

VISION

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK

Living Lives of Love

Volume 16 • Issue 3 • Summer 2012



Elizabeth
Seton Writing
Contest

Page 3



SC Archives

Page 4



Associate
Commitment
Day

Page 8



Page 6



SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

Sisters Hill Farm—

It's more than vegetables

Letter from the President

"In the name of all that is, we come together."

— Jan Novotka



Dear Sisters, Associates, and Friends,

God's gift of creation calls us to be in communion with the earth and all that is alive for God's spirit dwells in us all. One concrete way we honor the gift of the earth is through our Sisters Hill Farm in Stanfordville. Here Sr. Mary Ann Garisto and Farmer Dave have truly built an earth community.

The tilling of the soil, the growth of seedlings, the learning of interns and all who come to plant, weed, and harvest bring a deep sense of reverence and joy. The quality of the produce is superb; the distribution in the country and the city brings together a variety of good food and good company.

Seventy-five thousand pounds of food is grown each year from five acres of the farm. Shares of the food harvested are deliberately targeted for those in need and living in poverty. The nourishment provided from our farm feeds not only the body, but the spirit as well. The spirit of charity blossoms in the community and reaches far beyond this 140-acre farm.

Jesus has said, "I have come that they may have life." Our farm is a concrete example of this gift. Come and see how the gift of creation blossoms at Sisters Hill Farm. You are most welcome to come together to witness, share, and enjoy this land. Hearty appetite!

Peace,

Sr. Jane Iannucelli, SC
President

Cover photo: Sr. Mary Ann Garisto at Sisters Hill Farm in Stanfordville, NY

Other farm photos from top:

1. Farmhouse and tractor at Sisters Hill Farm
2. A 2007 distribution day at Mount Saint Vincent; (from left) Srs. Theresa Rybarik, Eleanor Fitzgerald, Mary Ann Garisto, Agnes Connolly, Anne Marie Falloon, and SC Associate Amanda Sarmiento

Visit www.scny.org to view our photo galleries celebrating our 2012 Spring Benefit, Associate Day, Sr. Margaret Beuadurette's sculptures for the Diocese of Metuchen and Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center, 2011 Golf Outing, and more.

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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Article contributions to this publication are welcome. All submissions are subject to editorial and space constraints. See rear cover for our mailing address and contact information.

Students Bring St. Elizabeth Seton's Spirit to Life by Sr. Regina Bechtle, SC

Remember long-ago English assignments on “What I did on my summer vacation” and “My favorite pet”? Much meatier topics engaged students who entered the recent St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Essay Contest sponsored by the Sisters of Charity. The contest was open to students in elementary and high schools and religious education programs where a Sister of Charity or Associate currently ministers.

High school students were asked to name issues in today's New York that would concern St. Elizabeth Seton, a native of the city, and reflect on how they might keep Mother Seton's spirit alive.

Entries came from three high schools: Notre Dame School, Manhattan (Sr. Margaret McEntee, religion teacher), and two in the Bronx— St. Raymond Academy (Sr. Mary Ann D'Antonio, principal, and Sr. Margaret Donegan, co-coordinator of the Caritas program), and Cardinal Spellman High School (Sr. Philip Dolores Cacciatore, tutor/bookstore manager).

First place winner Samantha Bennett, a sophomore at St. Raymond Academy in the Bronx, focused on the toll that the current economic recession has taken on New Yorkers. Samantha remarked, “St. Elizabeth Ann Seton would be concerned about the high rate of unemployment and the increase in poverty caused by the loss of jobs. ... The best way to bring Elizabeth Seton's spirit to life,” she continued, “is to assess these serious issues confronting New York with the utmost passion and determination we can muster.”

Second place winner Jessica McAleer, a senior at Notre Dame School, Manhattan, wrote that Mother Seton would be deeply concerned about the closing of Catholic schools and overcrowding in public schools. Jessica sees a role for young people like herself in making a good education available. Students can contribute time, money, or goods to their



Visitation School students, (from left) first place winner Natalie Java, contestants Chealsy Gonzalez, Arianna Muccio, and Rosalie Dang

elementary and high schools; they can “be proactive in writing letters to our representatives” about proposed changes in school funding.

Carla Billena, a sophomore at Cardinal Spellman High School in the Bronx, won third prize. In Carla's estimation, Mother Seton “understood the importance of love, which doesn't come from money.” She believes that Elizabeth's “unbreakable fortitude” could inspire and motivate New Yorkers and others coping with problems like homelessness, teen pregnancy, and a high divorce rate. “Elizabeth Ann Seton,” wrote Carla, “is the definition of a strong woman. She faced pain and hardships, but always relied on God.”

Elementary school students were asked to identify three facts they had learned about St. Elizabeth Ann's life, and the lessons she could teach them about being a follower of Jesus.

Seven elementary schools and two religious education programs participated: in the Bronx— Our Lady of Angels (Sr. Mary C. Cleary, principal, Sr. Ellen Dunne, teacher), St. Barnabas (Sr. Lorraine Cooper, librarian), Sts. Peter & Paul (Sr. Michelle McKeon, principal), Visitation (Sr. Rosemarie Connell, principal, Sr. Frances Keegan, teacher, Sr. Constance Brennan, religious education coordinator); from the counties— St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Shrub Oak (Sr. Gabriel Miriam Obraz, principal), St. Peter's, Yonkers (Sr. Patricia Quinn, teacher), St. Peter's, Haverstraw (Sr. Winifred Lyons, volunteer), and St. Joseph's religious education program, Yonkers (Sisters at St. Joseph's Convent).

Natalie Java, from Visitation, grade 8, won first place with her words about Elizabeth's “difficult and different childhood” which helped her to understand poor children and set up schools for them. Though Mother Seton herself was left penniless, said Natalie, “she used the talents God had given her to serve those who were vulnerable. She understood what loving God meant.”

Continued on page 10



Front row (left to right): David Herrera, Jennifer Mendey, Lucas Ludgate; back row: Molly Kruger, catechist, Sr. Frances Keegan, SC, and Sr. Connie Brennan, SC



"Betsy," dressed in the traditional habit of the Sisters of Charity.



Sr. Mary Irene Fitzgibbon's desk (left)
Mother Elizabeth Boyle's organ (right)

Sisters of Charity of New York Archives

by Sr. Maryellen Blumlein, SC

"Archival materials are the basis for organizational knowledge, legal evidence, historical research, as well as personal and collective memory. In general, archives consist of records that have been selected for permanent or long-term preservation on grounds of their enduring cultural, historical, or evidentiary value. They contain primary source documents that have accumulated over the course of an organization's lifetime—along with many secondary sources—and are kept to show the function of an organization."

The purpose of this rather lengthy definition is to help explain the existence of the Archives of the Sisters of Charity of New York, which reside in Boyle Hall at Mount Saint Vincent. Here are found records that date back to the time of St. Elizabeth Seton, our foundress, as well as those of the present year.

A display about St. Elizabeth Seton greets visitors when they first enter the archives, as well as a large portrait of Mother Elizabeth Boyle, for whom the building is named. Mother Boyle was the first sister elected as Mother General of the newly formed community of the Sisters of Charity of New York in 1846. Also on the first floor is the "Stack Room," the place where most paper documents and photos are stored. There are over 720 archival boxes of records containing the history of the Congregation, classified by subject matter in numbered groups. Subjects include information about Elizabeth Bayley Seton, her family, and the early founding of the community at Emmitsburg, and the lives and terms of office of the 29 women who have been the Mothers

General (now called President) of the New York community. The information covers governance, general history, records of all missions founded and served by the Sisters of Charity, and records of involvement with the Sisters of Charity Federation and other groups outside of the Congregation. There are also files kept on each living sister; the files on our deceased sisters are called the necrology files. Finally, we have all media catalogued for easy access.

Visitors to the second floor of Boyle Hall are met with portraits of Louise de Marillac, Elizabeth Seton, and Vincent de Paul, and two statues of Elizabeth Seton by Sr. Margaret Beaudette. As you enter the Heritage Room you are greeted by Sr. Betsy, a mannequin dressed in the traditional habit of the Sisters of Charity of New York. Display cases in the Heritage Room contain artifacts pertaining to the history of all the early Mothers General until Sr. Evelyn Schneider and items related to our mission in Guatemala. Also on display

are items depicting the life of Elizabeth Seton, her husband and children, her father's late-18th century tea chest, Elizabeth Bayley's christening dress, and Mother Seton's cape and belt.

Mother Regina Lawless' desk, used in the late 19th century, and Mother's chair, which was used at Mount St. Vincent, are against the back wall. A large statue of Mater Admirabilis, a statue with special meaning to all connected

with the Academy of Mount St. Vincent, is displayed as well. On the back wall is a display dedicated to our various hospitals and the sisters who served in them. Also on display are some letters, books, and relics of St. Vincent de Paul that date



Boyle Hall, home of the SC Archives, is located at Mount Saint Vincent.

back to the 17th century. A display case featuring our last six congregation presidents represents our recent history.

Along the center divide of the room is a poor box from St. Patrick's Mott Street from the early 19th century, as well as two chairs believed to have come from the orphanage, and Sr. Mary Irene Fitzgibbons' desk, which she used in the Foundling Hospital. Around the corner is Mother Elizabeth Boyle's organ, which she often played for the children in St. Patrick's Orphanage. The capstone of Mother Boyle's original tombstone stands proudly against the back wall.

All of these wonderful artifacts and information are available to visitors. We often have groups who come for a tour of the Heritage Room and to learn the stories of the lives of Elizabeth Seton and Vincent de Paul. Included in the tours is the history of our foundation and accounts of our Mothers General and Presidents.

In addition to the visitors to the Heritage Room, we also have many requests from researchers. These include people who are writing books, articles for publication, or dissertations. Topics range from HIV/AIDS, hospitals, and other institutions, to questions on orphans and the maintenance of their culture and faith.

The Sisters of Charity archivists receive requests for information on a daily basis via phone, email, and letter. These requests often require research, with some projects taking longer than others. A favorite of the archivists is doing a search of the orphanage records for people doing genealogical research or looking for a relative who may have been in a particular orphanage or attended a particular school. These searches can be time consuming but the archivists are happy to assist in such endeavors and have received letters and e-mails expressing sincere thanks for their work. With the closing of St. Vincent's Hospital, the Sisters of Charity Archives now takes care of the Nursing School transcripts for the graduates of the School.

As with most archives departments, there are some long-range assignments for archivists. These can include research and writing brief summaries about Sisters, institutions, and



Pages from "The Dolan Project" depicting early history.

Congregation events. The Leadership Team is often in contact with the Archives, requesting verification of facts or explanations of older community records.

One long-term project this year has been the compilation of the history of the Sisters of Charity juxtaposed with the history of the Archdiocese. The research and photos are being

Continued on page 12

From the Classroom to the Sisters of Charity Archives

For someone who spent more than thirty years in education, this past year has provided a great learning experience. I have grown in my knowledge of congregational history, learned the finer points of archival research and cataloging, and come to understand the distinction between what is and isn't archival.

While working at the archives I have also met very interesting and fun people—both those with whom I work and those I have met through archival queries and research. Until two years ago, I didn't give much thought to the archives, its purpose, its existence, or its

value. Having worked here for the past year, I honestly think the archives is a fascinating place.

This ministry is a learning experience in more ways than I can enumerate. It is also a very service-oriented position. There are always people who need some piece of information, and it is a pleasure to be able to provide that information. Working in the archives is very different than standing in front of a classroom, and yet, like school, it is a great place to be. The past months working on "The Dolan Project" has also been a bonding experience for myself and the two others working on the project, SC Archivist Sr. Constance Brennan, and Elena Miranda, Communications Director.

I would encourage everyone who is able to come visit all the wonderful treasures that are here in our archives. We will be more than happy to give you a tour and answer any questions you may have. Our door is always open, just ask the guard near the gate to direct you to Boyle Hall. We look forward to greeting you at our front door soon! ■

Sr. Maryellen Blumlein, SC
Assistant Archivist
Boyle Hall



"Who are we to praise thee – but we call on all thy creation to praise thee! the birds of the air, the inhabitants of the earth, and the depths of the sea, the mountains and the valleys, and whatever thou hast made to praise, to bless, to declare thy glory!"

–St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

The Gospels relate many stories of seeds. The mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds yet it grows to be a tree that shelters the many birds that come to it. Another story assures us that if the seed is planted on good ground, it will produce a hundredfold. The story of Sisters Hill Farm, sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, is a practical illustration of both these parables. A community farm utilizing organic farming methods to produce healthy, well-grown vegetables was a dream of Sr. Mary Ann Garisto, a biology teacher par excellence who over the years developed a profound knowledge of the effects of our actions on the earth.

supported garden. The Spring of 1998 saw the first planting on half an acre of land in Stanfordville, NY. Forty shareholders were recruited, and a dedicated, talented young man named David Hambleton was hired as farmer. He brought an extensive ecological knowledge and educational background to his new position. Farmer Hambleton believes that organic farming adheres to a simple philosophy: "feed the soil, not the plant." He explained that the main difference between Sisters Hill Farm and conventional farms is the low concentration of natural fertilizers.

The seed was planted and how it grew! In 2001, the farm was presented with a

SISTERS HILL FARM

by Sr. Constance Brennan, SC



Farmer Dave Hambleton with harvested bok choy.



Shareholder picks up her weekly share.



Apprentices work on the onion harvest.



Apprentices wash eggplant.



Apprentices working in the fields.

At the General Assembly of 1995 the Sisters of Charity voted to focus some of their energies on the responsibility to reverence all creation. The seed was planted. Sr. Mary Ann Garisto was appointed Director of Ecological and Global Concerns and one of her first projects was to create a community

Distinguished Achievement Award for Environmental Sensitivity by Mohonk Consultations Inc. of New Paltz. In 2007, the *New York Times* gave tribute to our 140 acre farm for having become one of the 1000 community supported agricultural projects in North America which serve the poor by



Apprentices John and Stefan deliver the first share of the season to Mount Saint Vincent.



Sr. Peggie Beaudette (center) talks with shareholders. Sr. Mary Lou McGrath (right) picks up her share.



A typical weekly share

setting aside a portion of the weekly harvest for those in need. In 2008, the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York City also paid tribute to the farm for its commitment to those in need. In 2011, the Garden Club of America presented a Horticulture Commendation to Sisters Hill Farm “for their dedication to the production of healthy food and for nurturing our bodies, spirits, communities, and the earth.”

Fast forward to May 29, 2012 and the opening of the 14th season of the farm. As the number of shareholders has grown to 270, the mission of Sisters Hill Farm remains the same.



The half-acre of land has become 5 acres and there are now 100 varieties of 50 vegetables grown. The Farm is now on Facebook® and Twitter® where many shareholders and volunteers connect to share friendships and recipes.

Throughout the years community building has been an important aspect of community supported agriculture. Collecting shares encourages comments that grow into conversations as volunteers and shareholders greet one another each week. Bonding increases as Pot-luck picnics and volunteer evenings continue throughout the season. It was part of the Dutchess Land Conservancy's Summer Farm Discovery Program that taught children from

ages 8 to 12 the skills and rewards of farming. In the Bronx, a sixth grade volunteer from St. Gabriel's Elementary School became a First Place Trophy Winner in the Elementary Catholic Forensic League as a direct result of a conversation as she performed her volunteer service. (See page 10.)

Shareholders look upon the farm as very important in their lives. Judy Mackie has been a volunteer at Sisters Hill Farm in Stanfordville for several years. She places her weekly share in a laundry basket and arranges it so that it's inviting to all who see it. Judy attributes her high energy level and feeling of good health to the healthy food she enjoys once the farm harvest begins. She enjoys her volunteer work and speaks often of the feelings of peace and well-being that Sisters Hill Farm has brought to her life. She praises Dave as being a wonderful teacher who is very patient as the volunteers learn new agricultural skills.

Service to and with those living in poverty has always been a part of the life of a Sister of Charity. Shares of the delicious produce are donated to POTS Soup Kitchen in the Bronx, the Handmaids of Mary in Manhattan, the Sharing Community in Yonkers, the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie, and soup kitchens and food pantries in Pleasant Valley and Pine Plains in New York.

Yes indeed, the seed planted and the dream envisioned by one Sister of Charity have become a reality that has made a difference in the bodies, souls, and lives of countless people as they rejoice in the new found reverence and joy they have found in the earth. As Sr. Mary Ann will tell you, “It's more than vegetables.” (See page 12 for a salad recipe made using vegetables from a share.) ■

The mission of the farm remains the same, “to grow healthy food which nourishes bodies, spirits, communities and the earth.”



Future farmer John Hambleton



Sr. Mary Ann Garisto, Director of Sisters Hill Farm

Sr. Constance Brennan, SC
Archivist
Boyle Hall





New and renewing Associates gather for group photo as celebration begins in Smith Hall.



Pat Devaney, (at left) SCNY's first Associate, leads the opening procession for the Commitment Ceremony.

Associate Commitment Day 2012 *by Margaret Comaskey, SC Associate*

On Saturday, April 28, the Congregation celebrated Associates Commitment Day. The day began with opening ceremonies and a panel presentation in Smith Hall, with commitments for new, renewing, and lifetime Associates in the Chapel, followed by Brunch in Smith Hall.

After opening remarks by Sr. Jane Iannucelli and Peggy B Cekoric, Director of the Associate Relationship Program, Sisters and Associates considered "what will it take for me to ignite charity anew?" the theme of Assembly 2011. Associate Theresa Bellacosa set the scene for individual responses of those attending.

Following the calling of Associates, panel members described some of their recent activities.

Pat Devaney, an Associate for 36 years, and an Adjunct Lecturer at Queens Community College, Bayside, NY, described a program held there in Spring 2012. In response to the discovery of human trafficking in neighboring Flushing, an Academic Services Learning Project was begun, organized by three professors and the Learning Center personnel. They wished to integrate trafficking into the campus consciousness and conversation. With one professor familiar with the Safe Houses sponsored by several religious communities, and Pat's background, the project had more than academic dimensions.



Sr. Edith Belmonte "Igntes Charity Anew."

The students, many of whom are poor and/or undocumented themselves, responded in generous, caring ways. Posters and materials about human trafficking in the United States and in other countries were displayed and distributed around the

campus. Petitions were signed and websites were visited. At Queens Community College, charity is being ignited anew.

Pat displayed samples of the materials available and information and websites of many organizations:

www.freetheslaves.net ("Slavery in the 21st Century")

www.gems_girls.org (Girls Educational and Mentoring Services)

www.halftheskymovement.org (a project of Nicholas D. Kristof of the New York Times)

www.jcca.org (Gateways, a treatment center in Pleasantville, NY)

www.notforsalecampaign.org (Not for Sale)

www.change.org (to sign petitions)



Panelists from left: Associates Pat Devaney, Eilene Bertsch, and Bill Hurley

Life-changing experiences are real and profound. Eilene Bertsch, an Associate since 2008, spoke of one that changed the nature of service at an entire university and carries on to this day.

In 1992 Eilene travelled with a group of faculty members from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut, to El Salvador to "listen and learn." She described a hilltop meeting of the group with Dean Brackley, SJ, who welcomed them to El Salvador but encouraged them to go down Park Avenue in Fairfield to serve the local residents of Bridgeport, Connecticut. And that, according to Eilene, changed the face of service at the University.



From left: Kay Cassidy, Eilene Bertsch, Rowena Kemp, and Kitty Lunn-Macmillan renewed their Associate Commitments.

Shortly thereafter, the University promoted the 30,000 Hour Project, honoring the 30th anniversary of the University. Service to members of the Bridgeport community within the year exceeded 30,000 hours and has continued to do so to this day, as do the yearly trips to El Salvador.

Eilene, who has since retired, spoke of her own continued service as a member of the Board of Directors of the Mercy Learning Center, an extraordinary center that provides literacy training to over 600 women with the support of over 160 volunteers and of her devotion to the many guests who visit Merton House every day—the invisible members of the Bridgeport community—to secure food and affirmation for their existence.

Bill Hurley, an Associate since 2000 and Director of Development for the Congregation, spoke about collaboration, a topic discussed in many of the meetings in preparation for Assembly 2011. He pointed out that Associates, as well as Sisters, bear a strong responsibility to promote our charism. Associates were among the Congregation's early collaborators. Since the beginnings of the Mission of Charity, Vincent, Louise, and Elizabeth were helped by the many people who stepped forward in their day.

As we all move forward together, through the Pink Door, let us ask ourselves how we can participate further in the life of the Congregation. In considering where our talents can be used we need to be aware of our gifts and limitations, to be mission-focused, to be willing to persevere through disagreements, difficulties, and failures, and to do ongoing evaluation of both the project and our contribution to it.

Think about joining a Threshold Group, or volunteer to participate in one of our Sponsored Works. This is living our charism!

During the prayer service in the Chapel, the following Associates made their commitments:



Sr. Jane Iannucelli looks on as April Boone makes a lifetime commitment.



From left: Making lifetime commitments were April Boone, Theresa G. Bellacosa, Nancy Burkley, Margaret Comaskey, Christine Gallagher, and Mary Barrett Herbst.

Right: Sr. Mary Kay Finneran, SC, (left) presents flowers to Peggy B Cekoric at the close of ceremonies.



- » New Associates are Elena Miranda, Maureen Russell, Diane Valek, and Robert Williams.
- » Eilene Bertsch, Kay Cassidy, Rowena Kemp, and Kitty Lunn-Macmillan renewed their commitments.
- » Theresa G. Bellacosa, April Boone, Nancy Burkley, Margaret Comaskey, Christine Gallagher, and Mary Barrett Herbst made lifetime commitments. ■

Margaret Comaskey
SC Associate/
Archives Volunteer
Boyle Hall



Correction: In the Spring 2012 issue of *Vision* we incorrectly reported the loan amount for the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center to be \$1,000,000.00. The actual amount of the loan was \$100,000,000.00. We apologize for the error.

Seton Art Cards

By Sister Katie Aucoin, SC



Compassionate and tender cards created for a variety of occasions such as:

Get Well, Birthday Jubilee, Sympathy & more

Contact Sr. Katie at
setonarts@gmail.com





Archivist Sr. Constance Brennan, SC, with class from Visitation School

Second place winner Troy Kesselmark, grade 6, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, Shrub Oak, admired Mother Seton for teaching him that “during hard times you have to believe in Jesus. You must fight through these times, knowing that God is with you. Stay faithful to God, and you will have the strength to face anything in life.”

Kathleen Whetzel, a seventh-grader at St. Barnabas, took third place. Revealing that she too had lost her mother, like

Elizabeth, Kathleen wrote, “Elizabeth strove to care for her children, family and friends ... She belongs to all of us in very unique ways.”

In the Religious Education division, St. Joseph’s, Yonkers, produced 2 winners: Denise Bravo (first place) and Jessica Herrera (third place). Lucas Ludgate of Visitation parish won second place.

Sisters Audrey Boylan, Eleanor Fitzgerald, Mary Therese Hannaway, Mary Kilmartin, Rita King, Marietta Joseph Mackin, and Madeleine Maria Mahoney, all from Mount St. Vincent Convent, brought years of experience as educators to their judging.

Winning students received cash prizes for themselves and for their schools, thanks to the SC Development Office. All entrants received a certificate of merit, along with a poster of St. Elizabeth Ann.

The SC Charism Resource Office, working with the Archives, designed the essay contest to promote awareness of Elizabeth Seton and the Sisters of Charity, to reach out to young people, and to strengthen the connection with the Congregation’s education ministry. As a mother and an educator, St. Elizabeth Ann must be quite proud of these students, and deeply grateful to their dedicated teachers and mentors. ■

Sisters Hill Farm Nurtures a Public Speaking Star

When sixth grader Grace McGrath volunteered to help in Sisters Hill Farm’s Tuesday distributions at Mount Saint Vincent, she didn’t know what was in store for her in the very near future.

A student in St. Gabriel’s School in Riverdale, Grace was very impressed with the organic farming methods employed at Sisters Hill Farm, and invited Sr. Mary Ann Garisto, director of the farm, to speak to her class. An outstanding science student, Grace was interested in many ecological projects. What she did not foresee was that it would lead her to public speaking.

Among the many gifts of distribution days is the opportunity for community building. Sr. Constance Brennan, SC, also a regular volunteer at Tuesday distributions, one day engaged in conversation with Grace and quickly recognized her oratory skills. Having been in education for over 50 years, Sr. Connie instinctively knew that this young lady had great potential. And so it happened that



Grace McGrath happily displays her 2012 First Place Forensics competition trophy.

after some research, the two new friends learned about the Catholic Elementary Forensic League and its interpretative reading and poetry contests.

Coached by Sr. Connie, Grace entered her first contest at St. Augustine’s School in Ossining last November and won first prize for reciting a poem by Shel Silverstein. With the encouragement of her parents, teachers, principal, and “coach,” she entered other contests, too.

Grace has competed successfully and in the process made new friends.

Grace continues to be a faithful volunteer at Tuesday distributions. Sisters Hill Farm has not only encouraged her ecological interests, but led her into other interests, challenges, and a mutually caring and beneficial relationship. ■



Grace, (left) little sister Lucy, and Farmer Dave at Sisters Hill Farm during July visit.

Elizabeth Seton and the Civil War Connection

Elizabeth Ann Seton knew about war first hand; she was a child during the American Revolution, and had already founded the Sisters of Charity when the War of 1812 occurred.

Her son William and his wife Emily Prime Seton had eight children, two of whom saw action in the Civil War. Henry (1838–1904) and William (1833–1903) enlisted as volunteers in the Union Army at the start of the war, and both served with distinction. Henry's military career extended over 35 years. He saw action in the Civil War but also in the Indian wars and the Spanish-American War.

William was wounded twice at the battle of Antietam, one of the bloodiest engagements of the Civil War. As he lay in a barn that housed the wounded and dying, he turned more than once to feed a Confederate captain of North Carolina, stretched beside him helpless with both arms shot off.

After a brief stay in this make-shift hospital William was transferred to St. Joseph Military Hospital, the former Motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of New York. He was cared for by the Sisters of Charity who formed the



Nuns of the Battlefield is a public artwork located at the intersection of Rhode Island Ave. NW, M St., and Connecticut Ave. NW in Wash., D.C. A New York Sister of Charity is one of 12 Sisters sculpted in this public tribute to the women religious who served as nurses during the Civil War. *Wikipedia*

nursing staff of the hospital. One in particular, Sister Mary Ulrica O'Reilly, was impressed by his courteous manner, although she knew him only by the number assigned him by the Army. It was only after he was out of danger of death that she discovered that he was the grandson of Mother Seton, foundress of her community.

Fifteen New York Sisters of Charity served as nurses in the Civil War. Their

graves are marked by special crosses erected by the United States Army as a sign of gratitude for their heroic service in the war. All told, 600 Sisters from many communities served wounded and dying Union and Confederate soldiers on the battlefields, in the camps, and in hospitals. ■

Sr. Mary E. Mc Cormick, SC
Charism writings, retreats and
spiritual direction, Boyle Hall



Photos

A. Sr. Rita King (left) in "conversation" with a student at Mount Saint Vincent Convent.

B. Sr. Nancy McNamara (right) tutors Nelson Acosta.

C. Gregory Pierce teaches class every Monday and Wednesday night.

D. Sr. Audrey Boylan (right) uses her teaching skills with a grateful student.

"English as a Second Language" classes, held twice a week at the Sisters of Charity Center, has over 65 adult students and 24 volunteer tutors, including many Sisters. Classes in Citizenship and GED are also given under the direction of Luz Reyes Devine. The Program continues to grow, attracting neighborhood folks representing many countries.



Sisters of Charity Archives

Continued from page 5

The book for Cardinal Dolan covers the early history of the Archdiocese and opening of Sisters of Charity missions, including child-care facilities and schools, up to and including the sponsored ministries of today.



Photos and research material from the Sisters of Charity of New York Archives were utilized for this project.

made into a book that will be presented to Timothy Cardinal Dolan in recognition of his elevation to Cardinal. The book's purpose is to familiarize the Cardinal with the impact that the Sisters of Charity have had on the development of the Archdiocese of New York. This work-in-progress, now coined, "The Dolan Project," has been the responsibility of a team of three for a period of over four months and has been both an educational and enjoyable experience. A copy of the book will become a proud part of the Sisters of Charity Archives when completed.

Sisters of Charity Archivist, Sr. Constance Brennan, SC, and this author look forward to sharing our rich and proud heritage with our friends. We will also have a brand new book to share with you. ■



View from the center showing Guatemalan exhibit, Sr. Margaret Beaudette's statue of St. Vincent, and early photos and artifacts.



Chef Jean, sc

*Chef Jean
Recommends*

**Fennel, Orange,
and Walnut Salad**

The following recipe utilizes some of the vegetables from the Sisters Hill Farm weekly share.

Serves three

Ingredients

- ½ cup walnuts
- 1 fennel bulb
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, salt, and freshly ground pepper
- ½ small white onion
- 2 naval oranges



Preparation

Toast the walnuts in a small frying pan.

Reserve a small amount of green fennel fronds.

Peel the outer fibers of the fennel bulb and trim the root end.

Slice the fennel bulb as thinly as you can and toss with lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper.

Slice the onion as thinly as you can and add salt; drain as much water out as you can.

Add the onion to the fennel slices.

Cut the oranges into slices and add to the walnuts, fennel, onions, salt and pepper.

Toss until everything is covered with lemon juice and olive oil.

Chop the reserved fennel fronds and sprinkle over the salad.

You can also combine this salad with green leaf lettuce or watercress.



by Sr. Mary E. McCormick, SC

Sparked by the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, the Holy Name, New Rochelle, local community and Sisters Ann Rose Connell, Mary Adele Henze, and Barbara Srozenski have reflected on the Council's admonition to "read the signs of the times" and to act accordingly.

The following are some of the initiatives the Sisters have undertaken:

- » The formation of a *Prayer Shawl Ministry* that meets and distributes shawls in the context of a prayer service to the homebound and nursing home residents.
- » Short scripture courses offered at the convent on various topics, e.g., *Women in the Old and New Testaments*.
- » Day-long retreat offerings in the convent on topics such as *Images of God and Prayer*.
- » Joining with existing parish prayer groups to have a monthly Holy Hour of Prayer for the needs of the people and the parish of Holy Name.
- » Coming up: a series of information/question-and-answer sessions on relevant topics such as *The Mystery of Suffering; Mary and the Church; Are Religion and Spirituality the Same?*
- » Attempting to "grow green," the Sisters will plant lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, and beans in their backyard.
- » Spiritual direction and counseling are offered on an individual basis.

The Sisters recognize that people are hungering for a deeper knowledge of their faith and opportunities to form a closer relationship with God in Jesus Christ. These initiatives, and others that will be suggested by the parishioners themselves, are a way of helping to meet the spiritual needs of their local parish community.

We thank the Sisters of Holy Name Convent for sharing the good news of all they have undertaken with and for the people in their parish. *We invite other local communities to share some of the initiatives they have started in their local parishes as well.* ■

"Retired" Sister Continues to Serve in New Roles

Sister Mary Ellen O'Boyle, SC, has been a Sister of Charity for over 50 years. She earned a BA from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and an MA from New York University, both in Business Education, and an MA in Pastoral Counseling from Iona College. She devoted most of her ministry to education, teaching on the elementary, secondary and adult education levels. Sr. Mary Ellen retired in 2011 after serving eight years as secretary to Sr. Dorothy Metz during her tenure as President of the Sisters of Charity.

As with many in religious life, retirement isn't really retirement, but rather an opportunity to dedicate more time to reveal God's love to those in need. Upon her "retirement," Sr. Mary Ellen became the Congregation's representative in the fight against human trafficking. She has taught classes, given workshops, hosted

teas, and more, all in an effort to spread awareness about the practice of modern day slavery that is human trafficking. Sr. Mary Ellen is the SCNY Council representative to NY-CRC-STOP, a coalition of 32 religious congregations working together to combat human trafficking. She also represents the Congregation in supporting the LifeWay Network safe house, recently opened to provide safe refuge and many levels of support for women rescued from trafficking.

Earlier in the year Sr. Mary Ellen took on yet another role: Executive Secretary of the Archdiocesan Council of Women Religious. The ACWR membership is comprised of the leadership of 62 congregations of women religious that serve in the New York Archdiocese. In



Sr. Mary Ellen O'Boyle was a guest speaker at the College of Mount Saint Vincent where she educated students about human trafficking, today's modern slavery.

this role she serves as a vehicle of communication for the congregations and brings to this position a level of experience, professionalism, and dedication that serves the organization very well.

Sr. Mary Ellen welcomes the opportunity to raise awareness about the reality of human trafficking with those interested joining the fight. She may be contacted at the Sisters of Charity Center at 718-549-9200. ■

With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

Sr. Miriam Gregory Yochum, SC

Entered: 1946 + Date of Death: 4/2/12 + Age: 82

"Sister Gregory saw the education of youth as a challenging and exciting ministry....Her legacy lives on in those she inspired to become teachers and school administrators."



Education was the focus of Sr. Gregory's ministry assignments. She taught at St. Paul's School, Manhattan, and St. Barnabas School, Bronx, before going on to teach English in high school at Holy Cross Academy, Manhattan. Her impact on education continued at St. Mary's School in Wappingers Falls, where she was principal from 1966 until 2000. In 2001, she returned to Wappingers Falls for the 150th

Anniversary of St. Mary's Parish. In an interview she stated, "I'm privileged to have served here for 34 years. The parents and children are wonderful—very warm, loving people, very anxious to do all they can to further the kingdom of God." Sister Gregory was most certainly loved and cherished in return by the families of St. Mary's. As principal she encouraged young people to join the profession that she loved. Her legacy lives on in those she inspired to become teachers and school administrators. ■

Sr. Catherine Sherry, SC (formerly Sr. Marian Gerard)

Entered: 1951 + Date of Death: 5/2/12 + Age: 84

"...we are called not only to be stewards of the resources available to us, but to use them purposefully...all for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ"

—Sr. Catherine Sherry



Sr. Catherine Sherry's knowledge of science, her skill as an administrator and her dedication to the mission of the Sisters of Charity made her one of the most highly esteemed professionals of her time. During her 61 years of ministry she served as Supervisor of the Blood Bank, and the Hematology, Chemistry, and Clinical Microbiology Departments of St. Vincent's Hospital, Manhattan. In 1971 she was appointed Administrative Director of Laboratories/Pathology and Program Director of the Educational Program in Medical Technology. As a true Sister of Charity, Sr. Catherine was able to integrate her professional expertise with her spirituality and love of all God's children, especially those to whom she ministered to or worked with at St. Vincent's Hospital. ■

Sr. Ann Reynolds, SC (formerly Sr. Christopher Maria)

Entered: 1953 + Date of Death: 7/2/12 + Age: 76

"A legendary primary and middle school teachers whom students and parents remember with deep affection."



Sr. Ann Reynolds was a gifted and much-loved educator. She was a favorite of students, parents and fellow teachers alike. Her teaching ministry spanned three boroughs of New York City, and the counties of Westchester and Rockland. She taught at St. Paul's in Brooklyn; St. Stephen's in Manhattan; St. Athanasius, St. Margaret of Cortona, and St. Raymond Academy in

the Bronx; St. Mary's and St. Peter's in Yonkers; and St. Peter's in Haverstraw, where she also served as principal.

After 37 years in education, Sr. Ann trained as a nursing assistant, serving at St. John Riverside Hospital in Yonkers. She then became a patient advocate, caring for the Sisters at the Convent of Mary the Queen for 16 years. Her wonderful people skills, sense of humor, and gift for telling compelling stories made her a great asset and friend to the Sisters and staff at the Queen. ■

Sr. Mary T. Kane, SC (formerly Sr. John Maureen)

Entered: 1946 + Date of Death: 7/16/12 + Age: 84

"In her quiet way, Sister Mary touched the lives of all those she met."



Sr. Mary T. Kane devoted most of her ministry years to elementary education and she did so with great joy. She taught at St. Francis Xavier, St. Agnes, and Blessed Sacrament in Manhattan before being missioned to St. Gabriel's School in the Bronx. Her administrative talents were soon recognized and she served as Principal at St. Peter's School, Poughkeepsie, before going to Blessed Sacrament School in Staten Island and St. Anthony's in the Bronx.

Sr. Mary is well remembered by all Sisters for service as part of the team working at the Convent of Mary the Ocean Star in Ventnor, New Jersey. After returning to St. Anthony's from 1987 to 1995, she briefly served as a clerical assistant at Cathedral High School, her alma mater, before beginning many years of service at Mount Saint Vincent Convent. ■

Visit www.scny.org/memorial.html for complete information about the Sisters' ministries.



From left: Georgia James and daughter-in-law Donna James cooked all the food for the picnic.



With the help of Golda Fleischman, (left) and Sr. Dorothy Gallant, SC, Barry Markman serves the shrimp he donated.



Team member Deborah Byrd, (left) with Sr. Karen Helfenstein, Director of Sponsorship Services.



Children of all ages were treated to face painting art.



Family enjoys the day at Central Park with LEFSA.

LEFSA Picnic in Central Park

Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association held its 20th annual picnic in Central Park on July 14th. With the help of generous and caring friends, LEFSA fed approximately 300 people. John Healy, long-time LEFSA friend, not only supported the event financially, he also provided a truck and workers to help transport the food to the park. Using the kitchen facilities at St. Jean Baptiste Church on 75th Street, Georgia and Donna James cooked for an entire week to prepare for the event. LEFSA supporter Barry Markman donated 150 pounds of jumbo shrimp with cocktail sauce for the picnic, which has never been rained out in its twenty-year history! ■



Sr. Karen (left) with LEFSA team member James Addison and Sr. Kathy Byrnes

SCNY NEWS

FALL ESL CLASSES will begin on Monday, September 24 and run until Wednesday, November 14 on Monday and Wednesday evenings, 6 to 8 P.M. Classes are held at the Sisters of Charity Administration Center at Mount Saint Vincent. Registration for the classes, also at SC Center, will be held on September 17 and 19 from 4 to 7 P.M. Volunteers are needed to help with the growing demand. No prior teaching experience or second language is required. The area is well served by both New York City and Yonkers bus lines and free parking is available on the grounds. This program has been a wonderful community building endeavor for students and teachers alike. For more information, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Luz Devine at 718-549-9200 Ext. 219. ■

The Immigration Threshold Group has initiated a program whereby individual Sisters at Mount Saint Vincent Convent, the Convent of Mary the Queen, and St. Patrick Villa pray for a legislator. Recognizing that "we can't wait for November elections to find solutions to the issues," the Sisters pray to strengthen New York lawmakers in the United States Senate and House of Representatives in their capacity to make decisions for the common good. "We want to witness to our belief that prayer has the power to effect good," said the Sisters in their letters to the elected officials. The group sent each legislator a photo of the Sister who is praying for him or her. The Sister in turn has a photo of the legislator for whom she prays. ■



The Sorrowful Mother

Sister Margaret Beaudette, SC, was commissioned to create a sculpture of the *Sorrowful Mother* by Bishop Paul G. Bootkoski, D.D., of the Diocese of Metuchen, NJ. Bishop Bootkoski visited De Paul Studios with Ms. Mary Ellen Gerrity, Director of Cemeteries for the Diocese of Metuchen, and benefactor Frank DiNapoli, to approve the early, small clay version of the sculpture. The trio was quite pleased and amazed when they returned three weeks later to see the full-sized clay version of the *Sorrowful Mother*.

The sculpture, now in the process of being finalized, will be erected in the fall at The Mary, Sorrowful Mother Mausoleum in Holy Cross Cemetery, East Brunswick, NJ, in memory of Mr. DiNapoli's wife, the late Josephine A. DiNapoli. ■

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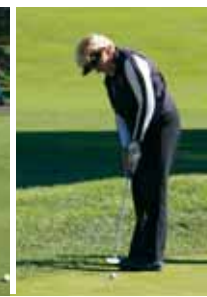


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