

VISION

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK

Living Lives of Love

Volume 17 • Issue 2 • Summer 2013

Saint Joseph's
Medical Center

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Book Presented
to Cardinal

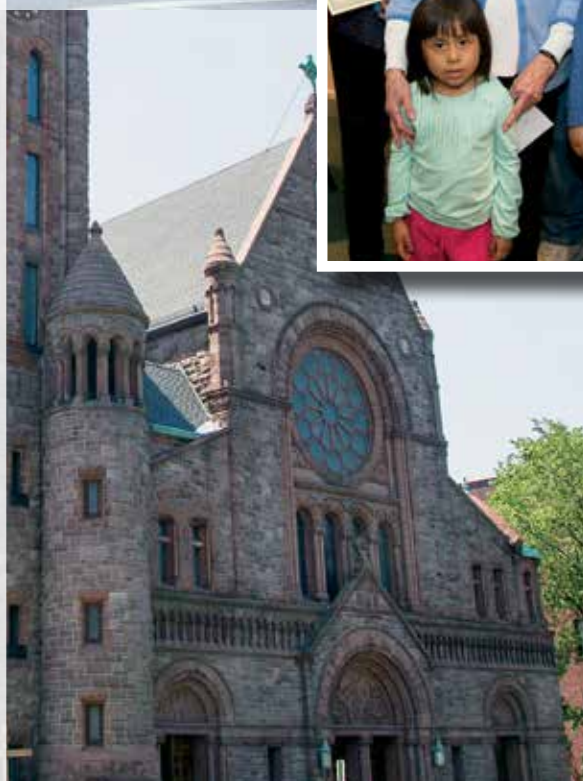
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SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

Living Lives of Love
in Southwest Yonkers

Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

The ferries to Yonkers have carried a variety of passengers to help build this wonderful city. The Sisters of Charity arrived here on one of those ferries in 1857, along with many immigrants searching for a job and a home.

Our Sisters have served the community of Southwest Yonkers as teachers, nurses, child care and social workers, as well as being present in many other ways to the growing city.

The city itself has gone through multiple transformations, as have the Sisters of Charity. As we continue our commitment to the Southwest Yonkers community, we choose to serve in a variety of new settings. The relationships of the past have brought a richness to the relationships being formed today. We build on a strong foundation by providing a listening ear, a compassionate heart, and a respectful attitude to all we meet. We offer our prayers and presence on a daily basis by attending civic meetings and interfaith services, providing a multi-service center, and a variety of volunteer services in hospitals and nursing homes, along with accompanying persons to doctors and grocery shopping for the elderly.

How we minister and serve our community has changed. We are still here sharing the wisdom of our experience to help and empower people to face the challenges of their days.

We are truly companions on the journey. Will you not also help ignite the fire of charity anew? Will you be a presence of charity exactly where you are? As we are committed to the community of Southwest Yonkers, may you journey with the people of your communities. No matter where we are, let us journey together.

Peace,



Jane Iannucelli, SC
President



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



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Cover photos:

Clockwise from top left in the background: St. Peter's Church, St. Joseph's Church, Saint Joseph's Medical Center, and St. Mary's Church. **Top photos from left:** Sisters Frances Keegan and Lorraine Cooper at the June St. Joseph Neighborhood Association meeting. **Middle:** Sister Mary Donagher with Project LIGHT ESL families. **Bottom:** Ravi Ragvir visited the Convent of Mary the Queen to speak to the Sisters about immigration. Mr. Ragvir is the outreach worker for New Sanctuary Coalition NYC.



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Living Lives of Love in Southwest Yonkers

The Sisters of Charity of New York are committed to the people of Southwest Yonkers.

Over a 156-year history, the ministries and ways of being present have changed. Even as our physical presence and numbers diminish, new ministries and new possibilities are emerging. In this issue of VISION we share with you how Sisters in Southwest Yonkers, along with Associates and colleagues, are responding to the signs of the times in Jesus' mission: "I have come that you may have life and live it to the fullest."

Sisters are accompanying the young, families, the elderly, the sick and dying, the immigrant, parishioners, and the diverse faith and civic communities of Southwest Yonkers. No longer doing full-time teaching, nursing, childcare, or social work—considered our primary ministries in the past—we are engaged in a greater variety of settings, often bringing our mature wisdom.

The insight and experience we have received through prayer and living in community bring a richness and depth

By Maryellen Blumlein, SC, Constance Brennan, SC, Carol De Angelo, SC, Donna Dodge, SC & Maria Iglesias, SC



to the relationships we form, as we journey with the people in "an accompaniment of empowerment," a term used by Diarmuid O'Murchu for the reign of God.

Following the 2011 Assembly, the Southwest Yonkers Task Force was formed to research the needs and the existing groups in the area and make recommendations to explore ways Sisters of

Charity presence will continue into the future. The Task Force completed its work in April by submitting recommendations to the Leadership Team. The fruit of the Task Force will be the continuation and growth of the mission of charity in Southwest Yonkers. It will require the efforts and dedication of Sisters, Associates, friends, and volunteers, ready to "ignite the fire of Charity anew."

The Sisters of Charity of New York began their long history in Southwest Yonkers in 1857...

when they traveled by boat up the Hudson River to staff St. Mary's School at the request of the pastor, Father Edward Lynch. Since that time the Sisters of Charity have been a vibrant presence there. As times have changed, so have the ways in which they meet the varied and evolving needs. Monsignor Hugh Corrigan, the present pastor of St. Mary's, praises the Sisters' presence in the school and parish, noting that they bonded with each immigrant group that inhabited the area. Many Sisters served in St. Mary's over the years; Sr. Ann Marie Lagan, who worked in the school and parish for

over 20 years, continues as a volunteer working in the rectory, responding to the many needs of all who ring the rectory bell.

St. Joseph's School, which closed in 1992, educated Yonkers children for 111 years. The Sisters who live in the convent continue to be a presence in the neighborhood. According to Mr. John Favareau, Reference Librarian of Yonkers Riverfront Library and Chairman of the St. Joseph's Neighborhood Association, the Sisters are a vital part of the organization, which they revived in the late 1990's. The Neighborhood Association is visited each month by representatives from



St. Joseph's Neighborhood Assn. meeting (inset) John Favareau, (from left) Sheila Touhy, and Sisters Frances Keegan and Lorraine Cooper



From left: Samantha Mars, Sr. Constance Brennan, Yonkers Deputy Dir. of Communications Jason Baker, and Yonkers P.D. Captain John Mueller

the Yonkers Police Department's 4th precinct, as well as from the offices of Mayor Mike Spano and Councilman Johnson, the District 1 Leader. Neighborhood problems are discussed and the Sisters' input is highly valued. Recently the administrator of the Community Action Program (CAP), operating out of closed Public School 12, has joined the Neighborhood Association



Sr. Ann Marie Lagan

The St. Joseph's Religious Education Program, which meets every Saturday morning, finds Sisters Constance Brennan, Frances Keegan, and Lorraine Cooper as catechists, while Sisters Mary T. Higgins and Ann Marie Lagan handle registration and related matters. Ms. Yolanda Fana, director of the program, has high

praise and gratitude for the presence of the Sisters. Ms. Fana stated that it was the Sisters of Charity who revitalized this program in 1981 when Sr. Margaret O'Brien, then principal of St. Joseph's School, saw the need for reaching out to the many public school students in the area. In the convent, Sr. Nora Hearty tutors first grader, Victoria, (*pictured below*) each afternoon. Her mother, Evita Garcia, stated that, without Sr. Nora's help Victoria would not be succeeding in school. Evita feels that she does not have the proficiency in English to help her daughter advance. When asked about their relationships with the Sisters of Charity, Evita said, "We are family," and Victoria chimed in, "Sister Nora is my friend."



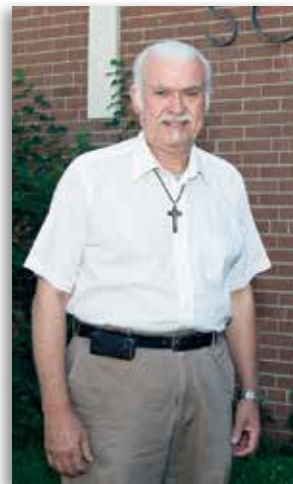
Another school, St. Peter's, was begun by the Sisters of Charity over one hundred years ago, and the list of Sisters who taught there is impressive. The convent chapel served as a place which nourished the mission and provided inspiration and strength to many: from St. Peter's, Sisters ventured to foreign missions, young women made discernment retreats, and new members came to experience part of their formation in religious life. Sister Patricia Quinn continues the mission of charity in the school as she teaches the first grade. Sister Sue Ellen Wallin (*left*) does volunteer service in the parish, and Sisters Ann O'Connell and Catherine Walsh



From left: Sisters Maria Iglesias, Ann O'Connell, and Catherine Walsh

continue ministering to the people through their presence at liturgies, where they serve as lectors, song leaders, and Eucharistic ministers. Sister Maria Iglesias also serves at liturgies and teaches in the RCIA Program.

In addition, the Sisters support the outreach of the food pantry, assist the undocumented day laborers, and participate in community celebrations and demonstrations for justice issues.



Deacon Pedro Irizarry (*pictured left*), who has served St. Peter's Parish for 25 years, feels that the Sisters have greatly impacted the life and mission of the parish. His three children attended St. Peter's School and he is thankful to all of the Sisters who taught them; and now he is deeply grateful for our "life of prayer" and example of spirituality. Wilda Mejias (*pictured below*), who has worked in St. Peter's Parish for over 50 years, began the Hispanic Foundation,

which served the people who came to the parish and the school. When looking for a new site for Catholic Charities, Monsignor Kevin Sullivan found not only a space, but also a readymade woman of charity. Wilda appreciates our involvement in social justice issues and the support that she receives from the Sisters' presence in the parish.



Casa de Esperanza-Multi-Service Center was begun in 1998, in a few classrooms in St. Mary's School in response to a need for services for immigrants, both documented and undocumented, and families. Sisters Jean Bocian and Terese McElroy began programs to teach English, to help immigrants get their citizenship, and to meet the many needs of the families who came to them. Several other Sisters of Charity and lay people volunteer their time and efforts to help in various ways in the center. In 2012, when Casa de Esperanza needed to find new space, the VIVE School reached out, and now new seeds of collaboration are being sown between VIVE and Casa. VIVE's Executive Director said, "The Sisters fit our



Left: Sr. Terese McElroy teaching ESL class; *(right)* Sr. Jean Bocian helps students as Mary Cryan, volunteer and Casa board member teaches class.

superintendent's philosophy to reach out to the whole family. Success and empowerment of adult learners depends on the family." It is apparent that Casa de Esperanza, through its staff, volunteers, and participants, is more than a program; it is a place where people experience belonging, feel secure, and have life-changing experiences "The Sisters are there for me." "The Sisters add a lot to life. There is a sense of community." We "feel welcomed." These are but a few of the participants' comments. One woman, after sharing her story in the group, spoke outside of the classroom saying, "I was abandoned. My husband left me and my baby daughter. I didn't know the language. The Sisters helped me with English and to learn skills so I could earn money. I constantly thank God and pray for the Sisters. I pray for you every day." This woman clutched Sr. Jean as she expressed how much it meant for her to be a part of Casa.

Casa continues to transform and be transformed by the lives of the people who attend the program. An immigration attorney is now counseling Casa's people in preparing for the changes in the immigration laws. In the spirit of collaboration, Sisters Jean and Terese introduced the lawyer to the director of VIVE and she is now also counseling their clientele. A VIVE staff member offered a parenting workshop to Casa's clientele, and one of Casa's former students graduated to a more advanced VIVE ESL class. From a seed planted over fifteen years ago, Casa's outreach has grown beyond the boundaries of its humble beginnings. The Sisters of Charity presence has joined hands with other organizations to keep the mission vibrant in the lives of the people of Southwest Yonkers.

Another burgeoning ESL Program is Project LIGHT. Operating in the Sisters of Charity Center on the campus of the College of Mount Saint Vincent in the Bronx, this program serves people from Southwest Yonkers, and also from the northern and western parts of the Bronx. ESL classes are held twice a week, and one-on-one conversation circles with retired Sisters at the Convent of Mount Saint Vincent are held

once a week. Luz Devine and Sr. Mary Lou McGrath administer the program, which usually operates in three "semesters." There has also been a special outreach to the Yonkers day-laborers in helping them learn English and in providing them with needed tool kits for their work. One, who spoke for all of the day-laborers, said "Words can not express our gratitude for



From left: Sisters Mary Lou McGrath and Mary Donagher at the semester-end celebration at Project LIGHT's ESL program

the many ways the Sisters have helped us learn English and provide for our families in so many different ways." One of Project LIGHTS's goals is to strengthen collaboration with Yonkers Catholic Charities, particularly with immigrants in GED and Citizenship classes.

"Every service within our power" was often a guiding thought for the early Sisters of Charity. It still guides the mission of charity in many areas, as can be seen by the various programs in Southwest Yonkers. Sisters, Associates, volunteers, and participants in these programs bring God's charity, love, and presence in abundance to all whom they encounter. From 1857 until the present day, the presence of the Sisters of Charity is strongly felt in Southwest Yonkers, and the spirit of the Sisters shall remain alive far into the future. ■

Left: Getty Square and Philipse Manor Hall, Westchester's oldest standing building, located in Southwest Yonkers



GARDEN OF HOPE



There is a special garden on the grounds of Mount Saint Vincent, a community garden that was born of love and hope, aptly named “Garden of Hope.” On March 12, 1997, two Sisters living at Ely Hall entered into a life-giving bond when Sr. Ann Costello donated one of her kidneys to Sr. Mary Ellen Butler. The successful transplant provided Sr. Mary Ellen ten more years of life.

Sisters Ann and Mary Ellen received many plants during their hospital stay and so the question arose, “What should we do with all of these plants?” And so the Garden of Hope was born. Ely resident Sr. Marie Morris emerged as the caretaker of the original garden, planting the gifted plants and adding peonies and irises from her mother’s own garden.

Today the garden continues to flourish with all sixteen Sisters living at Ely Hall contributing to its maintenance. Sisters Eileen McGrory and Elizabeth Judge took over the gardening duties several years ago but the majority of the gardening today is done with much love and care by Sr. Elizabeth Judge, who can be seen out there at any given time, from early spring to late fall. ■

Top left: A plaque commemorates the life-giving transplant from Sr. Ann Costello to Sr. Mary Ellen Butler. *Left:* Sr. Elizabeth Judge tends to the garden with a great deal of dedication and love. *Right:* Garden marker reads, “The earth laughs in flowers.”



Sister Constance Horan Celebrates 100th Birthday

By Constance Brennan, SC

Congratulations to Sr. Constance Horan, who celebrated her 100th birthday on May 17th! Although her accomplishments were many, most Sisters will best remember her as chairperson of the Sisters of Charity Habit Committee in the period of change when each Sister’s choice of clothing was personal. Sister Constance made arrangements with the David Chrystal manufacturers to design outfits for the Sisters who chose to dress in simple, contemporary style. Her long years of service at Grace Institute in the field of fashion merchandising and tailoring made her an expert in this field and a good choice for this position. She remembers this as “a most unique experience in my life.” Happy 100th Birthday, Sr. Constance! ■





Saint Joseph's Medical Center

In Loving Service to the People of Yonkers for 125 Years

By Miriam Kevin Phillips, SC

Westchester County, frequently identified with wealth, beautiful suburban landscapes, and stately homes, has its share of poverty. The City of Yonkers is considered the largest city in the County of Westchester. At one time in its history, Yonkers mirrored the county, but as it was transformed into an industrialized city, it gradually shed its idyllic veneer.

Skilled and unskilled workers arrived in a steady flow of humanity, seeking work in the giant carpet factory, the sugar refinery, and other manufacturing plants. While North Yonkers remained comparatively stable, Southwest Yonkers underwent radical changes. Single-family homes were replaced by multi-tiered dwellings, huge projects, and other forms of substandard housing. A mushrooming population produced a myriad of socioeconomic problems, not the least of which was a healthcare system inadequate to meet a fast developing public health crisis.

Mother Mary Jerome Ely, Superior General of the Sisters of Charity of New York, was approached and asked to build a hospital in Southwest Yonkers, primarily to serve the needs of the poor. Saint Joseph's Hospital, incorporated in 1888, officially opened to receive patients on the feast of St. Joseph in 1890. Today Saint Joseph's Medical Center stands on the exact location of the original structure. While Saint Joseph's has grown in size, multiplication of services, modernization of its plant, and upgrades necessary to compete in this technological age of healthcare, it never deviated from its primary mission.

For 125 years, Saint Joseph's doors have remained open to all in need, but especially to those living in poverty.

Prior to our nation's recent economic downturn, Yonkers experienced a catastrophic crumbling of its economic base. Unionization, needed to correct abuses, eventually became the primary factor that drove Yonkers' major employers to relocate to other parts of the United States, primarily the South, where labor and other costs were less expensive and strike threats were less likely. Large numbers of middle class and low-income workers found themselves unemployed.



Saint Joseph's Medical Center's devoted staff

To fully understand the importance of Saint Joseph's Medical Center, one must appreciate that there is no city hospital in Yonkers. At the time of the Yonkers economic crisis, there were three other hospitals in the city in addition to Saint Joseph's, two nonprofit and one proprietary. Because of its location and its mission to serve those living in poverty, Saint Joseph's became

the equivalent of Bellevue, Lincoln, or Kings County Hospital, but without the benefit of city financing. Saint Joseph's, as a not-for-profit institution, sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of New York, continually deals with financial shortfalls without the luxury of an endowment fund or political safety net. Today, Saint Joseph's Medical Center remains the primary source of health care for the poor, aging, immigrant population of Southwest Yonkers.

Continued see page 12

Twenty-Six Archdiocesan Schools Closed

The parochial school is our privileged apostolate.

By Maryellen Blumlein, SC

Mother Mary Ambrosia Sweeney,
Mother General of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent dePaul
of New York, 1885 to 1891

From the time the Sisters of Charity arrived in New York in 1817, they were involved with children. They came to take care of an orphanage and in 1822 the first Catholic school in New York, St. Patrick's, was opened. From then on, schools were opened and staffed by the Sisters of Charity, in parishes throughout the New York diocese and beyond. Academies were opened, and in many cases, worked side by side with the "free school" found in most Roman Catholic parishes. The Sisters of Charity believed that, with God's grace, they will attempt to provide "every service in our power." Childcare and Catholic education were the first needs of the vast diocese.

In 2011, thirty schools were closed, and now in 2013, twenty-six more parish schools and two high schools closed their doors for good in June. Of the schools closed in 2013, several were begun and staffed by the Sisters of Charity of New York. Schools closed this year that were begun by the Sisters of Charity are: Blessed Sacrament/St. Gabriel's High School, New Rochelle; Holy Name, and St. James/St. Joseph

in Manhattan; Our Lady of Angels, Blessed Sacrament, and St. Anthony's in the Bronx; St. Theresa's, Briarcliff Manor; St. Peter's, Haverstraw; and St. Mary of the Snows, Saugerties.

From these parishes came many vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Our children learned their religious and moral values as well as receiving strong academic foundations. How many of us, as we read this, can think back to our elementary school days and remember the joys of our parish life? Were our teachers strict? Yes, but we also knew that we were cared for and cared about, and we were grateful for these courageous people who were our mainstay for six or more hours every day. We may have complained about the "piles of homework," but we did it all. We may not have liked all of our teachers, but as we look back we see the values in all they taught us and the kindness they showed us.

Some of the schools that closed in June date back as far as the 1850's and served God's children with great joy and commitment. These schools celebrated many years of excellence in education.

The tears the children shed when they learned that their schools and their teachers would not be there to welcome them in September speak volumes about the love and care that exist in these monuments of learning.

"... in our zeal for advancement let us not forget that the heart of each little child is craving for that natural human affection which adverse circumstances have snatched from its grasp. 'God is love' and every action of our service should be permeated with his love that knows no bounds." These words are from Mother Miriam Regina Walsh during her term of office—from 1932 to 1935.

Let us celebrate the combined years of Catholic education that the Sisters of Charity, and our lay faculty, have provided in these schools, as well as the schools which have closed in the past. Let us rejoice in our own education as we recall our experiences of God's love gained through the efforts of our dedicated teachers. Let us hold on to our memories and continue to act with the boundless love of God in every moment of our lives. ■



Sr. Margaret O'Brien

Sister Margaret O'Brien, whose family were long-time parishioners of Our Lady of Angels, graduated from OLA School in 1956. About her education, Sr. Margaret recalls that faith "was the air we breathed, the gift of the Sisters of Charity at school and of parents at home." Character, Sr. Margaret notes, was "expected, molded, habitual, and was its own reward." Events like the annual bazaar were "anticipated and celebrated with gusto." Being part of the parish community evoked pride; "we stood tall because we worked, played, sang and prayed as part of something bigger than us and we knew it was truly good." About the closing of the school, Sr. Margaret remarked, "All these things and more I experienced in the OLA of the past and have seen continued in the present. I mourn their passing."

The family of Sisters Anne and Ellen Rose O'Connell has deep roots in Our Lady of Angels Parish. All seven of the O'Connell children were born and baptized there, recounts Sr. Ellen Rose, youngest of the legendary clan. As a child Sr. Anne used to help count the Sunday collection. All the children went to OLA School for at least part of their education, with

memorable teachers such as Sisters Grace Anne Troisi, Clare Miriam Barton and Bernadette Marie Hagan. Three daughters entered religious life: Mary, recently deceased, was a Sister of the Holy Child; Anne and Ellen became Sisters of Charity. Two sons were ordained: Ed, as a Jesuit, and Ken, as a priest of the New York Archdiocese. Two other sons, Jim and John, married and raised families.

But the O'Connell-OLA connection goes even deeper. When Anne and Ellen's grandparents died, the family home on University Avenue was rented to the parish in 1938 for use as a convent for the Sisters, who up till then had commuted every day from Mount Saint Vincent. In the Church—now the school auditorium—a stained glass window was donated by the family in memory of their parents and grandparents, James and Louisa O'Connell, the original OLA settlers. ■



Sr. Ellen O'Connell, left, and Sr. Anne O'Connell

By Regina Bechtle, SC



Sower–Seed–Soil Presented to Cardinal Dolan at St. Patrick's Cathedral

By Dominica Rocchio, SC

On Sunday, June 23 the Leadership Team, Sisters Constance Brennan and Mary Ellen Blumlein, and Elena Miranda attended the 10:15 Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral and had the opportunity to meet and greet Cardinal Dolan at the end of Mass.

The group presented Cardinal Dolan with a gift to commemorate his elevation to Cardinal in February 2012. The gift is a book entitled *Sower–Seed–Soil* that traces the relationship between the Archdiocese, founded in 1808, and the Sisters of Charity, who arrived in New York in 1817. The beautiful, two-of-a-kind book (a duplicate copy is housed in our archives) uses photos and text to describe the parallel growth of the Archdiocese and the Congregation as seen through the collaboration of their leaders—the Ordinaries and the Mother Generals and Presidents.

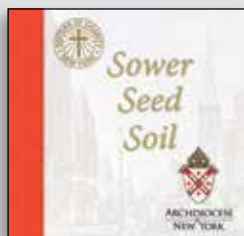
Top left: Sr. Jane presents book to Cardinal Dolan as (from left to right) Sisters Kathleen Byrnes, Eileen McGrory, Dominica Rocchio, Mary Ann Daly, Maryellen Blumlein, and Constance Brennan look on. **Top right:** Sister Eileen explains the layout of the book to Cardinal Dolan as others look on.

The gift was the creative work of Elena Miranda, Director of Communications, and Sisters Constance Brennan and Maryellen Blumlein, Archivists. Sister Regina Bechtel wrote the introductory poem describing the images of sower, seed, and soil.

The archives copy of *Sower–Seed–Soil* is available for review at its home in Boyle Hall at Mount Saint Vincent. Those interested may call Sr. Constance Brennan at 718-549-9200. ■



SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NEW YORK MOTHER GENERAL



Sower–Seed–Soil, the book created for Archbishop Dolan in commemoration of his elevation to Cardinal, highlights all

Sisters of Charity Mother Generals and the missions opened during their years of service. VISION is pleased to feature this new column in honor of the amazing women and their service.

“Dearest old partner of my cares and bearer of my burdens,” wrote Elizabeth Seton to her long time friend, Elizabeth Boyle, the Superior of St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum in New York. Elizabeth Boyle was one of the original thirty-three Sisters who remained in New York. She was elected first Mother General of the new community.

1847 Academy of Mount Saint Vincent and new motherhouse open in McGown's Pass, Manhattan

St. Philomena's Academy, Brooklyn



MOTHER ELIZABETH BOYLE
FIRST MOTHER GENERAL
SERVICE: 1846–1849

Sisters of Charity Gather at Liberty State Park in Support of Nuns on the Bus & Immigration Reform

With Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty as a backdrop, the Sisters of Charity joined the Nuns on the Bus for the Kick-off Event at Liberty State Park on May 29. Headed by Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of Network and the tireless leader of the group, the tour began its journey across the country to rally support for compassionate and comprehensive immigration reform. Msgr. Kevin Sullivan, Executive Director of Catholic Charities for the Archdiocese of New York, also spoke at the event, highlighting respect for



Left: Sr. Simone Campbell addresses supporters of immigration reform. Right: Rabbi Rick Jacobs looks on as Msgr. Kevin Sullivan speaks at the rally.

the dignity of each person, the right to meaningful work and a living wage, and the importance of family unity. Emphasizing the interfaith support of the movement, Rabbi Rick Jacobs from the Union of Reform Judaism spoke passionately about the need for immigration reform and lauded the work of Nuns on the Bus.

Network's Nuns on the Bus are back at home now for the moment, having finished the bus trip for immigration reform on June 18—but the journey for justice continues! The statement on their website reads, "We believe in the message we saw during our trip: Love God. Love your neighbor. Change the world. There is still much to be done, and we hope you will continue to journey with us as we advocate for justice for immi-

grants and all people who struggle at the margins." Visit their website for more information and schedule. ■



Left: Sisters and friends enjoy a lighthearted moment during the rally for immigration reform.



From left: Sr. Pat Brennan, Msgr. Sullivan, Sisters Eileen Judge, Carol De Angelo, Julie Cutter, DC, Florence Speth, Mary Kay Finneran, SC friend Diane Dowling, Sisters Andrea Dixon, Mary Segrue, and Associate Elena Miranda attended the rally at Liberty State Park.

Dedication of St. Elizabeth Seton & Child Statue Honors Eric Feldmann for 40-Plus Years of Service



Sr. Donna Dodge paid tribute to Eric Feldmann and his many accomplishments during his years of service to the Sisters of Charity.



A 5-foot replica of St. Elizabeth Seton and Child was dedicated to Mr. Feldmann.



Eric Feldmann and Sr. Margaret Beaudette, sculptor, in front of the newly dedicated statue.

In the presense of his family and friends, residents of Seton Village, the Sisters of Charity Leadership Team, and many other Sisters, Eric Feldmann was honored on May 30, 2013 at Seton Village in Nanuet. Tributes were made by Sr. Karen Helfenstein, Director of Sponsored Works, Sr. Donna Dodge, who succeeded Mr. Feldmann as Executive Director of the

Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corp., and Sr. Jane Iannucelli, President.

Sr. Jane closed her tribute by saying, "Today's dedication of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and Child represents a very fitting and permanent representation of the love and appreciation we have for Eric and Judy." ■



Elizabeth's Children: Anna Maria, Rebecca & Richard

By Mary Mc Cormick, SC

When asked if she would take on the responsibility of forming a religious community dedicated to the education of young women, Elizabeth Seton agreed, with the understanding that “First, I am a mother.” Nothing could interfere with that primary obligation, undertaken as her marriage to William Seton had blessed the couple with five children.

Previous issues of *Vision* contained brief biographies of William and Catherine Josephine, who lived into adulthood. Elizabeth's other children all died young: Anna Maria and Rebecca were still in their teens, and when he died two years after his mother, Richard was only 25.

Anna Maria, 1795–1812, was Elizabeth's first-born and in some ways the child nearest to her heart. She resembled Elizabeth in her looks, personality—and temper! She accompanied her parents on their ill-fated sea voyage to Leghorn, where they hoped for a cure, or at least a respite, from William's illness. After William's death, mother and daughter returned to New York. Elizabeth's decision to become a Catholic caused conflict within her family and circle of friends, but Anna Maria (renamed Annina in Italy) loved the prayers and the rituals of their new faith.

When the family relocated to Baltimore, then to Emmitsburg, Annina had her first “romance” with Charles du Pavillon, a student at Mount Saint Mary's and a school friend of her two brothers. Elizabeth felt she was too young for a commitment, but allowed Annina to visit him in Baltimore. In the end it came to nothing: Charles sent word of his engagement to a young woman in Martinique, his homeland. Annina returned to Emmitsburg to help in the school with the younger children. She received permission to enter the community. But the ravages of the disease that had already claimed her father were evident in Annina, and in January 1812 she was allowed to make vows as a Sister of Charity. She was not quite 17 when she died, on March 12, 1812.

Rebecca, 1802–1816, the youngest of Elizabeth's children, was still an infant when her parents took their trip to Italy. While they were away, she was cared for by Elizabeth's sister, Mary Post, herself the mother of a growing family. Rebecca

was only 10 when Annina died. During that same winter she fell and hurt herself, but kept her pain a secret from her mother. By the time her injury became noticeable she was filled with tuberculosis, with no hope held out by doctors for recovery. During the last months of her young life she was in such pain that she could neither lie down nor sit up. Elizabeth held her in her arms for long hours at a time, telling her stories and praying with her. She died November 4, 1816 at age 14.

The deaths of two of her daughters left Elizabeth grief-stricken to the degree that she feared she would lose her mind. She was able to carry out her many duties as Mother of a growing religious community and director of an academy solely by her faith in the God whom she knew had rescued her children from their pain and suffering.

Richard, 1798–1823, nearly died at birth. His grandfather, Dr. Richard Bayley, blew breath into his namesake's lungs to revive him. After finishing school at Mount Saint Mary's, he went to Baltimore to work for a friend of the family. In 1817 the Filicchis, his parents' great friends and supporters, offered him a place in their firm. This venture was not a success, and Richard returned to the States, visiting his mother in Emmitsburg in the December before she died. In 1822 Richard decided to follow his brother William into the Navy. He served aboard a U.S. vessel as a Captain's Clerk. The vessel put in at Cape Mesurado in the newly established country of Liberia. There he was asked to become a U.S. Assistant Agent at Monrovia, the capital of the new nation. Before he was able to take up that position, and while on board the USS Oswego, he died of a fever contracted while he was nursing an Episcopalian minister back to health. He died June 26, 1823, and was buried at sea.

A meaningful life seemed always beyond Richard's grasp. His struggles in the various jobs he had, his gullibility, a certain amount of selfishness and impatience, all played a role in keeping him from achieving an early success. Yet his final act of compassion offers us a glimpse of what his life could have been. He died a courageous man, true son of his Bayley-Seton heritage. ■

SAINT JOSEPH'S MEDICAL CENTER

Continued from
p. 7

Right: Yonkers
street sign honors
Sr. Mary Linehan

Far right:
Chapel window
at Saint Joseph's
Medical Center



The struggle to survive financially continues on a daily basis despite the efforts of talented administrators over the years who valued and still value Saint Joseph's mission. In 1968, Saint Joseph's reached a milestone; its very survival was at stake. It would take a pragmatic, mission-driven Sister of Charity to keep Saint Joseph's doors open. Sister Mary Linehan challenged the political establishment, which had neglected to provide for the health and welfare of its citizens, as well as the more financially affluent, who were indifferent to Saint Joseph's since it was not their hospital of choice. The hospital not only survived, but expanded to become Saint Joseph's Medical Center.

As a medical center, Saint Joseph's is able to offer a broad spectrum of services. In addition to acute care, there is a 200-bed nursing home, a renal dialysis service, and an updated, expanded Emergency Room capable of handling 40,000 visits yearly—making it one of the busiest in the country. A range of ambulatory clinics, where the poor traditionally go for care, claimed over a million visits in its most recent statistics. Through a merger with Saint Vincent's Hospital in Harrison,

Saint Joseph's expanded both its inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services.

Saint Joseph's also sponsors 900 low-income housing units for the frail elderly, plus 700 supervised units for low-income behavioral-health patients.

The financial challenges have not abated; neither has Saint Joseph's commitment to the poor. In its most recent fiscal report, Saint Joseph's listed over six million dollars given in free care to those unable to pay. As Sisters of Charity, our hope for Saint Joseph's future lies not only in our commitment to the poor, but in our lay colleagues, who bring their extraordinary talents and unqualified dedication in service to the Mission. ■

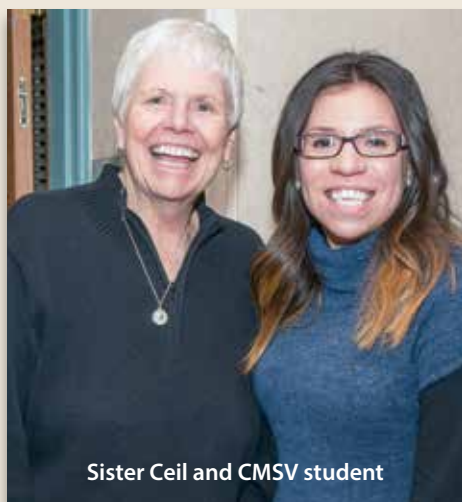


Miriam Kevin Phillips, SC, entered the Sisters of Charity as a registered nurse and was missioned to Saint Joseph's Hospital upon completing her novitiate years. Over the years she served in various capacities, including Director of the ER & Outpatient Department, instructor of anatomy and physiology in the School of Nursing, Assoc. Dir. of School of Nursing, and Assoc. Dir. of Nursing Service.

After dedicating 14 years she was transferred to St. Vincent's Hospital, Manhattan, where she served another 46 years in various capacities.

Sister Cecilia Missioned to Guatemala

By Mary Mc Cormick, SC



Sister Ceil and CMSV student

On May 16, 2013, Cecilia Harriendorf, SC, left for a three-year mission assignment in Guatemala. She will join Sisters Immaculata Burke, Marie Tolle, Anne Denise Brennan, Nora Cunningham, Gloria De Arteaga,

Virginia Searing, and Rosenda Castañeda González.

Sr. Ceil will divide her time between the communities in Santa Cruz del Quiché and Novillero, Sololá. Her primary focus will be to provide mission experiences of short duration for groups of volunteers, especially college students and their teachers.

As Campus Ministry Director at the College of Mount Saint Vincent, Sr. Ceil initiated a program that brought student nurses to the clinics in Sololá sponsored by the Sisters of Charity. In early 2013, the third year of the program, she also brought a group of nursing alums to work in the same clinics. She hopes to continue the program, expand

it to include other students and teachers, and offer volunteer opportunities in additional sites, including the Sister Barbara Ford Peace Center in Quiché.

Currently Sr. Ceil is studying Spanish in a language school in Antigua, the former capital of Guatemala, about a 45-minute drive from Guatemala City.

We ask God's blessing on Sr. Ceil and the work she is being asked to do for our brothers and sisters in Guatemala. ■



Sister Barbara Ford Peace Center

Charity in the City 2013 Lends a Helping Hand in Staten Island

By Mary Lou McGrath, SC

The “Green House on Amboy Road” welcomed Charity in the City 2013 to Staten Island on June 1. LeeAnn Brathwaite and Sheree Brown-Carter, College of Mount Saint Vincent students; Taylor Stiegler, Boston College; and I had arrived! Charity in the City is a program sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of New York which invites young women to share in volunteer ministry for a short time while living in a faith community.

Elizabeth Ann Seton had close connections with Staten Island in her early life and the New York Sisters of Charity have a rich history on the Island in health care, social services, and education. During Superstorm Sandy of October 2012, houses were displaced from their foundations and lives were washed out to sea. We felt a very strong call to go to Staten Island and help in any way we could.

Father Frank Dias and Deacon Richard Salhany of Our Lady Help of

Christians Parish, Tottenville, offered us hospitality and planned a week of ministry for us.

The folks we met were most welcoming and inspiring. During our work breaks Camille Brennan and her teenage son Anthony shared their storm stories with us and together we prayed in gratitude for the many people who still come to their assistance. Camille said, “These girls provided a beautiful yard for my son and me to enjoy this summer. I have met wonderful people through this disaster ... I’ve met friends for life.”

Our evenings were spent in reflecting on the day in light of gospel valued. Very often we were at a loss for words! These powerful days will continue to unfold in our hearts for a long time.

As we said our goodbyes we knew that our hearts have been “changed forever”—a good thing to happen! ■

Right: New friends forever, Sheree, LeeAnn, Camille, Taylor, and Sr. Mary Lou.



Taylor Stiegler (front), LeeAnn Brathwaite (rear left) and Sheree Brown-Carter cleaning up the backyard in the Brennan home. Below: Camille Brennan and Sr. Mary Lou McGrath.



Associate Commitment Day —A Joyful Celebration

By Margaret Comaskey

On Saturday, June 22, in the chapel at Mount Saint Vincent six new Associates made their commitment and six current Associates renewed their commitment, five of them making a lifetime commitment.

After an opening hymn and greetings from Sr. Jane Iannucelli, Peggy B Cekoric, Director of Associates, introduced the new Associates, each of whom briefly told



how they came to know the Sisters of Charity and Associate Relationship.

The new Associates (pictured above, left to right) are Rev. Chris Keenan, O.F.M., Joann Galley, Lynn Christopher, Anne Merwin Anne Gray, and Jim Landy. (Pictured at left) Pat Tursi renewed her commitment. Alicia Alvarez, Rose Meyler, Retta Blaney, Mayra McCarthy, and Kathleen McGrath Skinner made lifetime commitments.

Following the ceremony, all who attended celebrated the arrival of summer with a delightful picnic lunch in Smith Hall. ■



With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

Sr. Thomas Marie Callahan, SC

Entered: 1940 + Date of Death: 5/2/13 + Age: 92

"...she was a marvelous librarian whose love of literature, reading, and learning was easily conveyed to all of her students."



Most of Sr. Thomas' ministry in education was as a high school librarian but her fondest memories were the years she spent teaching the primary grades at St. John's, White Plains, Ascension in Manhattan, and Saint Mary of the Snow in Saugerties. High schools where she served as librarian include All Saints, Manhattan, Cardinal Spellman and St. Barnabas, Bronx, St. Gabriel, New Rochelle, and St. Peter's, Staten Island. Sister Thomas also served as librarian at Blessed Sacrament, Staten Island, Sacred Hearts School, Southampton, and Saint Ignatius Loyola, Manhattan.

Sister Thomas is fondly remembered by all for her kindness and gracious demeanor, and for her great love of the borough of her birth, Brooklyn.

Sr. Mary Anne Cronin, SC (Sr. Maureen Timothy)

Entered: 1953 + Date of Death: 6/27/13 + Age: 77

"We rejoice with her now as she is welcomed into the arms of her loving God whom she served so well as a Sister of Charity."



Sister Mary Anne began her ministry service in the field of education. She taught at Blessed Sacrament School, Staten Island; Sacred Heart and Saint Francis Xavier in Manhattan, and SS Peter and Paul in the Bronx. She then taught Accounting and Religion at Cardinal Hayes High School. From 1971 through 1980, Sr. Mary Anne served as the Congregation Treasurer, and during these difficult years she did an excellent job for the Community and for each of the Sisters. Sister Mary Anne then served as an administrative intern at St. Patrick's Home for the Aged in the Bronx. In 1986 she became an Internal Auditor for St. Vincent's Medical Center in Manhattan. She later served at the Finance Office at the Society of African Missions. Sister retired from active ministry in 2003 but continued her ministry of prayer, service, and witness.

Sr. Margaret Mary Murphy, SC

Entered: 1954 + Date of Death: 7/9/13 + Age: 77

"Sister Margaret spoke of the miracles she saw in her work with the elderly and those with HIV. 'Working with them,' she wrote, 'is a daily lesson in courage and hope.'"



Education was Sr. Margaret's first ministry. She enjoyed teaching the very young in elementary school and challenging youth in high school. She also treasured the relationships these ministries fostered. In 1972 Margaret felt a call to serve in the health care profession. It was as a visiting nurse that she first became involved in the care of the elderly. Sister Margaret was invited by the Richard Bayley Clinic of St. Vincent's Hospital, Staten Island, to provide primary care to people with HIV/AIDS who also had multiple complex illnesses. She headed the Gerontology departments at Bayley Seton, St. Vincent's, and later Richmond University Medical Center, all on Staten Island. With the Sisters at Seton Center #3 in Washington Square, she worked tirelessly for an end to human trafficking as well as other social justice issues.

Sr. Joanne Ward, SC

Entered: 1945 + Date of Death: 7/10/13 + Age: 85

"...Sister Joanne was open to ideas that stretched her mind and spirit... woman of balance, grace, buoyant hope, and sisterly charity..."



Sister Joanne began her life of ministry as a teacher at St. Joseph's Hall, Brooklyn. In 1953 she was assigned to St. Agatha's Home, Nanuet, where she served as group mother, social worker, Director of the Group Living Department, Assistant Administrator, and Administrator. During the post-Vatican II years, Sr. Joanne brought her practical wisdom to the new Congregational role of Regional Superior/Coordinator, 1968-1975. She returned to social work at St. Joseph Children's Services, Brooklyn, and as Director of Social Service at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, Manhattan, where she touched many lives.

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

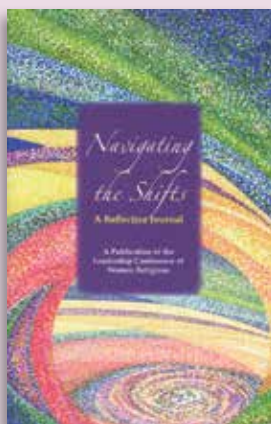
LCWR Book Features Sisters of Charity Talent

Sisters of Charity are well represented in *Navigating the Shifts*, a new reflective journal published by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). The journal includes a photo by Margaret Egan (SC-NY) and the poetry of:

Regina Bechtle (SC-NY), "Places That Scare You," and "Hope"

Deborah L. Humphreys (SC-NJ), "after you have come this far"

Eileen T. Kelly (SC-NY), "Lesson from 1861 Route 17"



Poems and photos were invited from women religious across the country on the themes of contemplation, prophetic voice, solidarity with the marginalized, community, nonviolence, and joyful hope. In her August 2012 presidential address to the LCWR assembly, Pat Farrell, OSF, proposed these six themes as "navigational tools" to guide in discerning the fresh inbreaking of God's reign in our day.

Congratulations to all the published Sisters. Well done! ■

Markham Gardens Manor Welcomes Residents



Markham Gardens Manor, located in the West Brighton section of Staten Island, opened its doors to new residents on May 14. This new 80-unit facility will provide low income hous-

ing for the elderly, some of whom were displaced from their homes as a result of Hurricane Sandy. This brings the total number of housing units provided by the Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corp. to approximately 625.

Postcards to Support Immigration Reform

Please send weekly electronic postcards to your US Senator and Representative by going to www.justiceforimmigrants.org Tony Cube, Director of the US Conference of Catholic Bishop's Justice for Immigration Campaign, has stated that it is imperative to keep comprehensive immigration reform before Congress. These postcards can make a difference.

Bill Hurley Honored by NCDC

Congratulations to Bill Hurley, SCNY Director of Development, who has been selected as the recipient of the 2013 Bishop Robert F. Morneau Award for Distinguished Service by the National Catholic Development Conference. The award will be presented in Grapevine, TX, on September 14. NCDC's board issued the following statement:



"William (Bill) F. Hurley, CFRE, has led the Sisters of Charity's (NCDC Active Member) development efforts since 1996. During this time, the Congregation has raised over \$32 million and completed four capital and endowment campaigns. Bill served on the NCDC Board of Directors as Treasurer, and has served as Accountability Task Force Chair and member of the Professional Development Committee. He is also a member of NCDC's New York Region's Coordinating Committee. In 1989, Bill founded a camp program for children with heart problems and continues to serve on its Board. He is the President of his local Lions Club and he is active in many civic and parish activities.

"Bill is an Associate of the Sisters of Charity. In recognition of his commitment to the mission of the Sisters of Charity, he was presented with their prestigious Flame of Charity

Award in May 2011. Bill was the first layperson to receive this recognition."

Sr. Jane Iannucelli, President of the Congregation, and Sr. Dominica Rochhio, Regional Coordinator, will be on hand for the presentation of the award. The Sisters of Charity are proud of Bill and are grateful for his hard work and great dedication to the Congregation.

LEFSA Team Member Ordained Minister



Congratulations and abundant blessings to James Addison, member of the LEFSA Team, who was ordained a minister on June 29 in the Church of the International Ministry, Inc. Sister Dorothy Gallant, co-founder of LEFSA, was among the members of the Congregation in attendance at the joyful event. We pray for James and thank God

for his ministry with our homeless and formerly homeless sisters and brothers who participate in the Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association.

Gold LEEDS Certification Granted

Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center and New York Foundling Bronx Community Services/Haven Academy Building, two SCNY sponsored works, were recently awarded Gold LEEDS Certification. A cause for celebration, we give thanks for their Executive Directors, Patricia Tursi and Bill Baccaglini, the boards, and all who made this achievement possible. We acknowledge their hard work and leadership in mitigating climate change and creating a more sustainable world. This is one example among many of ways our sponsored works partner with us in a ministry of peace, justice, and integrity of creation.

Sister Nurses in Civil War

On June 28, the Seton Shrine in Emmitsburg, MD, opened "Charity Afire," a striking new exhibit to mark the service of the Daughters and Sisters of Charity in the Civil War. Stories of Sr. Mary Ulrica O'Reilly and our St. Joseph's Military Hospital in Central Park are among the many first-hand accounts included.

Sisters Maryellen Blumlein, Connie Brennan, Mary McCormick, and Regina Bechtle offered info and advice to the Shrine staff and designers. A medal belonging to William Seton, Elizabeth's grandson, graciously lent by our Archives, is a featured part of the exhibit, which will be open throughout the Civil War Sesquicentennial. Read more about it on <http://famvin.org/en/2013/05/23/remembering-another-war-and-the-daughters-of-charity/>

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