both entities. These structural components as well as the commitment of the management team to continue to recognize the important history and culture that embodied St. Raphael’s for more than the last 100 years in New Haven are the key to establishing an enduring legacy to the Sisters of Charity in both practice and structure.

Q: What would you say to those who question forming alliances between Catholic hospitals and non-faith-based institutions?

A: While each organization and situation is unique, the essence of health care is the relationship with our patients and their communities. To continue to serve these communities, organizations must look at their options and assess what is the best means to continue that service while holding the ideals of the Catholic Church in the forefront of that review. As a Board works through this process, it is the history of each organization as well as those who serve that will determine what is best for each entity. For New Haven, it became clear to those of us involved and responsible for the ongoing service to our community that this relationship was best. From my perspective, all organizations must embark on a thorough and self-examining process that looks at all possibilities, keeping the patient at the center of all such relationships.
Villa Jubilee Reflections

Two of our Saint Anne Villa residents who are celebrating 65 years as Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth this year were asked what they were grateful for as they considered all the years of religious commitment that are represented by their Jubilee.

Sister Catherine Macaulay says, “I am grateful for my vocation. It gave me so much. It gave me my whole life. I always felt privileged to be teaching young people – and by golly they taught me too… so special, each one. I think about them and wonder what they are doing now. I pray for them, each one of them, whatever life has brought to them, may they be happy and fulfilled in everything they do – all children, all families, blessed. Some little thing during the day will bring a child to mind and I pray for them. I pray that as a community we will find our path – that God will guide us.”

Sister Marian Irene McMullen says, “I am grateful for the grace of perseverance. For the chance to be so well educated and the many opportunities to work with children and with adults; in particular, for the opportunity to serve the poor. I pray for my whole family – my mother and father, brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews. Their love supported me. And as for the future, I pray the poor are helped, the gospel preached and the suffering comforted.”

Letters to the Editor

Please continue to send me NEW Dimensions. I attended St. Mary of the Assumption High School in Elizabeth in the seventies. I also worked with the sisters at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Williamson Street, Elizabeth from 1975 – 1981. I have such fond memories. Please keep me in your prayers. I’ll pray for you too!

Cynthia R. Colchie Di Rosa

Happy Spring…new life…new dreams…new realities. Absolutely loved the recent issue of NEW Dimensions! “Habit History” was a treasured article for me. Father Terry’s “Reflection on the Sisters of Charity Congregational Seal” was just so informative. The photos of the 2012 Jubilarians are a priceless collage of so many of my friends, including new friends made by volunteering at the Villa, and the 50 year Jubilarians (my own wonderful band of 62)!

I have honestly read it cover to cover several times and every page brings a wonderful memory. Special thanks to Sister Noreen Neary for the “People are my Passion” article about Sister Maryanne Campeotto. Dynamically written about a dynamic woman! I am honored and privileged to belong to such a family!

Until next time, stay well and continue doing your wonderful work. I wish I could send you a hundred times over the amount of the enclosed check…love to all.

Rieda Breakey Piatti - Seton Associate
Sister Pat Strikes Again

by Sister Mary Elizabeth Dacey

The ribbon is red, white and blue and reads Summer National Senior Games, Doubles Bowling. These Senior Games, held every other year in different cities, resemble the Olympics in their assortment of sports and opening ceremony, even to the lighting of a cauldron. These organizations are non-profit members of the United States Olympic Committee dedicated to motivating senior men and women to lead a healthy lifestyle through the Senior Games movement (age 50 and over).

Sister Patricia Mayer is the proud owner of the above mentioned ribbon and is a very experienced bowler. An avid bowler before she entered the Sisters of Charity, she put bowling on hold until the rules and customs changed. When she visited her parents at Cape May, she sharpened her skills. Moving to Alaska, living and working in Fairbanks, she practiced in the Arctic Bowling Center where fun and companionship were the outcomes of diligent practice. One of the earliest sponsors of the Alaskan Games was the Big Brother, Big Sister Foundation. The young daughter of a Fairbanks policeman had cystic fibrosis, and this was one way to help the family by raising money. These Alaska games are held every year in August. Sister Pat has said that one could always find a companion at the Fairbanks Center adding socializing to the advantages of bowling for a cause. Clergy, teachers, local folks, all took advantage of the bowling center for fun and practice.

Sister Pat has done herself and us proud. The next National Games will be held in Minneapolis in 2015. Judging by her past performance, we can expect the ribbon collection to grow and our pride in her to match it.

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 March 1, 2013 and September 1, 2013. May our Sisters enjoy the fruits of their labor as well as peace with their God.

Sister Cecilia Mary Gelinas
March 1

Sister Bernadette Therese McCann
March 4

Sister Patricia Maureen Brennan
March 11

Sister Margaret Rose Mc Carroll
March 23

Sister Carol Johnston
March 25

Sister Anne Martina Walsh
March 26

Sister Mary Ann Boyle
April 6

Sister Agnes Bertrand Drew
April 14

Sister Mary Swanwick
May 6

Sister David Marie Crehan
May 30.

Sister Mary Ellen Healy
June 26

Sister Maureen Christopher Loughlin
July 29

Sister Margaret Amelia Costello
July 31

Sister Julia Claire Cawley
August 12.

Sister Rose Vincent De Prinzio
August 26.
LEAVE A LEGACY

Remember that one of the best ways to provide for the future of the Sisters of Charity is by including the Sisters in your will. Here is an example of suggested bequest wording:

I give, devise, and bequeath to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, a not-for-profit organization located in Convent Station, New Jersey, Federal Tax ID #22- 1487343, the sum of $______ (or _____ percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate) for the unrestricted use and general purposes of the Sisters of Charity.

If you have already designated the Sisters of Charity with a bequest or other legacy gift, please let us know so that we can welcome you as a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Heritage Society!

SISTERS OF CHARITY
WINDOWS REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Thank you to our many generous friends who have contributed to the Windows Replacement Project in the Motherhouse Building. We are now approaching the final phase of the extensive replacement work, and we look forward to scheduling the removal and replacement of the final 34 windows. Please help us complete the Windows Replacement Project by making a gift to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and designating your gift to the Windows Replacement Project. You may use the envelope included with this magazine or send your contribution directly to:

Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
Development Office, P.O. Box 476,
Convent Station, NJ 07961-0476.

We Would Like to Hear From You!

_____ Please add my name to the mailing list for NEW Dimensions.
_____ I am receiving duplicate copies of NEW Dimensions. Please remove ____________________.
_____ Please remove my name from the mailing list; I no longer wish to receive NEW Dimensions.
_____ Please send a copy of NEW Dimensions to the following person (please list name, full address and zip code):

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Send this completed form to: Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Communications Office, P.O. Box 476, Convent Station, NJ 07961-0476 or e-mail your requests to escharity@scnj.org.
Upcoming Events

Harvest Festival
Hilton Short Hills
Thursday, October 24, 2013
Honorees include:
Caritas Award – Elizabethtown Healthcare Foundation
Mehegan Award - Dr. Ernest E. Federici and Dr. William McHugh

Cathedral Sounds
Annual Christmas Concert
Holy Family Chapel
Sunday, December 1, 2013
Featuring The Masterwork Chorus under the Direction of Andrew Megill

Fall 50/50 Raffle
Drawing takes place on
Wednesday, December 4, 2013
There will be 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners