

# VISION

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK

*Living Lives of Love*

Volume 17 • Issue 1 • SPRING 2013



Ritz-Carlton  
Hotel at Sisters  
Hill Farm

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Sandy Victims

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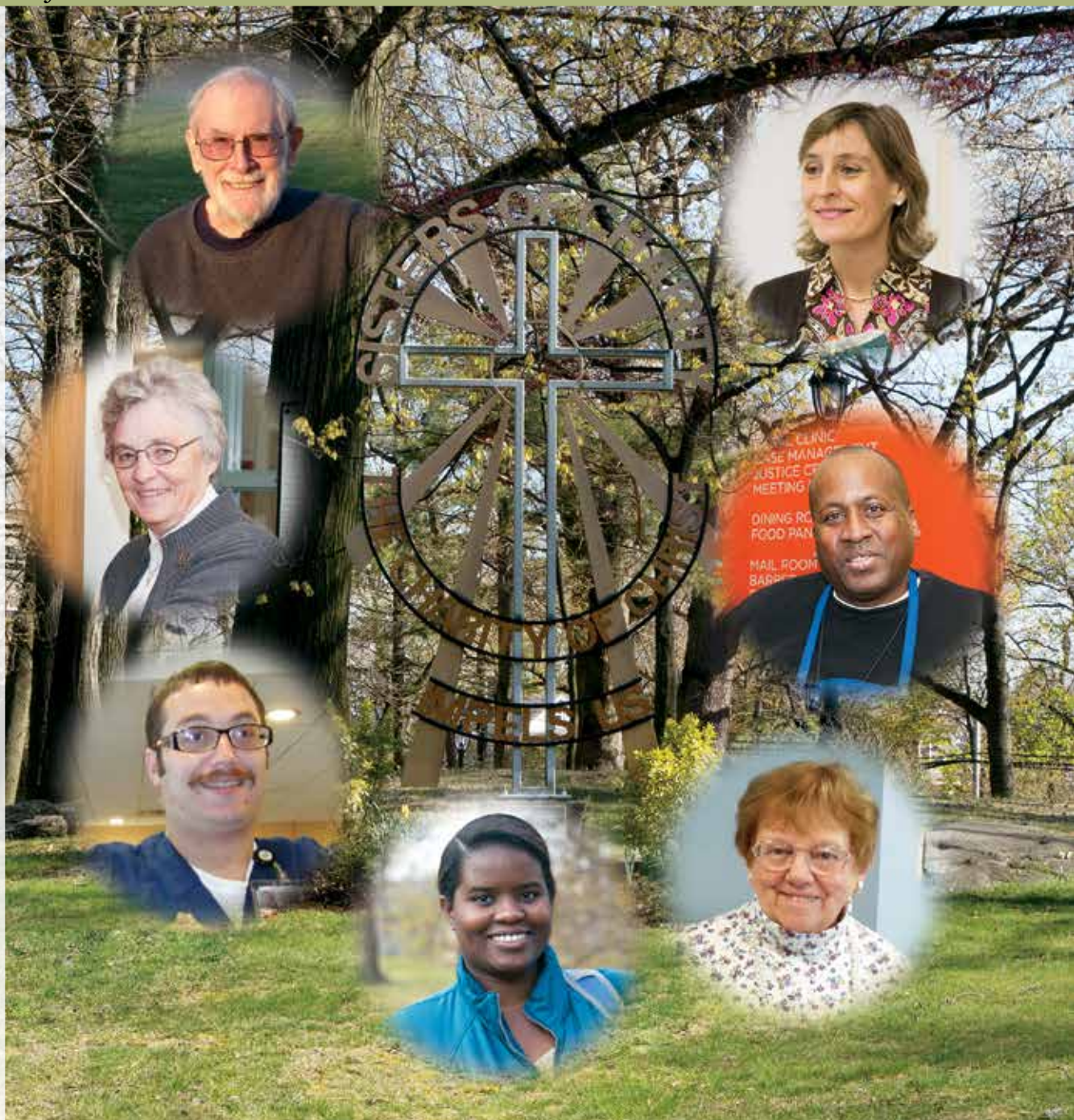


Dorothy Day  
Servant of God

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SISTERS  
of CHARITY  
NEW YORK



*I Am the Face of Charity*

## Letter from the President



Dear Friends,

The mission of the Sisters of Charity calls us to reveal God's love with and for all in need, especially those living in poverty. An early rule of charity calls us to serve not only those with visible needs, but those who because of shame hide their need from us. It is critically important for us in our lives to see with the eyes of charity the needs of our sisters and brothers.

We are called to act as women and men of charity. Each of us has an individual and unique vocation. Within that vocation is a call to serve the common good, and to live this call we need to be of service to one another. One concrete way to live this call is to volunteer. Sisters of Charity volunteers reveal God's love not only by what they do, but by the presence they bring to others.

You are living the gift of charity. As you read of the services of those highlighted here, know that you and so many others are the hands and face of charity to many. Thank you for being our partners in mission.

Peace,

Jane Iannucelli, SC  
President



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*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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NEW YORK

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# A Call to Service —*I Am the Face of Charity*

"Let us never forget that authentic power is service, and that the pope too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service which has its radiant culmination on the cross. He must be inspired by the lowly, concrete and faithful service which marked Saint Joseph and, like him, he must open his arms to protect all of God's people and embrace with tender affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least important, those whom Matthew lists in the final judgment on love: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison (cf. Mt 25:31-46). Only those who serve with love are able to protect!"

*Pope Francis during his installation*

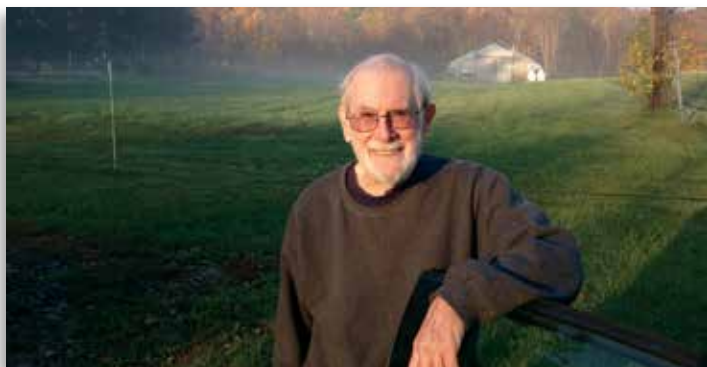
**O**n March 19, 2013, Pope Francis was installed as the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic Church. His call to service at his installation is a call the world desperately needs to hear as more and more of our brothers and sisters living on the margins seem to be forgotten, ignored, and passed on by.

"The Charity Family" has a long and wonderful history of service to those in need throughout our sponsored works. With love and appreciation we take a look at those who have already answered that call to service.

**Peter Christman** has been a volunteer at Sisters Hill Farm since we began in 1999. He read an article in a local newspaper chronicling the start-up of the farm and he and his wife, Danielle, showed up one day to see what it was all about. The day they met me, in the early spring, I was busy setting up the greenhouse and clearing the fields of rocks (to help make cultivation easier). Peter and Danielle saw that I had a monumental task ahead of me and they lived only a mile or two away. They were retired and looking for a way to stay physically active. They jumped right in and went to work—it was a match made in heaven! Over the years, due to knee issues, Danielle's participation waned, but Peter's increased.

Some interesting things about Peter: his name roughly translates to "the rock," and he majored in geology, yet he never pursued his interest professionally. Having missed all those years of playing with rocks, he has now taken to it with gusto! He spends about 20 to 25 hours a week at the farm in

*Continued see page 4*



**C**asa de Esperanza, a multi-service center sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, is a place of warmth, hospitality, and learning for people who are new to this country. Two levels of English as a second language (ESL), preparation for citizenship, and computer and sewing classes are offered to persons from Mexico, Central America, and several countries in the Middle East. Volunteer teachers assist the program directors, Sisters Jean Bocian and Terese McElroy, in presenting materials to the learners, who come to Casa four days a week.

**Mrs. Soledad Hershey** is, and has been for the past five years, one of the volunteer teachers. A native of Madrid, Soledad is married and the mother of four; she lives in Bronxville, NY, and



attends St. Joseph's parish. She heard about the program from some of the mothers who were themselves volunteers, or who supported the program at Casa through fund-raising events. Their descriptions of the program, the directors, and the people they served were positive and affirming. Soledad decided to become a volunteer teacher, and has loved every minute of the time she has spent with her students. She says of them that "they really want to learn. They are so thankful and appreciative of all they receive from Casa, not only the opportunity to learn English, but also for being made to feel at home, respected, and safe."

Soledad finds her volunteer work at Casa very rewarding. It is a way for her to give something to a community of women and men who really need what she is able and willing to give. She says, "There's a place for you (at Casa) if you, too, want to give."

*Mary E. McCormick, SC*



One of the volunteers who spends two days a week working in the Archives is **Sr. Margaret A. Donegan**. Among her many tasks is designing the exhibits which grace the cases across from the reception desk in Le Gras Hall. Over the past year and a half she has displayed exhibits which highlighted the various ministries of the Sisters of Charity of New York. Presently the exhibit is of various mothers of the early community. When you visit Le Gras Hall the next time, be sure to stop and browse this lovely exhibit and learn a bit of our early history.

Sister Margaret spent fifty-one years as a high school English teacher and an educator par excellence. She believes that education is the ministry that will enable our young people to become the leaders of tomorrow. She worked very hard during her years in the classroom to provide her students with a well-balanced education and a real love of learning. Sr. Margaret shares her many talents with us in the Archives and continues to volunteer

in programs designed to enhance the leadership skills of high school students.

Of her work, Sr. Margaret says "The Archives is a holy place that houses the extraordinary and sacred history of the congregation. It tells the stories of sisters, so many whose names I have never heard, but whose selfless and faithful service to God's people under all circumstances never ceases to inspire me. I am deeply touched by the gift these sisters have given to the congregation. Volunteering in the Archives is a special experience."

*Maryellen Blumlein, SC*

#### **Peter Christman, Sisters Hill Farm** *Continued from p. 3*

his self-appointed role as Senior Field Maintenance Engineer (he gave himself an upgrade from Technician a few years back). Since 1999 Peter has removed by hand more than 750,000 pounds of rocks! To keep track, he fills 5-gallon buckets to overflowing, knowing that those weigh about 65 pounds. Not only has he done that, he weeds for us as well. He tackles growing beds where the weeds have gotten ahead of us, helping both to make the farm look gorgeous and to make future work easier. He's in his early 80s and he's as strong as I am at not quite half his age. He has worn through at least a half dozen huge metal claw-like tools that he uses to unearth the rocks, and probably 50 pairs of heavy-duty work gloves, yet he is none the worse for the wear; in fact, he's healthier for it.

Peter is an inspiration to me and all who know him. He has given selflessly to Sisters Hill Farm for 14 years. His love of our farm, his farm, is humbling! Thank you Peter, you are our Rock!

*Dave Hambleton, Farmer*

**Umberto Duarte**, a volunteer at Saint Joseph's Medical Center, wears many hats. As a unit-based assistant he can be seen three days a week on patient floors, in the Emergency Room, in the Nursing Home, or at the Family Health Center. Whether he is transporting patients or making deliveries to patients or to staff members, Umberto is always "flexible and dependable" according to Arlene Penn, Director of Volunteers. "He always has a smile and brings joy to everyone he meets."

This Yonkers native is also a client of Jawonio (a community-based provider of lifespan services in the Hudson Valley for people with developmental disabilities and special needs). Along with his volunteer work, Umberto is studying at Lehman College to become a lab technician and "loves" coming to the hospital because he is "learning a lot about hospital life." And the best part of his days at the hospital are



the people he meets, he says, because they have "such beautiful hearts."

Saint Joseph's Medical Center has been a vibrant part of the downtown Yonkers NY area since its founding by the Sisters of Charity in 1888. For over 120 years the hospital has continued its commitment to providing health services to all those

in need. Along with its being an acute care facility, a nursing home, a Family Health Care Center, a psychiatric hospital in Westchester, and one of the busiest Emergency Departments in Westchester, it also provides school-based health programs for Yonkers and sponsors low-income housing in the surrounding area.

Saint Joseph's has a strong tradition of providing for the ever changing health care needs of its local community and Arlene Penn believes that Umberto exemplifies that tradition.

*Patricia McGowan, SC*

**Randy Brown**, POTS 2011 Volunteer of the Year, has been with POTS (Part of the Solution) for eight years. He first came as a guest and soon began volunteering in the community dining room. Today, Randy is a part-time employee and a part-time volunteer.

Randy is well known within the POTS community for greeting and shaking the hand of each guest he encounters. "When you shake a man's hand, you look him in the eye and give a real sense of greeting; sometimes these people go their whole day without even being noticed. This shake gives them a sense of acknowledgement, even if it's just for a moment," says Randy.

Randy was able to put a difficult life behind him. He came to POTS for meals and haircuts, and though he is now a part-time employee, he still maintains his humble respect for each individual who passes through the door.

One day when Randy was eating lunch in the community dining room, he noticed that they were short staffed, so he



took this as an opportunity to give back to the organization that gave him so much and he started to volunteer. Randy would even walk 45 minutes each day to arrive early in the morning, but he didn't mind, he considered it all therapeutic. He says "I love the fact that I honestly helped someone every day. I wake up every morning thinking, I hope I can help someone today because it makes the whole day worthwhile."

His dedication did not go unnoticed. Randy spoke with pride about the day he received his POTS Volunteer of the Year award: "I was asked to come in early and was greeting the people outside as every morning. They kept asking me to come inside and surprised me with an award. It felt good being recognized for your work, to be known around the community, not for something negative, but because you're helping these people."

*Kathryn Castillo, POTS Intern*



**Mildred Oslica** has lived in Seton Village, SC-sponsored housing in Nanuet, NY, since it opened in 2003. She contributed to its first newsletter for residents, worked on the Memorial Day and Valentines for Vets programs, helped with the annual sale, and arranged for a speaker on Haiti. She is a prime mover in the local branch of Catholic Daughters, as well as in her parish's Renew group and in its outreach to Haiti.

"Volunteering is in my blood," Mildred says. "We are called to help one another in our little ways." Rockland County Catholic Charities agreed, awarding her a Lifetime Volunteer Award recently.

Thanks, Mildred, for living out the spirit of Charity in so many ways!

*Regina Bechtle, SC*

**Lyne Louis-Charles**, a senior at the College of Mount Saint Vincent who immigrated to the United States from Haiti six years ago, grew up with a family tradition of volunteer duty. She equates volunteering to breathing—"It's only fair and right to be there for others," she says.

Early on during her freshman year at the college, Lyne responded to an email from the Office of Campus Ministry. One Sunday a month, she and several other students travel to POTS on Webster Avenue in the Bronx to volunteer in the kitchen and pantry. Lyne experiences a real sense of community in her work with clients and staff members alike. She feels welcomed and appreciated, and does her very best to make all who come through the doors at POTS feel that same sense of community and appreciation. "It's a nice way to spend a Sunday," says Lyne.



The Sisters of Charity are proud of all the "branches" of the Charity Family and all that we can accomplish by the willingness of many to be the hands of charity, the voice of charity, the eyes of charity. The aforementioned individuals are a few of the many who help us live out our mission.

Our volunteer efforts are coordinated by Sr. Mary Lou McGrath, Director of Volunteer Services. There is always room for those who want to join our efforts to make God's love visible in the lives of all in need. We invite you to call Sr. Mary Lou at 718-549-9200, extension 244. Please join us.

In his homily on the opening day of the "Year of Faith," October 11, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI called for "people of faith ... who, with their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive." For us and for the Church, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is one of those valiant people who models faith-filled discipleship.

In this article, written for teachers and catechists in the Archdiocese of New York, Sr. Maryellen reflects on Mother Seton's stalwart faith and hope. (October 11, 2012 also marked the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.)

**B**orn into a prominent New York Episcopalian family in 1774, Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton had a deep faith in God from an early age. Her mother died when she was three years old, and despite the pain and hardship this caused, Elizabeth continued to believe in God's great love for her. She saw her doctor father as he treated the poor and immigrants of New York City, and from him learned Jesus' gospel message of caring for the poor, sick, and less fortunate people of her native city.

She attended Sunday church services at Trinity Church and was a good friend of her minister, the Rev. Henry Hobart. She married William Magee Seton, who was prominent in the shipping business. They were extremely happy and had five children who were baptized in the Episcopalian faith. When William's business began to fail, he succumbed to the "family illness"—tuberculosis. As his health declined, Elizabeth and their eldest daughter, Anna Maria, sailed with William to Italy in the hope of improving his health. There they remained in quarantine until they were finally allowed into the country and could stay at the home of William's business partner, Antonio Filicchi. William died shortly after, on December 27, 1803, leaving Elizabeth a widow with five children to care for. But she continued to believe in God's love for her and to accept his will in both good and challenging times.

As they awaited return passage to New York, Elizabeth and Anna Maria remained in the care of the kind and

religious Filicchi family. Episcopalians believed in Jesus, but not in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, as Catholics did. As she learned more about the Roman Catholic faith from the Filicchi family, Elizabeth longed to be able to receive Jesus' body and blood in Communion. Upon her return to New York, she eventually decided to make her profession of faith as a Catholic and began instructions for First Holy



## Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton: *A Woman of Faith*

by Maryellen Blumlein, SC

Communion and Confirmation, which she received at St. Peter's Church on Barclay Street.

Because of her conversion to "the faith of the immigrants," many of Elizabeth's friends would no longer associate with her. She was invited to move to Baltimore and begin a school for girls. In this way she was able to support and care for her children. She was eventually given land in St. Joseph's Valley, near Emmitsburg, where the community of the American Sisters of Charity began to blossom. Elizabeth's faith and simplicity attracted other women to follow in Jesus' footsteps. The Sisters of Charity

professed vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and took up their work of education.

Mother Seton sent sisters to Philadelphia to staff an orphanage, and in 1817 sent three sisters to her native New York to take over the care of orphans in what came to be known as St. Patrick's Orphanage.

Mother Seton faced many hardships in her life. From the time of her mother's death, Elizabeth was no stranger to loss and struggle. Her husband and several of her children, as well as many of the younger members of her fledgling community, died from tuberculosis. She and her sisters lived in great poverty, and Mother Seton constantly prayed for God's providence and care for the sisters and the children with whom they worked. Despite these difficulties, Elizabeth's faith remained constant and strong. She knew that she and her mission were held in God's loving hands and heart.

On January 4, 1821, Mother Elizabeth Seton died of tuberculosis in the sisters' chapel, surrounded by her sisters and her Savior. To her last minutes she professed her love for her Divine Master and encouraged her sisters to remain faithful to the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to be ever faithful "children of the Church."

### *A Family Prayer for the Year of Faith*

O God our Father, in Jesus you call all Christian families and homes to be signs of living faith.

By the light of the Holy Spirit,  
lead us to be thankful for the gift of faith,  
and by that gift may we grow in our  
relationship with Jesus, your Son,  
and be confident witnesses to Christian  
hope and joy to all we meet.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen



Sheila Anderson, Housekeeping Office Coordinator;  
Aziz Bendriss, Rooms Executive (*former employee*)



Mark Arnao, Executive Chef



Laura McDavid, former Sales Manager (left);  
Rachel Freedland

## *Puttin' on the Ritz* at Sisters Hill Farm

In May 2012, the food service staff from New York's prestigious Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Central Park, visited Sisters Hill Farm in Stanfordville, NY, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project and a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Charity of New York.

Since 1983, the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company has sponsored Community Footprints, a program that is guided by three principles: engage, contribute, and inspire. These are the guiding principles of the social and environmental responsibility program that they have adhered to, deciding that their hotels would be "positive, supportive members of their communities and sensitive to the environment." With this in mind, Deborah Croce, Human Resources Director at the Central Park location, began the search for a way to engage the food service staff in a program that would involve food and community.

The search resulted in the discovery of Sisters Hill Farm, whose mission is focused on "growing healthy food, which nurtures bodies, spirits, communities, and the earth. It seemed like a perfect fit. Ms. Croce contacted and soon after met with Sr. Mary Ann Garisto, Director of Sisters Hill Farm. She explained the company's program and her desire to engage her food staff in the hard work and commitment it takes to grow healthy, nutritious food by actually participating in the planting, weeding, harvesting, and everything else it takes to grow healthy produce. As those familiar with the Sisters of Charity know, Sisters Hill Farm is not just any CSA. Since its very beginning, the farm has donated a portion of its produce to the local community, be it directly to families, to soup kitchens, or to pantries. Ms. Croce soon realized that Sisters Hill Farm provided a perfect opportunity for the Ritz-Carlton's food staff to contribute to the community. All they needed to do was to get Farmer Dave Hambleton on board.

He was initially skeptical, but the staff's hard work and enthusiasm soon won him over. Dave recalled, "Our work here on the farm is very hands on. Farm work involves hard physical labor in all manner of severe weather conditions. Dirt and sweat are a daily fact of life. I wasn't sure how the staff

of a five-star hotel would handle those conditions. From the first moment they arrived, Debbie and her colleagues met and exceeded my expectations. We started out planting potatoes, which involved spreading composted manure by hand, using 5-gallon buckets, on a drizzly morning. It was trial by fire, planting 1,300 pounds of potatoes under those conditions, but they passed with flying colors, enjoying every moment of



Deborah Croce, HR Director; Nelson DeJesus, Executive Steward

the task. We moved on to several other projects that rainy day, and each was met with enthusiasm. Debbie especially, seemed to thrive, creating a joyous presence."

Ms. Croce and her staff came back to the farm several times since that day in May, contributing a great deal of labor toward the harvests, which was always greatly appreciated by Farmer Dave. Each time they visited, they brought the staff of the farm a five-star lunch. There was a great sense of camaraderie among all. It was fascinating for the farm staff to hear about life and work in a luxury hotel, and the hotel staff enjoyed the experience of working in cooperation with the earth and nature to sustain themselves and the community at large. In a most generous and spirited gesture, the food service staff invited Sisters Mary Ann, Jean Flannelly, Margaret Ellen Burke, and Eileen Judge to lunch at the Ritz-Carlton.

As a result of this collaboration, the hotel has become a shareholder in the farm. Each week from May through early November they travel to Mount Saint Vincent to pick up ten shares of fresh, organically grown vegetables—everything from lettuce, cucumbers, and zucchini to kale, tomatoes, and pumpkins. The hotel's menu will state that the vegetables were grown at Sisters Hill Farm. When asked how long this collaboration between the hotel staff and the farm will continue, Ms. Croce enthusiastically responded, "As long as possible!"

## Ways We Live Peace, Justice, and Integrity of Creation!

Carol DeAngelo, SC

About twenty five people gathered at the SC retirement residence, the Convent of Mary the Queen, on Nov. 8, 2012—sisters, staff, volunteers, and an associate. “What does it look like to live a ministry of peace, justice, and integrity of creation?” (PJIC ministry for short) Sr. Carol DeAngelo asked the group. The gathering was an opportunity to explore how each sister, associate, and colleague of the Sisters of Charity, no matter where they are or what they do, collaborates with the Office of Peace, Justice, and Integrity of Creation. Sr. Carol also asked if they ever thought of a former ministry or their current ministry of prayer, presence, and witness as a PJIC ministry.

Members of the group began to nod yes when Sr. Carol asked if, as a teacher or nurse or social worker, they created environments of safety, openness, and trust. When asked if they considered gathering for daily Mass, a Holy Hour, or the Rosary, as acts of peace, justice, and care for earth, they weren't too sure at first. But after some discussion, some said how easy it is to forget the power and importance of prayer. They spoke of living through chronic pain and ongoing illness, undergoing medical treatment, or just finding it difficult to say yes to God (as one sister told me as she tried to adjust

to living at the Queen), as ways to bring light, forgiveness, reconciliation, and right relationships into the world, even though we may not be the ones to see the results.

Openness to hosting gatherings such as the Awakening the Dreamer Symposium and the Healing and Wellness workshops were events that gave a more public face to the congregation's peace, justice, and integrity of creation work. So many ways are open to us—listening, mentoring, welcoming, living simply. There is no one way.

The sisters and staff began to tell their stories. Sr. Maureen Dunn concluded the sharing at the Queen by saying “We need to tell each other the stories. The stories are important.” As I listened at the Queen, St. Patrick Villa, and Mount Saint Vincent Convent (all retirement residences) on separate occasions, I was filled with faith, hope, and love—by the people who told the stories, the people in the stories, and the people gathered in each of the three places. Perhaps we can continue to tell stories of how we see ourselves, individually and as congregation, living the ministry of peace, justice, and integrity of creation. As we do so, let us remember our 2011 Assembly call to remain rooted in deep contemplation, ongoing conversion, and prophetic action.

### *All Creation Sings Praying the Psalms with St. Elizabeth Seton*

*Selected and edited by  
by Regina Bechtle, SC  
& Margaret Egan, SC*

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Sr. Margaret Beaudette attended the unveiling of two sculptures commissioned by Bishop Paul G. Bootkoski on the occasion of his Tenth Anniversary as Bishop of Metuchen, NJ, on October 12, 2012. The sculpture of Pope John Paul II commemorates his founding of the diocese in 1981. The second sculpture is of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the cathedral.





Sr. Karen Helfenstein



Associate Pat Flynn (left) and Sr. Nancy McNamara



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## Sisters of Charity Reach out to Superstorm Sandy Victims

The Sisters of Charity of New York have a long history of service to the people of Staten Island and the connections run very deep.

For this reason, news of the devastation suffered by so many in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy was received with great sadness and concern for the residents, many of whom are former students, who were born or cared for in St. Vincent's and Bayley Seton Hospitals, or who live in Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corporation residences.

Upon hearing the news about Staten Island, Sr. Jane Iannucelli asked Sr. Donna Dodge to coordinate the congregation's efforts to aid those who were affected by the storm. A call went out to all sisters and associates requesting cash donations, which were matched by the congregation, as well as supplies of various kinds.



SC Staff member Ellen Downey

Supplies, blankets, batteries, garbage bags, and other needed goods. The Sisters of Charity Center and Seton Village in Nanuet were designated as collection sites for those who wished to donate supplies. Sisters, associates, and Sisters of Charity staff volunteered to sort the donated items and help with the distribution, an effort that was coordinated by Sr. Karen Helfenstein.



Sr. Maggie Kelly and Associate Bill Hurley

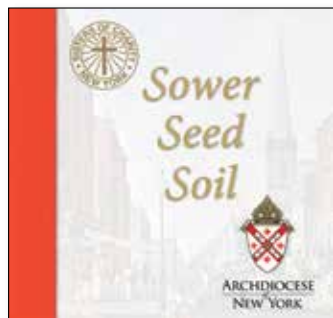
On November 14th, the Leadership Team announced that \$10,000 had been collected. While many areas of New York were devastated by the storm, the Sisters of Charity chose to concentrate their relief efforts in Staten Island because of the long history of service to that borough. A total of \$26,000.00, the money collected plus a \$6,000 donation, was distributed from Sisters of Charity funds. Checks for \$2,000.00 were sent to the parishes on the South Shore: Holy Rosary, St. Margaret Mary, St. Christopher, Our Lady Queen of Peace, St. Charles, St. Clare, Church of the Holy Child, Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. Joseph/St. Thomas, and Our Lady Help of Christians. The congregation also sent \$2,000.00 checks to Mount Manresa Retreat Center and St. Edward's Food Pantry, both also on Staten Island, and the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine in lower Manhattan. Several volunteers came forward to drive the donated supplies to the primary receiving center for Catholic Charities at Mount Loretto in Staten Island.



Santiago Moran, inside the van, and Francisco Vega, Convent of Mary the Queen employees.

The Sisters of Charity expressed their heartfelt gratitude to all those who responded with generosity and love to those in need. The Sisters continue to hold in prayer all the victims of Superstorm Sandy as they continue to recover from this devastating storm.

**UPDATE:** Sr. Mary Lou McGrath, Director of Volunteer Services, has announced that the Charity in the City program will be brought to Staten Island in June. She and six freshman and sophomore women will stay at the convent at Our Lady Help of Christians and lend a hand in whatever way they can to help Staten Islanders continue rebuilding their homes.



*This poem was written by Regina Bechtle, SC, for "Sower, Seed, Soil," a book written and produced by the Sisters of Charity to commemorate Cardinal Dolan's elevation in February 2012. Artwork by Margaret Beaudette, SC.*

Concanen, Connolly,  
Dubois, the French outlier,  
Hughes and McCloskey,  
Corrigan, Farley, and Hayes,  
Spellman, Cooke, O'Connor and Egan,  
and Dolan, the latest bishop and brother—

The lure of the Sower led you here,  
to make your home in cobbled fields,  
to fling the seed  
down hardscrabble streets  
with prodigal hope  
set on the living God.

Some seeds froze in the stony ground.  
Some took root in the concrete cracks  
where people lived  
who wore the grimy face of Christ.

Over this city He wept,  
wept for its brutal cut and thrust,  
its stench, its cries,  
its sad-eyed lambs  
cradled in soot.  
"Feed them yourselves."

Even in earliest days,  
women in widows' weeds  
came with bread and tenderness,  
mothers sent by the Seton woman,  
*"citizen of the world,"*  
back to the strays of her native city,  
*"so distracted a place,"*  
so hungry, so hard.

You fed, we fed, the lambs, the sheep  
with bread, with sweat,  
with love  
as fierce as any our mothers gave us.

You took, we took,  
the bread and blessed it.  
Com-panions, you baked, we baked  
and served it,  
ground from the seeds  
that grew through storms,  
through sorrows,  
into the bread that became our lives,

bread for the life  
of this place of grit and glory,  
this house of the living God,  
the One in whom—  
from first days till now—  
you place, we place,  
our stubborn hope.

—Regina Bechtle, SC, 2/12

\* Italicized words are quotes from Elizabeth Seton's letters.

# Servant of God Dorothy Day and the Sisters of Charity

*"It was human love that helped me to understand divine love."*

Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day is often defined as "an American journalist, social activist, and a devout Catholic convert." In 1983 a proposal for Dorothy Day's canonization was presented by the Claretian Missionaries. Commemorating the one-hundredth anniversary of her birth, Cardinal John O'Connor launched the cause for sainthood in 1997, which was accepted by Pope John Paul II in 2000. As a result Dorothy Day is now called a "Servant of God." At the urging of Cardinal Timothy Dolan last November, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops officially and unanimously endorsed the cause for sainthood.

Like St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Dorothy Day was one of us—a New Yorker. She was born in Brooklyn, lived and worked in Manhattan for many years, and it was in Staten Island that she was welcomed into the church. In her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, Dorothy recounts how the Sisters of Charity played an important role in her conversion to Catholicism. She lived in a waterfront beach cottage on the south shore of the island at the time, near St. Joseph by the Sea.

Born to a nonobservant Protestant family, Dorothy held within her a curiosity and interest in God and faith throughout her young life and into adulthood, despite her radical, bohemian lifestyle. Her faith and quest for God evolved over the years and she was eventually drawn to the Catholic Church. She attended Mass and Benediction, read *The Imitation of Christ*, learned about the saints, and without quite knowing how, she even prayed the Rosary.

One of the great tragedies of Dorothy's life was an abortion in her early twenties, which she thought left her barren. She was filled with joy and gratitude when she became pregnant in her late twenties and immediately knew that her child would be baptized in the



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Catholic Church. "I did not want my child to flounder as I had often floundered. I wanted to believe, and I wanted my child to believe, and if belonging to a church would give her so inestimable a grace as faith in God, and the companionable love of the saints, then the thing to do was to have her baptized a Catholic." The birth of Tamar Teresa brought her much happiness and filled her with an overwhelming love.

Dorothy yearned to speak to another Catholic but could not bring herself to do so. Perhaps it was her admiration of St. Teresa of Avila that gave her the confidence to approach a sister, but one day she spotted "an elderly nun" near St. Joseph by the Sea, and ran to speak to her about baptizing Tamar Teresa. At the time, Sr. Aloysia Mary Mulhern worked at the home, which served as a summer residence for children from the New York Foundling.

Sister Aloysia visited Dorothy three times a week to instruct her in catechism, and expressed her belief that Dorothy needed to become a Catholic herself in order to raise her daughter in the faith. Sr. Aloysia insisted that Dorothy recite the answers word for word, just as she taught her young students.

It was when Dorothy gave Sr. Aloysia a dollar and stamps to send a gift to her niece that she realized how the sisters lived in poverty and had nothing of their own. She was moved by Sr. Aloysia's "touching gratefulness."

Still living in a common-law marriage with Forster Batterham, an anarchist and atheist who did not believe in marriage, Dorothy knew she was not then prepared to make the changes in her life necessary to live the faith. She was, however, prepared to raise her daughter in what she believed to be the true church, "the church of immigrants, the church of the poor."

Tamar was baptized in July 1927, putting further distance between Dorothy and the child's father and eventually leading to a final breakup. With Sr. Aloysia as her godparent, Dorothy was conditionally baptized (having already been baptized in the Episcopal Church) on December 28 of that same year at Our Lady Help of Christians.

Her early days as a Catholic were not joyous ones. She was conflicted about all she left behind and felt like a hypocrite. But Dorothy did not abandon her principles and her fight for social justice. A few years later, after standing on the sidelines at a Washington, DC, march organized by the communist party, coincidentally held on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Dorothy found herself at a crossroad. "I offered

*Continued, see p. 14*



St. Joseph by the Sea

# With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

## Sister Rose Marie Galligan, SC (Sr. Thomas Regina)

Entered: 1944 + Date of Death: 9/16/12 + Age: 89

*"The calm and strength that radiated from Sister Rose Marie ... bore witness to St. Elizabeth's special care for one of her beloved daughters."*



Sister Rose Marie's entire active ministry, beginning in 1946 and continuing for 54 years, was spent at The New York Foundling. Sister used her business acumen as a bookkeeper; she then served in Personnel, Finance, and Support Services. Her ministry continued as Assistant Administrator for Finance and became Special Assistant. Sister retired in 1997 but continued to serve as a volunteer at the Foundling until 2000. The New York Foundling was very special to Sr. Rose Marie and, as a resident in the Convent of Mary the Queen, she enjoyed time reminiscing with others about her favorite place.

## Sister Patricia Regina Walsh, SC

Entered: 1951 + Date of Death: 10/19/12 + Age: 80

*"At the heart of each mission was a deep love for the children she served."*

Sister Patricia served in various ministries. As a group mother at St. Agatha Home, Nanuet, a baby nurse at the New York Foundling, or a first grade teacher, Sr. Patricia brought joy and quality service to all her "charges." Her years at St. Mary, Wappinger Falls, filled her with many blessings. This special woman had a tremendous heart filled with generosity and kindness. If she could do it, she would never say no to a request. Is it no wonder that her heart was worn out with love.



## Sister Angelica Marie Troy, SC

Entered: 1940 + Date of Death: 12/4/12 + Age: 92

*"More than 1,000 guests gathered to applaud the tiny Sister who had given a giant's service to anyone who needed her assistance..."*



Sister Angelica began her ministry in the field of education before beginning her studies at Fordham University. She served as Pharmacist and later as Coordinator of Pharmacy Purchasing at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Manhattan, where she became known for her compassion, wit, and selflessness toward others. Sr. Angelica traveled to Thailand with her sister, Jodi, to assist Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Laotian refugees of the Khmer Rouge genocide in the late 1970s. She found this ministry especially rewarding.

## Sister Regina O'Rourke, SC (Sr. Maria Rose)

Entered: 1946 + Date of Death: 12/26/12 + Age: 88

*"Sister Regina loved all her teaching ministries, which were mainly with the those living in poverty. She brought joy to staff, children, and families alike."*



Sister Regina taught elementary school, then became Principal. She was a vital part of the building of the new school and convent at St. Athanasius, about which she said, "I loved the spirit of the people as they saw the erecting of the new school and convent. You could feel their love for the sisters ...." Sr. Regina loved all her teaching ministries, which were mainly with the those living in poverty. She brought joy to staff, children, and families. Sr. Regina then became part of a team at the Sisters of Charity Rest House in Ventnor, NJ, and at Mount Saint Vincent Convent. Her enthusiasm, smile, and spirit were contagious.

## Sister Laura Marie Ruckel, SC

Entered: 1945 + Date of Death: 12/27/12 + Age: 87

*"She had a positive outlook, a sense of humor, and a friendly way of helping others. She will be remembered for her love for her religious life."*

Teaching was Sr. Laura's life-long ministry, and one which she dearly loved. She was an excellent and well-loved educator. She taught first, eighth, and fourth grades, spending 21 years at St. Mary School in Yonkers. In 1997, Sr. Laura volunteered at the Convent of Mary the Queen, where she transported wheelchair bound sisters to and from therapy, and assisted the sisters with their meals. She had a positive outlook, a sense of humor, and a friendly way of helping others.



## Sister Dolores Ann Calamari, SC

Entered: 1951 + Date of Death: 12/28/12 + Age: 83

*"At Pace, Sister Dolores was seen by her students and colleagues not only as a nurse and teacher, but also as a Sister of Charity, a person committed to her congregation and her church."*



Sister Dolores' first mission was St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan where she served as a staff nurse, supervisor, and instructor. She then worked at St. Vincent's Hospital in Staten Island where she was an instructor in the School of Nursing. In 1971 Sr. Dolores joined the faculty of Pace University in Pleasantville, New York, as an associate professor and retired in 2003 as Professor Emeritus. Sr. Dolores was a devoted family member. She was a loving caregiver to her parents and was present to her extended family in times of sadness and celebration.

Visit [www.scny.org/memoriam.html](http://www.scny.org/memoriam.html) for complete information about the sisters' ministries.

### Sister Alma Wedge, SC

Entered: 1931 + Date of Death: 12/29/12 + Age: 100

*"She was a pioneer in many fields, and became known as one who always reached out to the underprivileged and those who needed her assistance in any way."*



Sister Alma's early ministry was in education at the New York Catholic Protectory and St. Joseph Hall in Brooklyn, followed by Grace Institute, St. Barnabas Elementary, and Saints Peter and Paul Schools in the Bronx. She taught history at Cathedral High School then moved to higher education. With her doctorate in Sociology, she taught in St. John's University, Rutgers University, Stevens Institute, and Kean College.

Sr. Alma's career was broad. She was featured in the Fall 2012 issue of Vision, page 6, on the occasion of her 100th birthday.



### Sister Miriam Eugene Fenton SC

Entered: 1950 + Date of Death: 1/5/13 + Age: 79

*"Sister Eugene has often been called by her family, friends, and colleagues, 'a true Sister of Charity.'"*

Sister Miriam Eugene spent her life as a Sister of Charity in the field of education as teacher and principal, parish catechetical coordinator, and, most recently, as a regional catechetical director for the Archdiocese of New York. In 1985 Sr. Eugene was asked by the New York Archdiocesan Catechetical Office to become Regional Director of Catechetical Programs for Dutchess, Ulster, Putnam, and Rockland Counties, a position she held for over two decades. In this position, she made a tremendous contribution to catechetical formation as teacher, director, course writer, and editor.



### Sister Mary Seton Fanning, SC

Entered: 1938 + Date of Death: 1/8/13 + Age: 94

*"Sister Seton was certainly a loving individual who enjoyed sharing her giftedness with all of God's people."*



Sister Seton's many years of ministry in education began at Saints Peter and Paul in the Bronx, followed by assignments at Our Lady of Mercy, Port Chester, St. Peter's, Yonkers, and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scarsdale. She returned to Staten Island, teaching at Immaculate Conception, St. Mary, Rosebank, Blessed Sacrament, and Assumption. In the

1980s Sr. Seton worked in the New York City Public School system and the Caring Community, a seniors program in Greenwich Village. In 1991 she was chosen for a guest role in the play *Nunsense*. Her talent extended beyond the theatrical into the world of music; she was a talented harmonica player and performed on many occasions.

### Sister Marie Anne La Russo, SC (Sr. Miriam Michael)

Entered: 1941 + Date of Death: 1/13/13 + Age: 94

*"...she was able to 'joyfully spread Jesus' message' to all the people she encountered in her ministry."*



Sister Marie Anne spent forty-four years in the ministry of teaching, having taught every grade from first to eighth. After professing vows, she spent several months at Epiphany School in Manhattan before being missioned to Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, also in Manhattan. She spent five years at St. Mary's in Wappingers Falls and five more at Blessed Sacrament on Staten Island. She taught at Sts. Peter and Paul School and St. Barnabas School, both in the Bronx. Sr. Marie Anne then returned to Staten Island where she taught at Our Lady Star of the Sea and then moved to St. Bernard's School in Manhattan where she remained until her "retirement."



### Sister Anne T. Flood, SC (Sr. Mary Turibius)

Entered: 1944 + Date of Death: 3/3/13 + Age: 86

*"Like her foundress, of whom she wrote so lovingly, Sister Anne was helper and friend to many."*

Sister Anne's early ministries were in education and religious education in Westchester County; she then joined the parish team in St. Mary's Parish in Alexandria, VA. She was a member of the adjunct faculty in Theological Field Placement of the General Episcopal Theological Seminary. Sr. Anne became University Chaplain-Campus Minister at Fairfield University. She was also Founder and Director of the Spiritual Development Department of the New York Foundling Hospital. She served as Director of Spiritual and Human Development at Dominican Academy, Manhattan, and in the Pastoral Care Department of St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Centers of New York.



### Sister Mary Meyler, SC (Sr. Maria Philomena)

Entered: 1951 + Date of Death: 3/22/13 + Age: 79

*"Sister Mary collaborated with Sisters Barbara Ford (deceased) and Virginia Searing to enable the Guatemalan people to find a spirituality of peace in a country that had its land and spirit destroyed by war."*

Sister Mary's ministry began in elementary education at St. Peter's School, Staten Island. She went on to teach on the high school and college levels as well, devoting 41 years to education. In 1995, Sr. Mary attended a sabbatical program in Berkeley, California. She then volunteered for the Sisters of Charity mission in Guatemala, where she worked in the Diocese of Quiché. Sr. Mary founded a residential program of prevention and rehabilitation in alcoholism for women and men, which included education in occupational skills. The program continues to support many today.





## Passing on the Mission to the Next Generation

The Junior class at Notre Dame High School in Manhattan, taught by Sr. Margaret McEntee, studies social justice issues. One of the current topics is human trafficking.

Sister Mary Ellen O'Boyle, the Sisters of Charity representative of the Anti-Trafficking Project, visited the school to speak to the juniors about human trafficking. At that time she invited the young women to attend a conference on the topic entitled "*Human Trafficking: Whose Business Is It?*" to be held at St. John's University in Queens. The conference was co-sponsored by NY-CRC STOP, LifeWay Network, the Ladies of Charity USA, St. John's University, and the Vincentian Center for Church and Society. (The Sisters of Charity are members of NY-CRC STOP.)

On Saturday, April 6, 2013, six students and Sr. Margaret attended the conference, which focused on the travel industry's role in ending this modern day slavery. The keynote speaker, Sandi Mitchell, provided specifics on the travel industry's initiative to fighting child sex trafficking and human slavery through education, advocacy, and survivor support.

After lunch the students selected a round table discussion group. The options were:

- » When Business Takes the Lead: Engaging Corporate Culture in Combating Trafficking
- » Activism Works: Taking a Stand, Speaking Up
- » What Smart Travelers Know! How Smart Travelers Act!
- » The Cultural Environment That Creates "Demand"
- » Trafficking Through the District Attorney's Eyes

The young women enjoyed participating with several adults who offered enlightening and enriching information.

Upon returning to school, Patricia Guzman met with the principal, Mrs. Jacquelin Brilliant, to discuss the possibility of starting a club to assist the LifeWay Network safe house.

Thank you, Sisters Margaret and Mary Ellen, for inspiring the next generation.

Pictured in photo from left: Enaj Watson, Margaret Woods, Priscilla Guzman, Sr. Margaret McEntee, Gabriela Maura, Jamie Lee, and Veronica Camero.

## Chef Jean, sc

*Chef Jean Recommends...*

### Asparagus with Olive Oil and Parmesan

Serves 4-6

#### Ingredients

2 bunches (1½ pounds) asparagus  
½ cup olive oil  
6 ounces parmesan cheese, shaved  
Freshly ground pepper



#### Preparation

Steam asparagus until tender. Place on a large platter, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with Parmesan and pepper. Serve with extra Parmesan, pepper, and olive oil.

## DOROTHY DAY

*Continued from p. 11*

up a special prayer, a prayer which came with tears and anguish, that some way would open up for me to use what talents I possessed for my fellow workers, for the poor." The next day she met French immigrant Peter Maurin, a former Christian Brother. In an attempt to "bring about the peaceful transformation of society," together they founded the *The Catholic Worker*.

The paper and the movement itself had difficult times over the years, but the work of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin continues today with 217 Catholic Worker communities worldwide, whose mission is "grounded in a firm belief in the God-given dignity of every human person."

Dorothy once said, "Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily." More significantly, she also said, "If I have achieved anything in my life it is because I have not been embarrassed to talk about God." Her vision, courage, strength, and refusal to compromise her principles made her a hero to many, and someday possibly, a saint. The Sisters of Charity are happy to have played a role in Dorothy Day's journey. Her godmother must be very proud.

Much is written about and by Dorothy Day. To learn more visit [www.catholicworker.org](http://www.catholicworker.org) or your favorite bookstore. Information for this article is taken from Dorothy Day's autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, the Catholic Worker website, and the Sisters of Charity Archives.

## Village Voice Parts Ways with Backpage.com

Backpage.com, a controversial classified site with alleged ties to sex trafficking, published ads in the *Village Voice* newspaper. Trafficking Threshold Group members joined protest efforts and are grateful to report that these actions forced the *Village Voice* to cease publishing these ads. This is a small victory and we urge all to continue to be aware of advertising that involves persons who are trafficked.

## Sisters of Charity Join Fight to End Homelessness

The SCNY Executive Council endorsed the United to End Homelessness Platform. Sr. Florence Speth, a board member of Housing Services United, brought the platform to the attention of the council. Individuals and groups committed to ending homelessness and advocating affordable housing are also asked to endorse it. The United to End Homelessness Platform will be brought to the attention of those running for the office of Mayor and City Council members.

The new Mayor and City Council will confront unprecedented levels of homelessness. By the end of 2012, more than 48,000 people, including more than 20,000 children, slept in the municipal shelter system each night, the largest homeless shelter population ever. The United to End Homelessness Platform outlines the necessary steps the next NYC Administration must take to end the homelessness crisis. The Platform outlines three main areas:

1. Make ending homelessness and expanding affordable housing a top mayoral priority;
2. Enact core policies to end homelessness;
3. Create an interagency council on homelessness.

## Remember and Pray for Detainees and Undocumented

Each Thursday from 11 AM to noon, New Sanctuary Movement NYC (of which SCNY is a member) sponsors the Jericho Walk at Federal Plaza. About 15 people walk in silence around the block to pray for and raise awareness of the suffering and situation of detainees and undocumented. We can all join in the Jericho Walk by keeping in our prayer, heart, and thoughts those who are in detention and undocumented, especially each Thursday from 11-noon.

## Advocate Weekly for Just Comprehensive Immigration Reform

SCNY has joined the USCCB's Justice for Immigrants Campaign. Go to [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org) to obtain current information and action steps. Send the electronic postcard on the website weekly to your senators and representatives. Get to know and share with others the stories of those undocumented and detained.

## Sister Trud  Collins Honored

Sister Thomas, a.k.a. Sister Trud  Collins, was one of three guests honored on March 21 by the Salesians for her work in the South Bronx. Sr. Trud  received the St. Francis de Sales Award for Outstanding Community Service and accepted it in the name of the Sisters of Charity and all those whom she is privileged to serve.

## ROW Honors Sister Mary Ann Garisto

Sister Mary Ann Garisto, Director of Sisters Hill Farm, was recently honored by Religious on Water (ROW), an organization of religious congregations with oceanfront property. Sr. Mary Ann was one of the group's founders at a time when the Sisters of Charity owned two houses in Ventnor, NJ. The congregation continues to be a supporting member of ROW.



## Remembering Mayor Koch

Mayor Ed Koch passed away on February 1, 2013. Sr. Margaret Sweeney served as President and CEO of St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center in Manhattan from 1980 to 1990. During that time she had many occasions to meet with Mayor Koch, who sent her this autographed photo taken during one of those meetings. The Sisters of Charity offer prayers and mourn the loss of a man who truly loved the City of New York and its people. Rest in peace, Mayor Koch.

## Seton Village Celebrates Tenth Anniversary



Seton Village in Nanuet will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary with a variety of events planned for each month beginning in April 2013 and ending in April 2014. Their first major gathering will be an interfaith prayer service and reception for the residents. They also hope to have an outdoor fall festival to which all will be invited. Stay tuned for further information.

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## *Love Abounds on Valentine's Day at the Convent of Mary the Queen*



From left: Sisters Ellen Quirke, Thérèse Dunne and Betty Kolb ("waitress")

On Valentine's Day, the sisters were treated to a "Day Out at Queen of Vark Restaurant." Sisters ordered an appetizer, main course and dessert from the menu. The staff and some sisters served as waitresses to provide a true restaurant atmosphere, which was enjoyed and appreciated by all.



From left: Sisters Maggie Kelly and Margaret Franks



HR Director Sharon Dosin serves Sr. Maria Goretti Wieser



Sr. Elizabeth Carmela



Sr. Rita Moon



Sr. Rose Maureen and her "waitress," Sharett Cabrero



Left: Sr. Dorothy Gallant  
Right: Sr. Angela Rooney

## *Holy Thursday Services at Mount Saint Vincent Convent*



Left: Sr. Margaret Angelovich  
Right: Sr. Elizabeth Stelmack



From left: Sisters Mary Aquin Flaherty, Miriam Anne Brennan, Kieran Mulligan, and Marguerite McGilly



Sr. Aileen Kelly distributes Communion to Sr. Frances Devine



From left: Sisters Linda Guili, Rose Petrucelli, Barbara Szorenski, Ann Rose Connell, and Marguerite McGilly