

# VISION

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK

*Living Lives of Love*

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SISTERS  
of CHARITY  
NEW YORK

*Pope Francis  
Visits New York*

## Letter from Leadership

Dear Friends,

Forty years ago Pope Paul VI declared “Elizabeth Seton is a saint!” What a joyful day for all in the company of charity.

Forty years later an original key from the Stone House, the first home of the Sisters of Charity, was presented to Pope Francis during his visit here. The Daughters of Charity so generously donated this gift and how fitting to offer such a gift as Elizabeth Seton is the first American-born saint.

Yes the gift was given in a private ceremony by President Obama and Michelle but it was the Office of the President representing all United States citizens that gave this gift in our names. The key that opened the Stone House door truly was a key that opened the door to charity and justice. On the occasion of Elizabeth Seton’s beatification in 1963 Pope John XXIII said, “In a house that was very small, but with ample space for charity, she sowed a seed in America which by divine Grace grew into a large tree.”

Throughout these 198 years our mission to reveal God’s love has truly blossomed from the seeds planted by our first Sisters. We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. They have passed on the spirit of other stone houses so that we may continue to open doors for all those in need.

May we forever heed Elizabeth’s call to be “citizens of the world,” and Pope Francis’ call to “wake up the world.”

Peace,



M. Ellen McGovern, SC  
Regional Coordinator



VISION enables the Sisters of Charity of New York to make a cohesive statement about how we reveal God’s love in our lives and the many and varied ways in which we respond to the signs of the times.



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### COVER PHOTO

Pope Francis celebrated Mass at Madison Square Garden on Friday evening, September 25, 2015.  
Photo by Elena Miranda.



### Do You Share Your VISION?

When you finish reading your copy of VISION, please consider passing it along to help us spread the word about our work and history. Drop it off in your church vestibule, your local Catholic school, doctor’s office or other waiting room, laundromat, community or senior center, or any other place you see a stack of magazines. You never know who might pick it up—perhaps a former student, friend, or colleague. Thank you!



# 1965–2015

## *Celebrating Our Golden Jubilarians* One Hundred Fifty Years of Loving Service



Above from left: Sr. Mary Ann Daly is a Regional Coordinator on the Sisters of Charity Leadership Team; Sr. Jean Bocian is co-director of the Sisters of Charity Multi-Service Center in Yonkers; Sr. Ann Costello is the SCNY Health Coordinator (with Melissa Perez, Coordinator for Sisters of Charity at skilled nursing facilities).



**T**he times—they were a changin’ in 1965. Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in for his own full term as president, the war in Vietnam was escalating, and the anti-war movement escalated in response. The Beatles performed at Shea Stadium, the first stadium concert in music history, and Pope Paul VI celebrated Mass at Yankee Stadium—the first pontiff to ever visit the United States. Catholic school children were taken by the busloads to see *The Sound of Music*. The fight for civil rights in Montgomery and Selma, Alabama, riveted the nation, and the Sisters of Charity joined the Harlem March for justice and equality. And in that same year, on September 8, Sisters Jean Bocian, Ann Costello, and Mary Ann Daly entered the Novitiate of the Sisters of Charity, making a very deliberate choice to serve God in very uncertain times.

In 2015, the Year of Consecrated Life, these three Sisters celebrated the Golden Anniversary of the commitment they made, ever grateful to their families, friends, and colleagues, and their fellow Sisters for their friendship and constancy as they journeyed together during the past fifty years.

In a joint statement, the Golden Jubilarians shared the following quotation from Pope Francis: “following Jesus ... means sharing his merciful love, entering his great work of mercy and kindness, ... the work of forgiveness and love.” In the light of this statement, they asked all to join with them in performing acts of kindness and forgiveness as a means of celebrating this milestone in their lives.

*See page 10 to learn about our Golden Jubilarians.*

Right: Centenarian Sr. Mary Margaret McGovern. On September 8, Sr. Mary Margaret began her 80th year as a Sister of Charity of New York. Far right: from left, Sr. Mary Margaret, her mother, Margaret Anne McGovern, brother James, and sister, Sr. Virginia Maria.



## *Sister Mary Margaret McGovern* —Celebrating 100 Years of Life

by Patricia McGowan, SC

*“...quiet, gentle,  
appropriately demanding,  
with a dry sense of  
humor, one who ‘pulled  
out’ the best in each girl.”*

—Former students,  
Blessed Sacrament High School,  
Manhattan

On August 8, five generations of the McGovern family joined the Congregation and friends at Mount Saint Vincent to celebrate the 100th birthday of their beloved aunt, Sister Mary Margaret McGovern (aka Aunt Bee). The Chapel and the Convent resounded with hymns of thanksgiving and praise and Father F. X. Smith reminded all that Sister Mary Margaret was born in 1915, the beginning of both the twentieth century and WWI.

“What an amazing life,” he said, for this religious woman has “carried on the tradition of the women of Galilee and, like those first ladies of the Church, she has continued the mission of being a teaching mother.”

Those years as a “teaching mother” spanned many places and touched the lives of many, many students—from elementary schools, to high schools, to adult education programs: from St. Peter and Paul School in the Bronx, St. John High School in White Plains, Blessed Sacrament High School in Manhattan, and Cardinal Spellman High School in the Bronx. At Grace Institute in Manhattan, for 30 years, she filled many positions: teaching English, Accounting, and Computers and serving as Interim Director. In between those classroom years, she served as Postulant Mistress for three years.

The entrance hymn for the Mass, “Gentle Woman,” on that day in August seemed most appropriate. Former students from Blessed Sacrament High School remember their English, Religion, and Latin teacher as “quiet, gentle, appropriately demanding, with a dry sense of humor, one who ‘pulled out’ the best in each girl.” They wanted to honor this woman who had accepted each of them as she found them. And she also could appreciate surprises. Sister Kathleen Sullivan recalled that when a member of the rambunctious Class of 1995 placed a worm in her book, “Sister Margaret simply smiled and continued teaching, never giving them the satisfaction of showing any sort of squeamishness or even irritation.” Such was their respect for this teacher who “was kind, direct in her manner, but always fair,” that this group hosted their own birthday party for her earlier this summer, where they presented her with flowers and a Papal Blessing.



Such love and respect were in abundant evidence once more on the day of her “BIG” celebration. After the Mass, the Convent and the front lawn rang with the happy cries of slews of children (the fourth and fifth generations of McGoverns) rolling down the hills, laughing with a delight that was contagious on that perfect end-of-summer day.

The whole family and so many friends were anxious to explain how this revered Sister became known as Aunt Bee; why Aunt Bee went to the College of Mount Saint Vincent before she entered the convent; how she and her older sister, Sr. Virginia Maria (aka Aunt Helen), were “always around” for each generation of the McGovern clan as they were growing up; how Aunt Bee was more reserved than Aunt Helen; how both were so precious to their brother James’ children. Sister Mary Margaret’s given name was Brigid Veronica but, according to her niece, Helen, her grandmother used to say, “Brigid is always as busy as a bee” and “that’s why we always called her Aunt Bee.”

Aunt Helen entered the Congregation in 1931, right after finishing high school, but James and Margaret Anne McGovern told their younger daughter she would have to finish college before she could follow in her sister’s footsteps. They promised they would gladly bring her to the doors of the Novitiate if she then believed she still had a calling. So in 1936, after Brigid graduated and had worked with the Peekskill Franciscans at their day nursery, they did just that.

The happy memories that run through every generation of the family seem so similar. Her niece, Helen, recalled “loving when they both came to visit, especially around Thanksgiving.” Helen would sit on the stoop and anxiously wait for them because she knew they would always bring a special chocolate turkey “just for her.”

When they would visit, grandnephew Michael McGovern said, “They always played with us. Aunt Bee would play cards and Aunt Helen would watch hockey games with us.” One overwhelming memory for his wife was that “neither of them ever got mad at the kids, no matter what they did or how loud they were. They just loved all of them and the kids knew it.”

Another grandnephew, Andrew Piotrowski, remembered Aunt Bee as “always the sweetest thing”—a refrain that was repeated by each generation. One great grandniece recalled how “She always played with us on the swings.” Another, how “She always taught us to say ‘yes’ not ‘no’ because too many children say ‘no’ too often.” And Aidan Piotrowski (who is 8 going on 9) wanted people to know that he has known Aunt Bee “from the beginning, when I was born, till now.” Once when they were all dancing together “she fell, but she didn’t get mad,” he said. “When we helped her up she laughed. She just never gets mad at us and that’s why I love her.”

It seems that everyone agrees with young Aidan. Even neighbors of the McGovern clan looked forward to the “sister Sisters” visits. One neighbor recalled how they would come down the driveway in their black habits always happy and smiling. Another appreciated their sense of humor, what she called that “dry Irish wit.” Yes, in the words of Father Smith, this gentle centenarian has indeed carried on the tradition of the first ladies of the Church, the women of Galilee. Her love for her family and their love for her is almost palpable.

The love of her former students is obvious. During a senior year retreat at Blessed Sacrament High School, Sheila Finucane approached Sister because she “respected this ‘faith-filled woman’ who would give her an honest answer.” Truthfully, Sheila believed that Sister would agree with her that she did not have a vocation. Instead she “talked about making a date for an interview at the Convent of Mount Saint Vincent. The rest,” according to Sr. Sheila, “is history.”

Her love for the Congregation is evidently reciprocated. According to Sr. Maureen Alexander, another former student who now lives with Sr. Mary Margaret at the Convent of Mount Saint Vincent, “I have refound a person I loved, a woman who was and still is a true teacher, a blessing to all of us.”



Young Mary Margaret (right) received First Communion with her sister, Helen. Mary Margaret followed her older sister into religious life in 1936.



Favorite t-shirt of the many McGovern nieces and nephews



# Associate Day Ceremony Welcomes Six New Associates

by Lisa Shay, SC Associate



“Are you on a business trip?” the man in the next seat asked. “Yes,” responded Sr. Nancy Kellar. That mundane exchange led to a deeper conversation. Learning that the man next to her was Jewish, but his wife and children were Catholic and he loved attending liturgy, Sr. Nancy asked, “Have you ever considered becoming a Christian?” “No one has ever asked me to” he replied. The man was Herb Brooks, coach of the 1980 US Olympic hockey team. When Sr. Nancy heard that he was killed in a car accident, she wondered if he ever had become a Catholic. It turns out that he was in the RCIA program at the time of his death.

That story illustrates one of the methods of the New Evangelization, the theme of Sr. Nancy’s talk at Associate Day on September 12th. Evangelization wasn’t part of the Catholic vocabulary

until Vatican II, which made it a mission for all, not just for members of certain religious orders. Saint John Paul II developed a plan and scheme for a “New Evangelization,” reaching out to those among us who were never baptized; those who were baptized, received the sacraments and moral instruction but were never evangelized; and those who have become disaffected with the Church. Sister Nancy summarizes this with the terms *salt, leaven, and light*. We strive to bring people into relationship with Jesus.

In another trinity of terms, Sr. Nancy gave three methods for evangelization: *start a conversation, be a witness, and extend an invitation*. I find starting conversations difficult, but even a simple exchange like the one on the plane can yield fruit.

Giving witness can be daunting, but divide it into three components: where I was, what God did to me, and what effect it had on my life. We all have stories we can share, such as why I became an Associate. I was struggling to juggle work, family, and ministry when I met the Stanfordville community, particularly Sisters Jean Flannelly and Eileen Judge, who told me about the Associate relationship. I began the formation process on Ascension Thursday in 2014 and experienced a deep encounter with our God that has given me peace and joy and a renewed enthusiasm.

Being an Associate is a great blessing in my life. The joy of our relationship with Jesus compels us to extend invitations to others. Find innovative ways to reach out. Don’t be afraid to post flyers in grocery stores, libraries, or other



Sister Nancy Kellar spoke of the New Evangelization at the 2015 Associate Day.







nontraditional spaces. A major obstacle to evangelization is fear. But this is where the Associate relationship comes in! My community in Stanfordville has become an extended family to share ideas and gain encouragement.

After Sr. Nancy's talk, we gathered in the chapel for the Commitment ceremony, where Todd Gable, Mary Ann Lynch, Kat O'Loughlin, Matt Shields, Nizarys Vargas, and Jean Marie Walker made initial Associate commitments. Lynn Christopher, Joann Galley, and Fr. Chris Keenan, OFM, renewed their commitments; Patrice Athanasidy, Eilene C. Bertsch, Kay Cassidy, Bill Hurley, Amanda Sarmiento, Josephine Thomas, Patricia Tursi, and Connie Velez made lifetime commitments.

As happens at every liturgy with the Congregation, the faith and love expressed in prayer and song moved me to tears of joy. I'm an Army officer and an engineering professor with a reputation for asking tough questions; this is not my normal demeanor! People wonder why I travel so far to come to Congregation events, but I love being with the community. The backgrounds of the new Associates and the nature of their commitments reflect the varied ministries of the Congregation: from education, to health care, to social work. They show the broad impact the Sisters of Charity continue to have in the world.

As Sr. Jane expressed at the end of the ceremony, Associates and Sisters are a *blessing*, a *witness*, and *leaven* for each other. Sister Jane may not have coordinated with Sr. Nancy on these terms, but the Holy Spirit certainly did!

During the ceremony, each new Associate shares the story of their relationship with the Congregation. After signing a contract in the presence of Sr. Jane Iannucelli, they are presented with the Congregation's Associate pin. **Above from left:** Todd Gable, Kat O'Loughlin, Matt Shields, Nizarys Vargas, Jean Marie Walker, and Mary Ann Lynch.

Many thanks to all who made such an inspiring day possible: Sr. Nancy, the leadership team, the coordinators, Maureen Russell and Sr. Mary Lou McGrath, the staff who made the logistics work smoothly, the music ministry, and of course the Associates who made and renewed their commitments.

*Hazard yet Forward!*



Colonel Lisa Shay is an Academy Professor and Director of the Electrical Engineering Program at the US Military Academy at West Point. She and her husband, Jeff, have six children, ages 7 to 22. Lisa was welcomed into the Associate relationship in 2014. On the left is Cadet David Chacko (now lieutenant), who received the Electrical Engineering Award for excellence in photonics engineering at the graduation awards ceremony in May 2015. Lt. Chacko attended a seminar on human trafficking at Mount Saint Vincent with Lisa last year.

## Meet Our New Associates

by Maureen Russell  
Associate Coordinator

**Todd Gable, Jr.**, is a 2015 graduate of the College of Mount Saint Vincent. He was a student leader and was also actively involved with, and supportive of, the Sisters of Charity during his college years. Todd is expecting to leave for Burma in February to serve in the first group of Peace Corps volunteers to enter that isolated country.

**Mary Ann Lynch** was educated by the Sisters of Charity from first grade at Ascension School through her BA from the College of Mount Saint Vincent. A wife and mother, Mary Ann is currently a Development Associate for the Sisters of Charity. In her words, she now has "the honor and pleasure of working for the Congregation."

**Kat O'Loughlin** is a Campus Minister at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. She "looks to the Sisters and their charism and mission as a source of inspiration" in her work and as a guide for her life. Kat has accompanied students on service trips to the House of Charity in New Orleans and to Guatemala.

**Matt Shields**, married father of two young children, is the Director of Campus Ministry at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. He is committed to working with young adults toward justice and equality and to ensuring the continuation of the mission and charism of the Sisters of Charity.

**Nizarys Vargas**, a graduate of the College of Mount Saint Vincent, started working at the Convent of Mount Saint Vincent at the age of 17 and continued there through college, strengthening her relationship with the Sisters. Nizarys realized her goal of becoming a Funeral Director and now lovingly ministers to the Sisters in that capacity.

**Jean Marie Walker** is the Store Manager at the College of Mount Saint Vincent's store. A devoted single mother, she is also committed to the students, particularly those whom she employs in the store. She helps provide them with life skills and acknowledges the abundant grace she receives from working with them.



## Congregation Members & Staff Attend Vespers & MSG Mass



"Pope Francis has landed in D.C.!"

"Pope Francis is at the White House!"

"Pope Francis has arrived in New York!"

The excitement and the energy during the six days of Pope Francis' visit to the United States in September was palpable. People were glued to their television sets or computers watching every minute that was captured. Not only was every minute broadcast, there were tweets and Facebook postings of his every move.

At the Sisters of Charity Center schedules and meetings were rearranged to enable the staff to watch the Holy Father's addresses to Congress and to the United Nations. And when Pope Francis arrived in New York, some members of the Congregation and staff were lucky enough to win tickets to two events: Vespers at St. Patrick's Cathedral and the Madison Square Garden Mass. We asked the lucky winners to share their thoughts about their once-in-a-lifetime experience

The days between September 24th and September 28th were grace-filled—beginning with Vespers at St. Patrick's Cathedral where I sat in Row 72 at 3 pm waiting for Pope Francis to arrive. I waved to many Sisters I had come to know because of my position at ACWR (Archdiocesan Council of Women Religious) and as Co-Chair of CRC-STOP (Coalition of Religious Congregations to Stop Trafficking of Persons). I felt united to so many religious who are concerned for those in need.

Francis evoked spontaneous applause when he expressed his esteem and gratitude to religious women of the United States: "What would the church be without you—women of strength, fighters with that spirit of courage—which

puts you in the front lines in the proclamation of the Gospel?"

When the Pope was led to the side altar for prayer and the screens focused on his bent head and closed eyes, there was utter silence in the cathedral, and I believe we were all drawn into his deep space of prayer, and it remains with me today, hopefully, as a lasting memory and aid to be in the front lines in the proclamation of the Gospel.

—Sr. Mary Ellen O'Boyle, SC







The experience at Madison Square Garden was heartwarming and memorable. It was a gathering of people of every age and background. Waiting on the endless line and then streaming into the Garden—the mounting excitement and energy was palpable. Finally, as Pope Francis entered and was driven up and down the aisles, the throng literally exploded with joy and gratitude.

The most moving experience of these days was observing his deep union with God. Every time he paused to enter into that silent communion, the words of the song, “Into the Quiet God Calls You,” reverberated in my being. It also reminded me of Moses’ encounters with God, for Francis came forth even more radiant. I experienced myself present at a transfiguration. Not only was Pope Francis filled with light, he was light!

The light was especially evident in his eyes. How often during these days had he looked up into the audience, at you and me as well? It seemed his way of emphasizing the invitation, the strong call to take seriously his words, which were none other than Jesus’ words in the Gospel.

This celebration at Madison Square Garden was both a gift and a grace that continues to unfold.

—Sr. Margaret Ellen Burke



Doris Garcia, right, and co-worker Anne Hennelley

For me, the day of Pope Francis’ Mass at Madison Square Garden was a testament to charity and faith, as well as test of patience.

I was very excited about the opportunity to see and hear Papa Francisco. From the beginning of his papacy, he has touched and impressed me with his grace and humility.

As the daughter of a Cuban immigrant, I saw Papa Francisco’s intervention in initiating conversations between Cuban President Raul Castro and President Obama as a stroke of genius. His visit to Cuba brought tears to my eyes as I watched the people of Cuba cheer for this holy man who brought hope to their lives with the highest power—the power of love—along with his special way of speaking like an “abuelo”; gently but firmly showing you the error of your ways while still loving you.

When I heard Papa Francisco speak during the Mass at Madison Square Garden, I found his voice to be like that of a father reminding us to look out for our brothers and sisters, to be aware of those around us who labor and toil for those who suffer, and for those who need the most help. A testament to charity.

I had the chance of a lifetime to hear the gospel from God’s representative on earth—a testament to faith.

I am glad I remained on line all those hours, a true test of my patience but worth every minute!

—Doris Garcia, SC Center Staff Member

As an Associate and the editor of *Vision*, I was honored to attend the MSG Mass. It was a wonderful experience and I am grateful for the opportunity to take photos of this historic event.

—Elena Miranda



From left: Elena Miranda, Sr. Margaret Ellen Burke, and Sr. Karen Helfenstein

# Meet Our Golden Jubilarians

by Patrice Athanasidy

## SISTER JEAN BOCIAN, SC

Sister Jean Bocian, began her ministry in the classroom not far from Mount Saint Vincent, as a teacher at Visitation School and then St. Gabriel School, both in Riverdale. Sister Jean went on to teach in the follow-through program at Sacred Heart School in Manhattan for the next dozen years, keeping students dedicated to their education.



In the 1980s Sr. Jean taught at Incarnation School in Manhattan and St. Joseph's School in Yonkers before becoming co-director of the S.K.I.P., a program she founded and directed in Yonkers to improve children's performance. She took on new challenges, teaching computers to students from Pre-K through eighth grade at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Pelham Manor

from 1988 to 1992. She concluded her teaching career at St. Dominic's in the Bronx as a special education/pre-school teacher in the T.O.R.C.H. program.

Sister Jean began her current ministry at Casa de Esperanza in Yonkers in 1998 as a founding co-director of the program. The multi-service center works with the local community to be a welcoming place dedicated to improving the lives of new immigrants. Sister Jean and co-director Sister Terese McElroy have helped thousands since Casa de Esperanza opened. The programs have expanded from a few classrooms for English to programs which work with the new immigrants to help them in every facet of life, including education, job networking, the creation of cottage industries, translation, citizenship preparation, and more.

Although it is impossible to sum up the work of Casa de Esperanza, one woman's story hints at the many lives which have been touched. She explained, "I was abandoned. My husband left me and my baby daughter. I didn't know the language. The Sisters helped me with English and to learn skills so I could earn money. I constantly thank God and pray for the Sisters. I pray for you [Sr. Jean] every day."

A native of Alton, IL, Sr. Jean entered the Sisters of Charity at St. Philip's in Battlecreek, MI. She earned her bachelor's degree in mathematics from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and a master's in education with a reading specialty from Fordham University.

## SISTER ANN COSTELLO, SC

Sister Ann Costello began her ministry at Mary the Queen in Yonkers as an administrative assistant. In the early 1970s she also served as secretary of the Education Department at the Sisters of Charity Center in the Bronx.

In 1977 Sr. Ann began her nursing ministry at St. Vincent Medical Center in New York City as a registered nurse. She served as head nurse at St. Clare's Hospital in Manhattan for one year in 1984 before returning to St. Vincent's as nursing care coordinator through 1991, combining her administrative and pastoral talents.

In 1992 Sr. Ann served the entire community as the Secretary to the Congregation at the Sisters of Charity Center in the Bronx. She returned to healthcare after her term as secretary. Sister Ann cared for the Dominican Sisters at their convent in Sparkill as director of the Dominican Infirmary. She returned to the Sisters of Charity Center in 2001 as Assistant Health Coordinator for the Sisters. The next year, she became Health Coordinator for the Congregation, a position she still holds. During her tenure, she has seen the Sisters through many changes in healthcare, always using her pastoral nursing knowledge to create a supportive environment as Sisters work through their healthcare needs.

Born to Irish immigrants living in New York City, Sr. Ann earned two bachelor's degrees from Pace University, one in business administration and the other in nursing. She is also a graduate of Long Island University with a master's in health administration.



## SISTER MARY ANN DALY, SC

Sister Mary Ann Daly began her ministry as a student in the Juniorate at Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale. After studying at the College of Mount Saint Vincent, she began teaching seventh grade at St. Margaret of Cortona. Her teaching assignments varied throughout the 1970s, including religion and English, all at St. Margaret of Cortona, also in Riverdale.

After returning to the classroom herself to study for her master's of divinity at Immaculate Conception Seminary in New Jersey, Sr. Mary Ann returned to the Bronx to care for the religious education of students attending Visitation School as director of the religious education program.

Sister Mary Ann's leadership in religious education grew as she became regional director of catechises and formation director in the Bronx in 1986. She spent much of the 1990s



*Continued, see page 14, bottom*





# Papal Gift Honors First American Born Saint

Visiting Pope Francis Presented with Key to the Home of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

*by Scott Dugan, Seton Heritage Ministries*

Upon Pope Francis' arrival at the White House on September 23, 2015, President Barack Obama presented him with the original key to the home of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. The key once opened the door to her home, called the Stone House, in Emmitsburg, Maryland, on the grounds of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.



One of two originals that remained, the key was donated by the Archives of the Daughters of Charity for the purpose of being given by the President.

Presented in an ornate case crafted specifically for the occasion, the key honored both His Holiness Pope Francis, and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. "This gift is a fitting tribute," said Rob Judge, Executive Director of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, "for a woman who opened the doors for so many women to serve the poor, and for a man who has been a strong advocate for those who are poor and marginalized."

"It is humbling," said Judge, "to know that Pope Francis literally holds the key to Mother

Seton's home, where we welcome tens of thousands of visitors every year. People from all faiths are drawn here to learn the story of her life and legacy."

Seton was born in 1774 in New York. She was a wife, mother of five, and widow, who founded both a girls' school and congregation of religious sisters, the first of their kind in the United States. More than 200 years later, thousands of her sisters continue her legacy of charity worldwide. Her National Shrine is now celebrating the 40th anniversary of her canonization in September 1975 by Pope Paul VI.

The key represents not only Elizabeth Seton's work—which began in the Stone House—but the work of all members of the Sisters of Charity Federation.

Sister Jane Iannucelli, President of the Sisters of Charity of New York, is board president of Seton Heritage Ministries.

*Photos courtesy of Seton Heritage Ministries*



The Filicchi Portrait of St. Elizabeth

# College Student Reflects on Her Volunteer Work at Casa Esperanza

One could easily walk down Riverdale Avenue in Yonkers and never know about the existence of Casa de Esperanza, tucked into a pocket of the public Vive School. The organization's somewhat hidden nature is a quality that it actually works to protect, for its students' sake. If one did happen to discover Casa, what one would find is almost an optical illusion in which limited allocated space, funds, and resources are creatively and determinedly utilized to provide an ever-expanding multitude of services.

Co-directed by Sisters Jean Bocian and Terese McElroy, Casa provides English language classes and child-care, predominately for immigrant mothers, but anyone who's ever set foot in Casa knows that in reality it's so much more. I am most reminded of this reality when I see Sr. Terese meticulously going around Casa's space making sure that each decoration for pregnant mothers' baby showers is just right; when Sr. Jean informs us about the emergency fund that she takes out of her pocket when one of the clients has lost her job or has been evicted from their apartment—whatever the need may be.

The Sisters didn't have to welcome us—young college students, relatively inexperienced with some of life's harshest realities. But not only did they take us in, they treated us with respect and high expectations of our ability to contribute. They taught us to take in as much as we could from Casa and in turn try and take the skills we do possess to make the organization even more powerful. In our case, this was the addition of a library for children and adults, more technology to enhance the English learning curriculum, and expanded sales of the hand-sewn products made by some of the workers at Casa. I've even gotten to teach stress-relief-based dance classes. I hope the students enjoy them.

Thinking about the state of the world at times leaves me feeling defeated, questioning what the point of trying to do anything is anyway, because what can I do, really?

But in reality, this form of thinking is most insidious to our ability to make meaningful, profound change in the world. Because in making these seemingly small changes, each day we actively look the system in the eyes and say that we refuse to be members of a nation that tries to promote a nationalist lie that certain human beings are less worthy of access to safety, care, and opportunity than others.

Precisely because of Casa, each week I take home with me two incredibly powerful sensations: the first, motivation, to take what I do possess and work fiercely to try and make the positive changes that I can; and, second, a feeling of awe in knowing such a community of solidarity that has shown me the capabilities of hard work, care, of faith, of motherhood, of womanhood, and of personhood, if you have compassion.

*Testimony given at 2015 Community Partners Dinner at Sarah Lawrence College by Dana Langhans.*

## Chef Jean, sc

### *Chef Jean Recommends ...*

#### CRANBERRY CUSTARD PIE



ACTIVE: 30 min | TOTAL: 2 hr (plus cooling)  
SERVES: 8 to 10

#### Ingredients

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 14-ounce box refrigerated pie dough (2 sheets)       | 1 cup granulated sugar              |
| 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting | ½ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest |
| 3 large eggs   | ⅔ cup heavy cream                   |
| 1 12-ounce bag cranberries, slightly thawed if frozen  | Confectioners' sugar, for dusting   |



#### Preparation

Lay 1 sheet of pie dough on a lightly floured surface. Lightly beat 1 egg and brush some on the dough, then place the second sheet of pie dough directly on top. Roll out the double layer of dough into a 12-inch round. Ease into a 9-inch pie plate. Fold the overhanging dough under itself and crimp with your fingers or a fork. Brush the edge with more beaten egg. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°. Line the crust with foil, then fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake until lightly golden around the edge, about 15 minutes. Remove the foil and weights and continue baking until the bottom of the crust is dry, about 5 more minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely.

Meanwhile, make the filling: Roughly chop the cranberries and combine with ¾ cup granulated sugar and the lemon zest in a large bowl. Spread in the cooled crust. Whisk the remaining 2 eggs, the heavy cream, flour and the remaining ¼ cup granulated sugar in a bowl until smooth; pour over the cranberries.

Bake until the filling is set and slightly puffed, 50 minutes to 1 hour. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

Enjoy!



# Rev. Dennis Holtschneider, CM, Addresses Fourth Annual Sponsorship Conference



Rev. Dennis Holtschneider, CM,  
President, De Paul University.  
Photo by Jeff Carrion

The Sponsorship Advisory Council hosted the Fourth Annual Sponsorship Conference at Saint Vincent's Hospital Westchester on September 19, 2015. One hundred ministry leaders and board members attended, and the gathering was filled with substantive conversations.

Sister Jane Iannucelli, President of the Sisters of Charity, welcomed everyone and announced the recent formation of the Sisters of Charity Ministry Network. The Network is a separate corporation that will be governed by a board including Sisters and lay men and women. Its purpose is to strengthen the mission of the ministries and to develop a strategy to take them into the future, maintaining the values of the Sisters who originally founded the organizations.

Father Dennis Holtschneider, CM, President of De Paul University in Chicago, gave the keynote address and provided a clear explanation of the need for both board members and senior staff to prepare themselves for leadership and governance of these ministries as they are transformed.

We heard that our responsibility at this time is to continue the legacy of education, health care, social services, and spiritual care and to be intentional about the task of leadership formation. Father Dennis talked about practical approaches and real structures for accountability in assuring the mission. Organizations can develop strategic goals and job descriptions that can be used in annual evaluations to measure progress toward integration of values into everyday operations. There is strength in partnering with peer institutions and advocating changes that

are mutually beneficial.

Providing leadership formation is essential and every organization needs to find its own way. We need to learn about new models of sponsorship and study new models of accountability. On a ladder of engagement, some will climb the ladder more quickly than others, and some will become leaders in mission alignment processes.

To sum up, the central challenge of our time is the shift from being part of the "Sisters' mission" to taking responsibility for "Our Mission" and creating new structures so that one generation always forms the next.

*by Karen Helfenstein, SC*

Thanks to the prayers and support of friends like you, **Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates** is **Celebrating 30 Years** of service to people who are homeless!



This life-changing ministry creates faith communities with those in shelters and on the streets. LEFSA helps those served find strength in God's love and the spiritual support they need to heal.

**Please join LEFSA in celebration!**

You can visit [www.scny-lefsa.org](http://www.scny-lefsa.org) to make a financial gift, find stories of lives changed, share prayers and encouragement, and more.

[www.scny-lefsa.org](http://www.scny-lefsa.org)



**Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates**  
45 East 126th Street, 2nd Floor  
New York, New York 10035

# Congratulations to Our Sisters!

**Sister Eileen Martin** (center) was surrounded by devoted friends at the shrine of Our Lady of Long Island where she attended daily Mass in her retirement. Sister Eileen lived at St. John's Convent for thirty-two years and served as principal of St. John's School, renamed Our Lady of the Apostles School when it merged with three other schools in the area. In her retirement, Sr. Eileen ministered in nursing homes, prison ministry, and as a Eucharistic Minister to homebound parishioners. The youth group on Sunday evening and the role of greeter at Baptisms are two more places that will miss the presence of the Sister of Charity who completed the ninety-year presence of the Congregation at St. John the Evangelist in Center Moriches, NY.



On October 25 St. Patrick's Parish in Bedford, NY, celebrated **Sr. Kathleen Fitzgerald** for her 50 years of teaching in their school, her 60 years as a Sister of Charity, and her 80th birthday on November 17. A wonderful turnout of families and students from many years joyously expressed their thanks, admiration, and deep affection for Sister.

We concur with the pastor who spoke of the great blessing her presence has been, particularly her ability to be fully attentive and involved with each person she encounters. The Congregation congratulates Sister Kathleen for this well deserved honor.

We extend our congratulations to **Sr. Rosemarie Connell**, who retired after serving as principal/administrator of Visitation School in the Bronx for thirty-five years. Sister Rosemarie began her fifty-three years in Catholic education at Elizabeth Seton Academy in Yonkers (1962–1965), then taught at St. Raymond in the Bronx (1965–1976) before becoming principal there in 1976. She began serving as principal at Visitation in 1980. Many blessings to you, Sr. Rosemarie, in your retirement.



## Meet Our Golden Jubilarians *Continued from page 10*

serving in New Jersey, first as the formation director of the novitiate at the Madonna Convent in Fort Lee and then as pastoral assistant at Newark's Queen of Angels parish.

Returning to New York in 1997, Sr. Mary Ann led the Terrence Cardinal Cooke Center as director of mission effectiveness. She continued her years of leadership and dedication to mission there through 2004, becoming associate vice president for mission leadership in 1999.

Since 2004, Sr. Mary Ann has worked with the Sisters of Charity in a variety of positions, always sharing her faith and encouraging others to make the most of their gifts. She

returned to the Sisters of Charity Center as Director of Temporary Professed Sisters of Charity and also served as an administrative assistant for the Federation at the Center. Sister Mary Ann served the Sisters of Charity Federation as Executive Director from 2007 to 2011. She is currently part of the Leadership Team as a Regional Coordinator.

A native of New York City, Sr. Mary Ann is a graduate of the College of Mount Saint Vincent. She earned her master's degree in adult religious education from Fordham University and her master's of divinity from Immaculate Conception Seminary.



# Jubilarians 2015

We honor, we celebrate, we thank our Sisters who celebrated milestone Jubilees on September 8, 2015.

## FORTY YEARS

Sister Alberta Carey, SC

## SIXTY YEARS

Sister Maureen Alexander, SC  
 Sister Margaret E. Angelovich, SC  
 Sister Helen Bryant, SC  
 Sister Margaret Ellen Burke, SC  
 Sister Ann Rose Connell, SC  
 Sister Kathleen E. Fitzgerald, SC  
 Sister Kathleen Gilmartin, SC  
 Sister Doris Heinlein, SC  
 Sister A. Jean Iannone, SC  
 Sister Constance Kelly, SC  
 Sister Eileen T. Kelly, SC  
 Sister Kathryn E. McDermott, SC  
 Sister Patricia A. Morgan, SC  
 Sister Sheila Normoyle, SC  
 Sister Mary Sugrue, SC  
 Sister Kathleen Theresa Sullivan, SC  
 Sister Catherine Marie Walsh, SC

## SIXTY-FIVE YEARS

Sister Jeanne Delaney, SC  
 Sister Mary Donagher, SC  
 Sister Mary Thérèse Hannaway, SC  
 Sister Mary A. Jordan, SC  
 Sister Aileen Kelly, SC  
 Sister Mary M. Kilmartin, SC  
 Sister Anita Miriam Lavelle, SC  
 Sister M. Patrice Murphy, SC  
 Sister Rita Nowatzki, SC  
 Sister Mary O'Brien, SC  
 Sister Rosemary Petrucelli, SC  
 Sister T. Marie T. Tolle, SC  
 Sister Kathleen Tracey, SC

## SEVENTY YEARS

Sister Rose Maureen Dormer, SC  
 Sister Ellen Quirke, SC  
 Sister Mary Richard Rowley, SC

## With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

Please visit our website at [www.scny.org/news](http://www.scny.org/news) for complete biographies of our Sisters

### Sister Grayce Megna, SC (Sister Miriam Bernard)

Entered: 1955 + Date of Death: 9/13/15 + Age: 89

*A devoted nurse, a kind and understanding person, a gracious and prayerful woman ...*



Sister Grayce's lifelong ministry was in the field of healthcare. After serving at the Convent of Mary the Queen, New York Foundling, and St. Vincent's Hospital, Manhattan, she was transferred to Saint Vincent Medical Center, Staten Island, where she worked as an administrative assistant and nursing supervisor for the next thirty-six years until it closed in 2007.

### Sister Kathleen Doherty, SC

Entered: 1962 + Date of Death: 9/14/15 + Age: 71

*Sister Kathy had a deep sense of the presence of God in all things great and small, in our universe, in our planet, and in all of life.*



Sister Kathy was a kind, understanding, and compassionate teacher whose students will long remember the science lessons they learned and the gentleness, patience, and love shown to them. She went above and beyond to help her students with academic as well as personal problems. She gave herself joyfully to people and to all of creation.

### Sister Anne Rita Cullen, SC (Sister Miriam Gerald)

Entered: 1939 + Date of Death: 10/28/15 + Age: 95

*Sister Anne Rita's love of learning was apparent to all of her students. She was able to convey to them her high expectations, thirst for knowledge, and love of literature.*



Sister Anne Rita was involved in various ministries throughout her religious life. Her first ministry was education, having taught in schools throughout the archdiocese. She then served as librarian in the archdiocese as well as in The Berkeley School. In her later years she worked at the NYC Department for the Aging, where she was able to assist many of the city's senior citizens. In all that she did, her kindness, compassion, and caring heart was always evident.

## SHARE YOUR STORY

The Sisters of Charity of New York celebrate 200 years of service in 2017. In preparation of this milestone we want to hear from you, our former Catholic School students, nursing students, employees, partners in ministry, etc. We are actively seeking 200 compelling stories telling how the Congregation has influenced your life. Email your story to [extcomm@scny.org](mailto:extcomm@scny.org) or drop us a note in the envelope found inside this issue. *Thank you!*

*Thank you for serving with love for so many years. God bless you for all you have given and continue to give every day!*



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## Sisters of Charity Annual Fall Luncheon

A sellout crowd of nearly 200 guests filled Xavier's X2O on the Hudson on September 16 for the Sisters of Charity Annual Fall Luncheon. New and old friends were treated to a colorful view of the Hudson to go along with a delightful luncheon meal. Our guests participated in a raffle of beautifully decorated baskets and a fifty-fifty raffle that totaled \$28,155. The three winners split the amount of \$14,155 with 25, 15, and 10 percent.

Save the date of September 14, 2016 for next year, as we again expect a sellout crowd!

