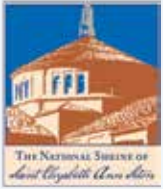


VISION

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK

Living Lives of Love

Volume 19 • Issue 3 • Summer 2015



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SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

*Transfer of Leadership
Installs New Council*

Letter from Leadership

Dear Friends,

In a small departure from tradition, Sr. Jane has invited members of the Leadership Team to share in writing these letters to you, our readers of *Vision*. It is my pleasure to express to you some thoughts evoked by this issue, which highlights several sisters who furthered the mission of charity in New York.

"Love one another; love the children entrusted to your care. Everything depends on your love." These words of Elizabeth Boyle, our first New York Mother, are a beautiful synthesis of our mission. They express for me the pulse that impels each sister, no matter her particular ministry. In her gentle way, Mother Elizabeth Boyle imbibed the foundational inspiration of her beloved Mother Seton in the peaceful valley of Emmitsburg and brought it to life in the throbbing heart of New York City.

A companion on whom she relied for many practical affairs of the growing New York community was her Assistant and Treasurer, Sr. Williamanna Hickey, a lively, energetic complement to Elizabeth's retiring, steady nature. Both labored with determination and deep love in the New York vineyard, Elizabeth with the orphans and Williamanna with academy students. Together they represent the Congregation's enduring commitment to education for the poorest immigrants and for future leaders. Each used her unique gifts to provide stability to the new Congregation and the Church of New York in its formative years.

On the wall of my office I have hung a reminder of these two women and several others of our pioneers. One of Sr. Williamanna's tasks as Treasurer was to guide the process of civil incorporation for the new community. My framed copy of the incorporation document links my daily tasks as Assistant to the President and as Treasurer to theirs. Discerning God in those daily tasks and in the larger events of joy, pain, and loss in our lives is what leads to holiness—so said Sr. Mary Elizabeth Earley (of happy memory) in the article about the 1975 Canonization of St. Elizabeth Seton. Her reflection on the great and small sufferings of our saint is a striking quotation.

Among the memories of the Canonization recalled in this article is a toast written by Sr. Catherine Hunt "To our future ..." When you read it (on page 12) perhaps you will think as I did that her words are a good description of the forty intervening years since 1975 and an apt expression of our abiding hopes for the future.

Happy reading,

Sr. Margaret

Margaret O'Brien, SC
Assistant to the President



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 PHOTOS

Top row from left: Sr. Ann Marie Lafferty carried the image of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton; Srs. Rose Frederick Jones and Margaret Donegan served as candle bearers; Sr. Marguerite McGilly carried the image of Mother Elizabeth Boyle, first mother superior; Sr. Miriam Kevin Phillips (behind her) carried the Sisters of Charity Constitution; **middle row:** members of the 2011-2015 Leadership Team: Srs. Dominica Rocchio, Mary Ann Daly, and Kathleen Byrnes; new members of the Leadership Team: Srs. Mary Ellen McGovern, Margaret O'Brien, and Sheila Brosnan; Sr. Eileen McGrory, 2011-2015 Assistant to the President; **bottom row:** Sr. Jane Iannucelli, President, addresses the Congregation; Sr. Katie Aucoin incensed the candles as the choir led the Congregation in song.

Forty Years Later, Seton Canonization

Still Lives in Memory

1975—Saigon was evacuated, ending the Vietnam War. American and Soviet spacecrafts Apollo and Soyuz linked up in space. The Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia. Three top Nixon advisors were sentenced for the Watergate cover-up. The Church declared a Holy Year and the United Nations celebrated the International Year of the Woman.

But for the family of Charity, 1975 will forever be known as “the year of the Canonization,” when our own Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton of New York was declared the first American-born Saint.

A proud group of New York sisters, colleagues, family, and friends were among more than 16,000 American pilgrims who traveled to Rome for the ceremony. On the day they left, they transformed Kennedy Airport into a joyfully chaotic scene that one sister described as “our first congregational meeting at an international airport.”

Sister Elizabeth Vermaelen remembers the canonization ceremony as a “profound experience.” She had arrived early with her companion, **Sr. Mary Elizabeth Earley**, to get good seats in St. Peter’s Square. Sister Mary Elizabeth later wrote that when she saw the huge banner depicting Mother Seton, “edged with fresh flowers,” she felt “awe and hope in realizing that many human loves, and rejection, and many deaths, and pails of icy water, and carrot coffee, and cold and weariness, and the discernment of God in all these things had led to holiness.”

Seeing the crowds from all over the world gathered outside St. Peter’s was “overwhelming,” said **Sr. Marianne Robertson**, echoing the sentiments of many. The sisters sat toward the

front of the square, but behind and around them were thousands, seated in rows, on rooftops and balconies, hanging out of windows, all calling out Elizabeth Seton’s name and rejoicing in her life.

Making History

Sister Janet Baxendale vividly remembers **Sr. Margaret Dowling**, then the Congregation’s President and a key figure in negotiating arrangements, bursting into their hotel lobby on the day before the canonization. She brought the good news that Pope Paul VI would allow **Sr. Hildegarde Marie Mahoney**, SC–NJ, then Chairperson of the Federation, to be a lector at the canonization Mass. The Pope had personally intervened in response to many petitions from the American sisters and their friends. The next day, as Sr. Hildegarde began the first reading from Proverbs 31, praising Elizabeth as a worthy wife and a valiant woman, she made history as the first woman ever to proclaim the Word of God at a papal mass in Saint Peter’s Square—a fitting way to mark the International Year of the Woman.

Sister Rose Bianco, selected as one of ten sisters from our Congregation who received Communion from the Pope,

Regina Bechtle, SC

front of the square, but behind and around them were thousands, seated in

FACT: The other nine chosen from SCNY were Sisters Margaret Dowling, Teresita Regina Austin, Mary Elizabeth Earley, Marie Leonore Fell, Mary Perpetua Collins, Winifred Goddard, Mary Martin Meehan, Patricia Maureen Mulryan, and Paula Marie Spaight.

Continued, see page 12

Charity in the City

LeeAnn Brathwaite, SC Associate



Charity in the City brings a unique group of individuals together each year. This year, seniors from Cardinal Spellman High School came to the Mount. We visited several places during the week-long program, including the Kingsbridge Veterans Hospital, the Senior Sisters at Kittay House, the Terence Cardinal Cook Health Care Center, the Elizabeth Seton museum on the Mount Saint Vincent campus, POTS, and Sisters Hill Farm. We also did a Midnight Run.

We were blessed with the presence of five young women: Raven Morris, Rebecca Mota, Enellie Mikel, Charlee Cay, and Talia Nanton. They were all honor students from Cardinal Spellman who were accustomed to doing service work. However, they didn't know what to expect from this service trip. They said "We have learned more of the true

meaning of charity in one week than in all four years of high school theology."

These young women reminded me of who I was when I started Charity in the City in 2011. Like them, I was heavily involved in service work with my high school and church. I knew what it meant to roll up one's sleeves and get to work. Yet I was so focused on the task that I overlooked the human element of service. People are at the heart of service and they are often neglected. Most of us tend to focus on the labels given to the most vulnerable in society, such as poor, homeless, and disabled. It is easy to forget that everyone has a story but not everyone is fortunate enough to have someone listen to their story.

The most important element of Charity in the City for me is sharing one's story. Listening to people from various walks of life enriches our own

Above left: Preparing sandwiches for the Midnight Run, left to right, Talia Nanton, Sr. Mary Lou McGrath (program director) Raven Morris, Charlee Cay, Enellie Mikel, and Rebecca Mota. Above: The group visited the Kingsbridge Veteran's Hospital in the Bronx on Memorial Day.

lives. We heard stories about war, high school, life on New York City streets, and Saints Vincent de Paul and Elizabeth Ann Seton. Every story contained the elements of love, sadness, desperation, and hope. It was an experience that we will not soon forget.

The Charity in the City program continues to affect people in different ways by increasing their own knowledge, understanding, and love. It truly is a labor of love for all participants involved. I echo the sentiments of Raven, Rebecca, Enellie, Talia, and Charlee when I say "Thank you!"



The group spent a day at Sisters Hill Farm in Standfordville, NY.



Visiting the Sisters at Kittay House. In front, Srs. Doris Pagano (left) and Mary Elizabeth Phelan.

Laudato Si'

LAUDATO SI
MI' SIGNORE

PER SORA NOSTRA
MADRE TERRA

& SCNY

*"Praise be to you, my Lord
through our Sister,
Mother Earth"*

from the *Canticle of the Sun*
St. Francis of Assisi

Catholic News Agency Photo

Carol De Angelo, SC

- » A young adult learns beekeeping at the Barbara Ford Peace Building Center in Guatemala.
- » Sisters, Associates, and colleagues participate in community supported agriculture by buying shares in Sisters Hill Farm; they eat local healthy organic produce, and Sisters Hill Farm gives 10% of food each week to those in need.
- » Hundreds of letters are signed by sisters at Mount Saint Vincent Convent, CMSV students, and colleagues asking that a father who is supporting his family, who are U.S. citizens, not be deported.
- » Bread for the World petitions are signed and emails sent, advocating an end to child hunger in the U.S. and abroad.
- » Sisters and Associates volunteer at a safe house where women recovering from the violence of human trafficking can live and find hope again.
- » The College of Mount Saint Vincent and the Congregation participate in a collaborative energy project.

The many themes in Pope Francis' second encyclical offer a perspective on how the ministries of the Sisters of Charity of New York practice "integral ecology," a term used by the Pope: "Today, the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related,

and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment."

Laudato Si': On Care For Our Common Home issues a call and challenge to all peoples of the planet to care for Earth and its people. Francis states, "Climate change is a global problem with grave implications ... It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day." He writes later "We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both

social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring human dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature."

These two quotations highlight the multifaceted response of the Sisters of Charity to the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor. At the 1995 Assembly, we committed to calls "to be visible, effective risk takers standing with and for the poor" and "to reverence creation in a spirit of interconnectedness with all that is, living responsibly."

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Sister Ceil Harriendorf and Development Director Anne Marie Gardiner (second and third from left, respectively) participated in a hands-on demonstration of the beekeeping program at the Barbara Ford Peace Building Center in Guatemala.



The New York Mission, Continued Mary E. McCormick, SC

In 1833 Sister Williamanna Hickey was missioned to New York to start an academy, which later became the Academy of Mount Saint Vincent.

She was 32 years old and had been a Sister of Charity for three years. She had already professed her vows and had served on one mission in Frederick, Maryland. Sister Mary Hickey, her sister, entered the community a year after she did, and several years later would also be missioned to New York.

In 1846 they would both choose to become part of a new community, the Sisters of Charity of New York.

In many ways Williamanna was a prototype of the early 19th century's American Catholic woman. She was what we would call today a mover and shaker. Well educated herself, she was passionately committed to the education of young women: the Academy and free school under her direction became models for those to follow. She was curious about what was happening, not only in her community, but in the Church and in her adopted city as well. A resourceful financial administrator, she was generous in sending donations to the Motherhouse in Emmitsburg, and procured goods for them at the best prices available.

Eleanor Hickey was born in 1801 in Washington, DC. Both parents, James and Mary Ann, nee Brent, came from old Roman Catholic families, and provided a solid grounding in the faith to their three sons and six daughters. John Hickey, their eldest, became a Sulpician. He is known to us most famously as the priest scolded by Elizabeth Seton because of the carelessness of a sermon he delivered in her presence. But he was a great friend of the community and in 1829 became its Director. He had been instrumental in persuading his father to send his sisters to the Academy in Emmitsburg, and Eleanor was the first to go, probably in 1816.

Eleanor did not take well to the discipline at St. Joseph's, but was an excellent student nonetheless. When her father died her mother needed her help managing the younger children and running the household. Eleanor went home; one of her teachers, Sr. Margaret George, saw the glimmerings of a vocation in her young protégée, but the sisterhood was the farthest thing from the mind of the headstrong Eleanor Hickey.

It was not until 1830 when Eleanor was 29 that she came back to Emmitsburg to petition for entrance into the community. She was accepted, and received the name Sister Williamanna.

New York in the 1830s and 1840s was a place of increasing dichotomy between the have's and have-not's. Sisters of Charity, in the tradition of Vincent de Paul, tried to bridge the gap between the two. The Academies they opened gave the students a first-class education but also imbued in them a sense of their obligation to be of service to those living in poverty. The fees charged helped to fund the free schools and orphanages the Sisters opened and staffed.

Then a change in understanding of the Community's mission precipitated a crisis in New York around the care of orphan boys. Sister Williamanna was an outspoken advocate of the continuation of their care until other arrangements could be made. On June 20, 1846, she wrote a long, loving, but strongly worded letter to Mother Etienne and her Council in Emmitsburg, begging them to reconsider the directive to close the New York mission. In July, she and Elizabeth Boyle, considered leaders in the cause of keeping things status quo, were missioned to far off Utica and Rochester, perhaps in an attempt to lessen their influence among the New York sisters.

In the end, two things happened which forever changed the community started by Elizabeth Seton. The New York mission was *closed* and twenty-nine sisters returned to Emmitsburg. Thirty-three remained in New York as the founding members of a new community. Elizabeth Boyle was elected first Mother; Williamanna became the Treasurer, and later took on the role of Assistant Mother as well. She spent her days keeping accounts of the community's costs, its State incorporation, the progress of St. Vincent's Hospital (begun in 1849), the Halifax venture (also in 1849), and a thousand other business transactions connected with the running of a complex institution.

In May 1858 Sr. Williamanna suffered a stroke and died on December 23 of that year, the first of our founding sisters to fall. Her remains were placed in the crypt in old St. Patrick's Cathedral and in 1860 were transferred to the hill at Mount Saint Vincent.



New Leadership Team Installed

The Congregation joined in blessing the new Leadership Team at the conclusion of the ceremony. On the altar from left to right: Sisters Mary Ellen McGovern, Sheila Brosnan, Jane Iannucelli, Margaret O'Brien, Kathleen Byrnes, and Mary Ann Daly.

In a spirit of joyful celebration, gratitude, and tradition, Sisters of Charity, Associates, Companions of Charity, partners in ministry, friends, and family came together on June 30, 2015 in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Mount Saint Vincent to express gratitude to the Sisters who served from 2011 to 2015 and bless the new Leadership Team that will serve for the next four years.

Sister Carol Barnes, who served as president from 1987 to 1995, reflected on a reading from the letter to the Thessalonians: "Paul urges the Thessalonians to build each other up, to seek what is good for all people, and not to stifle the spirit nor despise the prophetic gift. Isn't that what our call to mission is all about?"

Leadership Team



Re-elected at Assembly 2015, **Sr. Jane Iannucelli** was installed as President for a second term. Prior to being elected in 2011, she served as Director of Sponsorship Services for four years. Earlier leadership roles included service as Assistant to the President (2003–2007), Regional Coordinator (1999–2003), Social Concerns Coordinator (1984–1988), and Director of the Formation Team and Novice

Director (1976–1981). With Fr. Ned Murphy and Tim Boon, Sr. Jane was one of the founders of POTS, the soup kitchen in the Bronx that began in a storefront and today serves more than 20,000 people annually.

Sister Jane's first ministry was in education, where she served for fifteen years.

Sister Jane holds a BA in Mathematics from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and an MEd. in Administration from Fairfield University. She entered the Sisters of Charity of New York in 1957; her religious name was Sr. Jane Dolores. She is a graduate of Bishop McDonnell High School, Brooklyn, and St. Gabriel School, East Elmhurst (Queens).



Sister Margaret O'Brien was installed as Assistant to the President. She has served as the Congregation Treasurer since 2012 and as Regional Coordinator on the Council from 2003 to 2011.

Sister Margaret has ministered in several capacities during her fifty-five years as a Sisters of Charity. Her first ministry was in education where she taught in elementary education for seven years before serving as a librarian for eight years. She then served in school administration for seven years before theological studies brought her to California in the late 1980s. During her eleven years in the Diocese of Oakland, Sr. Margaret served as teacher and librarian. She returned to New York in 1999 and was Senior Vice President for Mission in the Sisters of Charity Healthcare System on Staten Island before being elected to Leadership in 2003.

Sister Margaret holds a BA in English from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, an MS in Science from Columbia University, and a CTS from the Jesuit School in Berkeley, CA. She entered the Sisters of Charity in 1960; her religious name was Sr. Mary Elizabeth. She is a graduate of St. Barnabas High School and Our Lady of Angels, both in the Bronx.

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Sr. Mary Margaret's niece Helen Piotrowski escorted her into the chapel.



HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY SR. MARY MARGARET

Five generations of McGovern's joined the Sisters of Charity on August 8 to celebrate Sr. Mary Margaret McGovern—"Aunt Bee" as she is known—on her 100th birthday. The celebration began with a beautiful Mass in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception and then moved out to the grounds of Mount Saint Vincent for a great barbecue. The day was a celebration of family, service, and love.

Sr. Mary Margaret's life of service will be featured in the next issue of Vision.



Above: Margaret McGovern O'Connor gave Communion to her "Aunt Bee."

Left: Surrounded by family, Sr. Mary Margaret's looks to her Great Grand, four-month-old Niece Anastasia Piotrowski.

Bottom left: Sr. Mary Margaret with her youngest nieces and nephews.

Bottom right: Sr. Sheila Finucane celebrated with Sr. Mary Margaret, who sponsored her as a Sister of Charity.



Fun in the Sun for Sisters at JHL

Maryellen Blumlein, SC



Above: Srs. Marietta Joseph Mackin (left) and Georgette Dircks

Below from left: Srs. Connie Brennan, Margaret Mar Hannon, Elizabeth Phelan, and (with back to camera) Doris Pagano.



Saturday, August 15 was a “fun in the sun” day for our Sisters at Elizabeth’s Place and Kittay House. All of the Sisters were invited to a picnic lunch in the garden. The menu was sandwiches, salads (chips and pretzels, of course), fruit, and ice cream. While the weather was a bit warm, the Sisters were under garden umbrellas and trees, and in other shady spots. Sisters Mary Kay Finneran and Elaine Owens, assisted by their coworkers (and a few volunteers) provided a lovely outing—and eating—for all in attendance. The picnic was a big hit and the Sisters look forward to the next one.

The Sisters are most grateful to all who came to enjoy this first gathering and to those who helped make it happen.

2015 CMSV Graduate Welcomed into SCNY Associate Relationship



In the presence of her mom, friends, and members of the Congregation, LeeAnn Brathwaite became the newest Associate on July 20, 2015. A testament to her faith, LeeAnn’s contract is featured on our website. Visit www.scny.org/news.

Left: Sr. Jane with LeeAnn

Sisters at Schervier Nursing Care Center Enjoy Barbecue



Our Sisters at Schervier Nursing Care Center were to happy to join the annual barbecue on July 9 where firefighters from FDNY Engine 52 and Ladder 52 served as grill masters. The Sisters had a great time with the staff and fellow residents.

Above: Sr. Thérèse Hannaway with staff member Lubi Proko; **above right:** 103-year-old Sr. Anne Mary Regan (left), and Sr. Theresa Fowler; **right:** Sr. Theresa Luciano with CNA Winsome Housen



Photos by Laura Amerman

YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

Join Us!



Sunday, September 27, 2015

The Sisters of Charity invite you to tour Mount Saint Vincent on the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul.

Tours (1-2:30) include:

Lourdes Grotto

Sisters of Charity Archives

Sisters Cemetery

followed by

Prayer Service in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.

Refreshments at Mount Saint Vincent Convent.

Visit our website for more info

Sisters of Charity Sign the Paris Pledge

Carol De Angelo, SC

The Sisters of Charity of New York, as a congregation, have signed the Paris Pledge, an initiative of Interfaith Power and Light (IPL), making a commitment to reduce our carbon emissions by 50% by 2030, with a goal of being carbon neutral by 2050. IPL is asking America's faith communities to sign the Paris Pledge and lead by example. Pledges will be presented to world leaders at the UN Climate Summit talks in Paris in hopes that they will commit their nations to specific actions that reduce carbon emissions and address climate change.

The collaborative Energy Project between the Sisters of Charity and the College of Mount Saint Vincent is a big step toward fulfilling the Paris Pledge commitment to reduce carbon emissions. Project benefits include a reduced carbon footprint, lower energy costs, and less energy consumption. Solar panels will be put on the roofs of Spellman Hall, Alumnae Hall, the Library, Alumnae Pavilion, Peter J. Sharp Athletic Center, Mount Saint Vincent Convent, Rosary Hall, Ely Hall, and Le Gras Hall. The Villa Parking Lot will have solar covered carports. Adding solar panels to all these areas will provide approximately 520 kW of electricity that will not have to be obtained from the grid.

The Paris Pledge reads in part, "I believe a brighter future is within reach—a world with an economy that works for people and the planet, a world safe from the ravages of climate change, a world with good jobs, clean air and water, healthy communities, and a world where people of faith everywhere act as stewards of Creation and begin to build a new relationship with the Earth." Interfaith Power and Light is also asking that individuals sign the Paris Pledge.

The Sisters of Charity are proud to stand with other faith communities as we respond to Pope Francis' call in *Laudato Si'* to take action on behalf of the Earth and people living in poverty.

To sign on, visit: www.parispledge.org

Laudato Si' & SCNY

Continued from page 5

While climate change is not directly associated with our sponsored ministries or with our individual lives, as we reflect on *Laudato Si'* we are reminded that the way we use our power as consumers, the everyday practice of recycling, celebrating Eucharist, and enjoying the beauty of the Mount Saint Vincent campus are actions that care for Earth and people.

A major focus of the Congregation since 1995 has been "to reverence creation in a spirit of interconnectedness with all that is, living responsibly" (Vision 2000 Statement). The Earth Charter, affirmed at the 2007 Assembly, reminded us that "We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future." And our 2015 Assembly Calls connect to *Laudato Si'*. When they are fleshed out, they call us, for example, to witness to God's love in our care for others and for all creation; to love deeply and to live simply; to put the common good before our personal preferences while respecting individual differences.

Sisters and Associates' awareness of climate change and its effects on people who are trafficked, undocumented, and live in poverty has increased over the past few years through the efforts of the Task Forces (Creation's Transformative Energy, Global Poverty, Trafficking, and Immigration). Collaboration with groups such as Jubilee Network USA, Bread for the World, Justice for Immigrants, Catholic Climate Covenant, and Interfaith Power and Light offer a vision, support, and direction in changing unjust systems and structures. Members of the Task Forces find inspiration and strength in Pope Francis' words: "Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society."

In the months leading up to the UN Climate Summit in Paris in December, the Congregation is participating in the Global Catholic Climate Movement

*"We stand at a critical
moment in Earth's
history, a time when
humanity must choose
its future."*

Earth Charter

initiative to get people of faith to sign a petition to be presented to world leaders at the Summit, urging them to agree to a strong, just international climate treaty. It is hoped that at least 1 million Catholics in the United States will join their voices to millions throughout the world.

As members of ICCR (Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility) and TRI-CRI (TriState Coalition for Responsible Investments), the Congregation has signed statements and resolutions calling for reduction in carbon emissions and other corporate actions to mitigate effects of climate change.

Pope Francis reminds us that no action is too small. Practiced by individuals, by groups, by corporations, the four R's (reduce, reuse, recycle, and recreate) make a difference.

These are not new to us. They are part of our story. Humility, simplicity, and charity were not just words on the wall of every local community but the Vincentian virtues that were part of each sister's formation. Today we find them interwoven and illustrated in *Laudato Si'*—clarion calls inviting us to stand in awe, wonder, and gratitude before the beauty of all Creation; to recognize the value of diversity and difference; to take Sabbath time.

As we explore Pope Francis' call to take action on behalf of Earth and those living in poverty, we are asked to be grounded in these and other ecological virtues that can sustain us in caring for Earth and its people.

Group of Young Associates in Formation Visit Missions in Guatemala

Cecilia Harriendorf, SC

Five soon-to-be Sisters of Charity Associates recently visited the Sisters' missions in the Sololá and Quiché regions of Guatemala as part of a newly developed program designed for young adults.

The pioneer group included LeeAnn Brathwaite, a 2015 graduate of the College of Mount Saint Vincent who will travel to Italy in September as part of the requirements for a Masters in International Service; Todd Gable, also from the CMSV Class of 2015, who is currently interviewing with the Peace Corps; Nizarys Vargas, a 2012 CMSV graduate who studied at the American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Service and is now a Funeral Director; and Matthew Shields and Kathryn O'Loughlin, the director and assistant director, respectively, of the College of Mount Saint Vincent's Campus Ministry Office.

While in Guatemala, these young adults visited three of the medical clinics, enjoyed the children in the Sisters of Charity pre-school program, and learned about many of the services provided at the Barbara Ford Peace Building Center. They visited a model farm that teaches proper farming techniques, and took a short course in beekeeping. All five donned suits and helmets while learning about the Center's Beekeeping Entrepreneur Program, which offers young people a trade and the skills necessary to process, package, and effectively market the fruits of their and the bees' labor.

During their six-day stay in Guatemala, the group also attended a dinner hosted by the Sisters of Charity Novitiate Community and met more than fifteen of our Associates from Guatemala.

Above left: The group posed for this photo after visiting the beekeeping project at the Barbara Ford Peace Building Center in Quiché.

Above top: the group visited the farm on the ground of the Center. From left: Matt Shields, Kathryn O'Loughlin, LeeAnn Brathwaite, Nizarys Vargas, and Todd Gable. **Above bottom:** Sr. Ceil Harriendorf (back row on left) with the group and participants while on the grounds the Center.

Dinner conversation was lively, funny, and heartwarming as the Associates spoke about the value of their Associate relationships. These young adults will formalize their own Charity relationship at the Associate Commitment Ceremony in the fall.

All five returned home with an admiration for the Guatemalan people and with gratitude to the New York Sisters of Charity who have been serving the people of Guatemala for more than forty-five years.

Below: Sisters Nora Cunningham and Gloria De Artega (at right) welcomed the group and local Associates to the House of Formation.



Seton Canonization Still Lives in Memory

Continued from page 3

recalled the event as a “special blessing.” She had met Pope Paul VI once before, in 1960, when as Cardinal Montini he visited St. Vincent’s Hospital in Manhattan. Sister Rose, who spoke Italian, was asked to greet him. The Cardinal asked about her family and they spoke for ten minutes.

In Rome, Sr. Rose found it wonderful that the New York sisters who went to the canonization learned to enjoy every aspect of the Italian culture and its people—even until 10 o’clock at night!

FACT: New Yorkers who assisted Sr. Janet on the Liturgy Committee were Srs. Helen O’Connor and Marjorie Walsh.

A Lasting Legacy

Immediately after the Canonization ceremony, a group had a private audience with Pope Paul VI, at which Sr. Hildegarde Marie presented him with a scroll and a check for \$200,000. In her remarks (written by Sr. Margaret Dowling and exquisitely illuminated by Sr. Berenice Marie Leehive) she explained to the Pope, “Mindful of the charism of Sisters of Charity to serve the poor, we hear daily their crying needs.... Aware of Your Holiness’ concern for the poor, we wish to celebrate the universal charity of Elizabeth Seton by presenting today an offering to be distributed by you to alleviate the needs of the starving people of the world.” Other gifts presented to the Holy Father included two American flags from our Congregation, one with the thirteen stars of Elizabeth’s day and another with the fifty stars of the flag today.

FACT: New York Sisters who served as liturgical ministers at the three liturgies included Srs. Mary David Barry, Jean Miriam Donachie, Rose Agnes MacAuley, Virginia McGovern, and Helen O’Connor.

Behind the Scenes Organizers

Sister Janet Baxendale (with a recent graduate degree in liturgy from Notre Dame) was asked by Sr. Margaret Dowling to chair the Liturgy Committee for the canonization—a mammoth undertaking. Details for the canonization itself were handled by authorities in Rome, but the committee was responsible

FACT: Because of the large number wishing to attend the ceremony, the time was changed from morning to late afternoon, and the venue was switched from indoors to outdoors in St. Peter’s Square. It was carried live by American television and viewed by many New Yorkers at 11:30 am.



Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise, St. Louis, MO

This painting of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton hung from a balcony of the Vatican overlooking St. Peter’s Square on September 14, 1975.

Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, and over 500 Sisters and former members enjoyed a festive dinner.

The toast written by Sr. Catherine Hunt said in part: “*To our future*—which we will make together, sometimes in darkness, sometimes in light, always in love, through the help of the Lord, in the spirit of St. Vincent and St. Elizabeth.”

The Takeaway

For Sr. Janet, it was the strong spirit of collaboration among members of the Federation of the Daughters of Blessed Elizabeth Seton (now known as the Sisters of Charity Federation). “As I look back on that day forty years ago,” she wrote, “I rejoice again in that

for the September 16, 17, and 18 Triduum of Masses in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls. They had to choose appropriate texts and music, select liturgical ministers representing the six congregations of Sisters and Daughters of Charity, and coordinate countless details.

Around the world, the ceremony was viewed by many; Sr. Irene Fugazy, media consultant for the event, provided live (and lively) commentary for NBC-TV.

Much Joy at Home

An outdoor liturgy was held in Battery Park’s Castle Garden and in many other places where Sisters of Charity served. Here and in the Bahamas people celebrated at special liturgies, services, and ecumenical gatherings. At Mount Saint Vincent, the great Tower bell over the Chapel rang out at a morning prayer service in the

FACT: A last-minute fall unfortunately kept Sr. Loretto Bernard Beagan from participating in the Offertory Procession. Sister Alphonse Mary McGinley, beloved novice mistress for many Sisters, replaced her, accompanied by Joseph McGovern, long-time friend and Congregational consultant.

Mother Elizabeth Boyle Legacy Society

*"Love one another; love the children entrusted to your care.
Everything depends on your love."* Elizabeth Boyle

These were the last words of Mother Elizabeth Boyle, who was elected Mother of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of New York in 1846. Her ministry with the orphanages under the care of the Sisters of Charity was her life's work and her legacy continued for generations. What better way to honor Mother Elizabeth and all of the Sisters of Charity of New York than to consider a legacy gift to the Congregation.

A legacy gift serves as a powerful expression of your gratitude and support for the Sisters of Charity and your desire to make a lasting difference. Your gift will help ensure that the mission of the Sisters will go forward into the future and will also help to provide for



the continuing care of the Sisters who devote their lives to service.

There are various types of planned or deferred gifts that will allow you to make a difference into the future and that can be an integral component of prudent financial and tax planning.

People who remember the Sisters of Charity in their wills, bequests, or other planned giving vehicles will be recognized in the newly established Mother Elizabeth Boyle Legacy Society. Your name, or that of a loved one, will be engraved on a brass plate and mounted on the plaque located in Le Gras Hall on the campus of the College of Mount Saint Vincent.

For more information please contact the development office at: amgardiner@scny.org or 718-549-9200.

Anne Marie Gardiner

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extraordinary experience of faith, pride, gratitude, and perhaps above all, unity which washed over us then."

Sister Margaret Dowling drew a lesson from spending time in Rome, the Eternal City: "We who wish to accomplish everything in a year need to reflect on the life of history, and eternity. We are an important part of God's plan—but only a part."

In her remarks at a service on September 15, Sr. Hildegard Marie echoed Mother Seton's long view of God's plan: "Thwarted at times by ecclesiastical directors who did not share or trust her charism—one of whom even tried to depose her as superior of the Sisters of Charity—she was

FACT: A proclamation by President Gerald Ford declared Sept. 14 as National Saint Elizabeth Seton Day. Similar proclamations were made by the Governors of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, the Mayor of New York, and the Rockland County Legislature.

a religious who never lost her confidence in divine Providence, or her love for the Church."

Later that month at the New York Archdiocese's Mass of Celebration at St. Patrick's Cathedral on September 28, Msgr. James Conlan described the new saint as "a woman who went from riches to rags to glory. ... Without wealth, she founded schools and orphanages. Without husband, she found a new family beyond the counting. Without encouragement,

she breathed confidence into others. Without priesthood, she brought Christ to a New World." The next day, September 29, teachers, parents, and students—representatives of the Catholic schools of New York—celebrated Elizabeth, the educator, at a Mass at the Cathedral.

Without a doubt, the Church in America came of age with this honor. As Pope Paul VI later told the American bishops, "We are convinced that the action of the Holy Spirit is ever intense in the midst of your people, stirring up new fruits of holiness and justice." Sister Janet noted that the Pope seemed to speak from the heart when he proclaimed "She is a Saint! Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton IS a SAINT!!" He truly understood, she believed, "just how much that declaration meant to those who had come from near and far to celebrate her sainthood."

Sister Rose Bianco believes that St. Elizabeth Seton would tell us today: "My dear Sisters, I am proud of what you have done, are continuing to do, and will do in the years ahead. Leave the future to God. The spirit of the Sisters of Charity will always prevail!"

Sister Winifred Goddard summed up the feeling of all who attended: "To be part of a huge group of believers, to be in Rome, to share the experience with so many New Yorkers, to look back now and realize that it was a 'divine, human' experience fills me with awe—and I will always be grateful for it!"

Regional Coordinators



Prior to being elected to a first term, **Sr. Mary Ellen McGovern** served on the Congregation's Steering Committee, which was responsible for establishing the agenda for Assembly 2015. She also served at the Sisters of Charity Multi-Service Center (Casa De Esperanza, 2010–2015) and on the Church Threshold Committee (2011–2014).

Sister Mary Ellen's first ministry was in elementary education where she served for thirteen years. She then taught Communication Arts at the College of Mount Saint Vincent before accepting a position as producer/director at Instructional Television (ITV, 1978–1991). Sister Mary Ellen became Director of the School of New Resources at the College of New Rochelle in 1991, serving in that position until 2006.

Sister Mary Ellen earned a BA in English from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, and an MA and PhD in Communications from New York University. She attended St. Paul the Apostle School and Cathedral High School, both in Manhattan, and entered the Sisters of Charity in 1956. Her religious name was Sr. Maureen Ellen.



Sister Sheila Brosnan is returning to the as Regional Coordinator. Before being elected she served as VP for Mission Integration at Archcare (2010–2015). She previously served as Regional Coordinator from 1995 to 2003.

Education was Sr. Sheila's first ministry, on both the elementary and high school levels. Her first foreign mission was in 1971 when she served as a pastoral worker in Santiago, Chile, until 1974. Upon returning to the United States, Sr. Sheila trained as a nurse. She was missioned to Novillero, Guatemala, where she served as both nurse and missionary from 1978 until 1985. After returning she served as nursing supervisor at the Little Sisters of Assumption and at St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center, both in Manhattan. She served as Pastoral Associate at St. Francis Xavier in Manhattan from 1990 to 1995 and was then elected to Sisters of Charity Leadership. After two terms, Sr. Sheila served as Senior Vice President for Mission at St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Center in Staten Island until 2007. She studied at the Jesuit School of Theology before serving in the same role at St. Vincent's in Manhattan (2008–2010).

Sister Sheila earned a BA in Spanish from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, an MA in Spanish from Hunter College, a BSN in Nursing from the State University of New York, and an MA in Religious Studies from Fordham University.

A native Staten Islander, Sr. Sheila attended Our Lady Help of Christians and St. Peter's High School in that borough. She entered the Sisters of Charity in 1959; her religious name was Sister Denis Marie.



Sister Mary Ann Daly is serving a second term as Regional Coordinator. Prior to her election to the Leadership Team in 2011 she was Executive Director the Sisters of Charity Federation (2004–2011). She concurrently served as Director of Temporary Professed for the Sisters of Charity from 2007 to 2011.

Sister Mary Ann's first ministry was in elementary education; she taught for eight years at St. Margaret of Cortona School in the Bronx. Sister Mary Ann returned to school to earn a Master of Divinity degree. She then served as Director of Religious Education at Visitation Parish, the Bronx, and as Regional Director of Catechesis and Candidate Director for the Congregation. At the Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center in Manhattan, Sr. Mary Ann was Director of Mission Effectiveness for two years, and Associate Vice President for Mission Leadership for five years. In the Archdiocese of Newark, Sr. Mary Ann served as Formation Director and as Pastoral Assistant for over seven years.

Sister Mary Ann holds a BA in English from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, an MS in Adult Religious Education from Fordham University, and an MDiv in Theology from Immaculate Conception Seminary, Seton Hall University. She is a graduate of St. Barnabas High School and St. Frances of Rome School, both in the Bronx. Sister Mary Ann entered the Sisters of Charity in 1965.

Sister Kathleen Byrnes is also serving a second term as Regional Coordinator. Prior to being elected to Leadership in 2011, she served as Director of the Mobile Soup Kitchen ministry at St. John's Bread and Life in the Diocese of Brooklyn.

Sister Kathleen's first ministry was at St. Paul School, Manhattan, where she served as teacher, assistant principal, and principal (1969–1982).



Sister Story

The following are letters written to us from VISION readers and visitors to our website and Facebook page.

Each issue of VISION is a welcome reminder of two very special ladies. My mother's sisters, Ella and Julia Farrell, were both Sisters of Charity, and I cherish childhood memories of their visits to our New Jersey home. When they were based in Yonkers, their trip would include trolley, subway to the end of the line, ferry to New Jersey, and then the train to Dunellen—and the return trip—the same day, of course.

My friends were in awe of these two black-clad, take charge ladies, with their "Mother Seton" hats and their seemingly bottomless black bags of treasures: holy cards, medals, rosaries, etc.

Now, as a ninety-one year old lady, I envy their serene, steadfast faith. God always provided answers to their problems, big and small. If they were running late, the train was late, too. Good Samaritans with umbrellas and a convenient car materialized as needed, and if sunshine was vital for a big event, you were so lucky to have the "Auntie Sisters'" prayers to rely on.

God bless all the Sisters of Charity, including Sister Mary Pancratia Farrell and Sister Marie Lucille Farrell.

Ms. Anna Henderson, Rochester, MI

When I strolled into Sr. Marie Joseph's sophomore home room at Resurrection, Rye in 1961, I had no idea we would become friends until she went home to her Love. It is due to her guidance, love, and boundless patience that I am the person I am today. Sister Eileen was like St. Francis, preaching the Gospel using words only when necessary. Of course, with me, she had to use many words. It is because of Sister Eileen that I am in ministry as a DRE. She was a beautiful soul. I am blessed to have been called her friend.

Charlene Prisinzano, NY

When I began working at the College of Mount Saint Vincent, I was lucky enough to have Sr. Carol Finegan in an office right across from mine. Sister Carol made friendship easy. She is an amazing listener with just the right amount of concern, humor, and advice thrown in to make me leave her office feeling better than I entered. While at the Mount, I had a pregnancy which from almost the onset was expected to end before the birth of the baby. It was a struggle and test of faith. Sister Carol helped me through it all, sharing as a friend and a Sister. At a time which could have shut a door on my faith, she managed to help make mine stronger and it is the reason I decided to become an Associate with the Sisters of Charity.

Patrice Athanasidy, Cortlandt Manor, NY

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She continued in education, serving as Assistant Director for the archdiocesan Parish School Planning Program then as Director. After eighteen years in education, Sr. Kathleen transitioned to social work and served at the New York Foundling. After studying Spanish in Bolivia, Sr. Kathleen utilized her many skills in Guatemala where she served for seven years. She worked for nine years on Staten Island as Community Resource Coordinator at the Sisters of Charity Healthcare facility and as a social worker at St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Center.

With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

Please visit our website at www.scny.org/news for complete biographies of our Sisters

Sister Miriam Helen Callahan, SC

Entered: 1938 + Date of Death: 7/22/15 + Age: 98

Much-loved by former students, families, and colleagues, Sr. Helen spent her entire ministry life in education. Her longest mission was with St. Ignatius Loyola in Manhattan where she served as teacher, administrator, and then volunteer. Throughout her life she possessed a great passion for sowing the seeds of God's love through education and example. She never missed an opportunity to teach others or to learn from them.



Sister Miriam Roberta Kiernan, SC

Entered: 1944 + Date of Death: 7/27/15 + Age: 93

Sister Roberta is most remembered for her long years of service (1962-1996) at Cathedral High School where, with professionalism and a trademark sense of humor, she taught English and moderated the school newspaper, *The Arbutus*. She loved her students ("most days," as she wryly noted), many of whom came from a background of poverty. Sister firmly believed that a good educational foundation was the best preparation for life that she could give them.



Sister Elizabeth McLoughlin, SC

Entered: 1943 + Date of Death: 7/28/15 + Age: 92

Sister Elizabeth was a quintessential elementary educator. She taught in eight schools over fifty-one years. Upon retirement she volunteered as patient representative at St. Vincent's Hospital and Mary Manning Walsh Home, both in Manhattan. In both places she provided compassion, an open heart, and a listening ear for each patient's needs and stories.



Sister Kathleen holds a BA in History from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, an MS in Elementary Education from Hunter College, and an MSW from Fordham University. She received New York State Certification in School Administration and has studied at the Maryknoll Language School in Bolivia.

A Bronx native, Sr. Kathleen is a graduate of St. Raymond Academy and St. Raymond Elementary School. Sister Kathleen entered the Congregation in 1964; her religious name was Sr. Maura Thomas.

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Above: The reredos as it appeared in its original location at the Convent of Mary the Queen chapel. **Below left and right:** The reconstruction was carefully executed by a team of three craftsmen.

Reredos from the Queen Reconstructed at Mount Saint Vincent Convent

Sisters Janet Baxendale, Eileen McGrory, and Dominica Rocchio are working with Rolf Rohn, Liturgical Design/Architectural Consultant and Artist, and his company for the disposition of Mary the Queen chapel items.

The reredos, the wooden grill work that was behind the altar, has been installed in the Assembly Room where Mass is celebrated at Mount Saint Vincent Convent. Stained glass from the top of the Marian windows in the chapel of Mary the Queen has been attached to the back of the reredos. The finishing work will be completed over the next several weeks.



Above: The reredos as it appears now in the Assembly Room at Mount Saint Vincent Convent. **Below center:** Srs. Dominica Rocchio (left) and Janet Baxendale with Costel Christina, supervisor of the team.

