

Vision

SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 2, Spring 2009

2009
marks the
200th anniversary
of the founding
of the
Sisters of Charity
by
St. Elizabeth
Ann Seton

A Banner Day for the Sisters

March 17th is always a special day in New York City. That's because the world's largest and oldest St. Patrick's Day parade is held here. This year the day had extra significance for the Sisters of Charity of New York because the 248th parade was dedicated to them in recognition of their "200 years of dedicated service to the Poor of New York City."

It was a full day that started for Sr. Dorothy Metz, President, and Sr. Donna Dodge, Assistant to the President, with 7am breakfast with NYC's Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Then they dashed to St.

Patrick's Cathedral to join other Sisters and Associates gathered there for the 8:30am Liturgy, where Edward Cardinal Egan was the principal celebrant. After Mass, it was down to 44th Street where the Sisters of Charity contingent formed and awaited the call to march up Fifth Avenue at 11am.

The parade was broadcast by WNBC-TV New York, Channel 4. It could also be viewed online from the parade's official site. During the day, Sr. Dorothy and others in the Congregation were interviewed by various TV outlets. *(continued on page 8)*

In this issue:

- A Memorable March
- Final Vows
- Spiritual Ministries
- Volunteering



This was the first parade in which the Sisters marched in their own Congregational contingent. Three teams of Sisters took turns carrying the 10-foot wide banner. Here, Sisters Carol Barnes, Mary Ann Daly, Kathleen Byrnes and Karen Helfenstein take the first shift. They were succeeded by Sisters Sheila Brosnan, Kathleen McHugh, Regina Murphy and Eileen P. Walsh; and, in the final stretch, by Sisters Andrea Dixon, Vivienne Joyce, Frances Keegan and Florence Speth.



Letter From the President

Dear Sisters, Associates and Friends,

“Everybody loves a parade” and that refrain was never truer than it was on this St. Patrick’s Day in New York City.

When I wrote to the Official Parade Committee requesting permission to join this year’s march as a way of celebrating the Bicentennial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton’s founding of the Sisters of Charity in North America, their response was immediate. They met and decided unanimously to dedicate the Parade to the Sisters of Charity to honor and recognize the Congregation’s great service to the Church and the people of this continent. We soon found out we had quite a bit to learn about parades, but once we mastered *Parades 101* we were ready to go.

We – Sisters of Charity of New York and our Associates – were joined by Federation members, colleagues from our sponsored works, friends and family members. Marching with such a wonderful contingent gave us a strong feeling of support and solidarity. I was totally surprised by the enormity of the expressions of gratitude from the crowds all along the Parade route. Many called out the names of the schools they attended or Sisters who taught them. Some expressed gratitude for children they had adopted from The New York Foundling. In some ways, it was like stepping into the shoes of the 4,000 plus Sisters of Charity who ever ministered in the 285 schools, hospitals and child care institutions we staffed throughout our history. The many “thank-yous” we heard were for all those Sisters. As the saying goes, we knew “we were standing on the shoulders of those who came before us.”

It was very humbling for me personally, but also a source of great pride as I reflected on our long history and the wonderful women whose heritage we continue. During these difficult economic times, the Parade was a reminder that we are on a journey together, not alone. God was an active presence as we marched and surely St. Patrick marched proudly with us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister Dorothy Metz, SC
President

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



**SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK**

Advisory Board

Sr. Regina Bechtle
Sr. Donna Dodge
Sr. Mary Gallagher
William Hurley, Associate
Sr. Mary E. Mc Cormick
Sr. Patricia McGowan

Editor

Christine Haggerty

Contributors

Sr. Regina Bechtle	William Hurley
Sr. Constance Brennan	Sr. Mary E. Mc Cormick
Sr. Alice Darragh	Sr. A. Jean Iannone
Sr. Dorothy Gallant	Sr. Eileen Regina Leonard
Christine Haggerty	Sr. Eileen McGrory
Sr. Jane Iannucelli	Sr. Ellen Rose O’Connell

Designer/Printer

Jill Cuddire / Rose Press Inc.

Articles without bylines were written by Christine Haggerty.

Article contributions to this publication are welcome; however, all submissions are subject to editorial and space constraints. See back page for our mailing address.



Spring Benefit Helps Multiple Ministries

We hope you will be able to join us at our Annual Spring Benefit. It's on Thursday, May 7th at the Yale Club by Grand Central Station.

Proceeds of the evening will go to the six ministries in the Congregation's Charity Response Team (CRT) whose goals are to improve the lives of the homeless, new immigrants and women in need. You can learn more about the CRT ministries online at www.scny.org/socialservices.html

The featured guest speaker at this year's event will be Fr. James Martin, SJ. He is Culture Editor of *America*, the national Catholic weekly magazine, and is also the author of several books, including *My Life with the Saints* which received a 2006 Christopher Award and was also named one of the "Best Books" of 2006 by *Publishers Weekly*.

Our first Benefit last year was a delightful evening of good company, delicious food and wonderful silent auction items – trips, autographed books, jewelry, tickets to sporting events and Broadway shows, and more. We were thrilled to exceed our target goal then and hope to do so again this year. We hope you'll be able to join us in this good cause.

For more information, contact Bill Hurley, Development Director, at 718-549-9200 x 234 or bhurley@scny.org ■

Those who attended our first Spring Benefit last year found it an enjoyable experience, including the Houlihans, who had winning bids on several fine silent auction items.

From the left: Gerry Houlihan, Maureen Doran Houlihan, Mark Houlihan, Dr. Anna Filipkowski Houlihan, and, in the background, Kate Houlihan.

Kate's daughter, Rita, is on the planning committee again for this year's Benefit, so it's sure to be another successful and memorable evening.

LEFSA Proves a Lifesaver

Sr. Dorothy Gallant co-founded and directs the Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association. LEFSA is a unique city-wide program that fills a critical void for those in city shelters by creating faith communities among the homeless. It is one of the CRT ministries that will be helped by the proceeds from the Spring Benefit. Here is one example of how LEFSA made a difference to Janet (not her real name).

Janet's story

Several years ago, I arrived at Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association, homeless and pregnant. Sr. Dorothy befriended me during that time when my life seemed to be falling apart. She encouraged me to get medical care and pregnancy counseling.

I began participating in the Life and Faith Sharing Community gatherings in the shelter and met other women who were struggling. We grew together in the knowledge that God is walking with us and loving us no matter what our situation is. We addressed goals for

futures that did not include being homeless. Gradually, my confidence and hope in a better life were restored. It was a happy day when I moved into my own apartment, which LEFSA helped me find and furnish with basics.

As a new mother, I needed help adjusting to all the new responsibilities in my life. I continued my connection with LEFSA and went to the monthly women's group meetings and leadership study days. My daughter came with me and became a part of the LEFSA family. When life became too overwhelming, I always got the encouragement to press on. I was able to raise my daughter, who is now in a Catholic HS. When she needs to talk with someone other than me about her troubles, she calls Sr. Dorothy and shares what is in her heart. She gets some counseling and assurance of her own goodness.

Today, I thank God that I am gainfully employed. I am grateful to LEFSA, which is always there with support, encouragement and care. LEFSA helped turn my life around. ■

Charity in the City



The Congregation is offering the 2nd year of its Charity in the City service program. This two-week volunteer option offers young women 18-25 years of age a chance to live and work with the Sisters and their associates in their ministries to the poor – especially women and children, new immigrants and the homeless. The volunteers get plenty of chances to visit NYC's tourist sites, too.

This year's program runs May 29 - June 12 in NYC and environs. No experience needed, just a desire to help and a willingness to live simply. Apply by May 12. Details & application online at www.scny.org

For more information, contact Sr. Mary Katherine Hamm at 718.549.9200 x 264 or mkhamm@scny.org ■

Volunteers Get More Than They Give

by Sr. Ellen Rose O'Connell

Time is one of our most precious possessions. Whether we are young and starting our lives, or retiring from full-time employment, we are always intrigued by the question, "What will I do with my one, wild, wonderful life?"

The gift of time given in volunteer service is one that returns to us and brings untold richness in relationships and in gratitude given and received. When you volunteer for a worthwhile cause, you learn the mission and history of the organization, and who it helps. You absorb and believe in its mission. You also continue the mission, bringing it to those who are helped as well as to the staff who are greatly touched by your gift of service.

Sisters and Associates of Charity, as well as friends and colleagues, have much to share in living the mission of Charity. They can bring that love and dedication to assist lay colleagues and Sisters working in ministries. The quality of the work and the sense of service to clients are greatly enhanced through dedicated volunteers.

You may ask, "What can I do as a volunteer to assist those in full-time ministry?" The tasks are endlessly creative, whether they entail directly aiding children or clients, staff or caregivers. The experience might call forth gifts you never knew you had. Most volunteer programs offer on-the-job training as well as orientation for the work.

Our new Director of Volunteers, Sr. Kati Hamm, SC – Halifax, can help your skills find a good "fit" with a Sister of Charity ministry. If you decide to share your very precious possessions of time and talent, you will be enriched and deepened in countless ways, becoming part of a caring community. ■

The Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center and the John A. Coleman School, with campuses in Manhattan and White Plains, have special need for volunteers to the staff in its service to medically fragile children. Check the web sites of the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center www.setonpediatric.org and the Sisters of Charity www.scny.org under "Join Us" to discover many volunteer opportunities.



...where good beginnings never end

JOHN A. COLEMAN SCHOOL

The Coleman School has volunteer opportunities at these 2009 events:

Annual Fashion Show Fundraiser
Wednesday, April 29th

Annual Butterfly Open Golf Outing
Monday, June 8th / All day event
(Both events will be held at Westchester Hills Golf Club in White Plains, NY)

John A. Coleman School Graduation
Tuesday, June 30th / Ceremony begins at noon
Coleman White Plains Campus

Annual Walk-a-thon and Resource Fair
Sunday, October 4th
Tibbetts Brook Park / Yonkers, NY

Sr. Ellen Rose O'Connell is Director of Mission and Pastoral Care at the John A. Coleman School in White Plains, a branch of the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center in White Plains. She has been involved for many years with lay associates to religious communities.

Final Vows Professed

Sr. Cecilia Harriendorf professed final vows on Congregation Day, December 6th at a Mass held in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at Mount Saint Vincent.

The Ritual of Final Profession consisted of a request for profession by Sr. Cecilia; affirmation by Sr. Anne Denise Brennan; a reflection by Sr. Mary E. Mc Cormick; an examination by Sr. Dorothy Metz; and a singing of the Litany of the Saints led by Sr. Carol Finegan.

In her final vows, which she wrote herself, Sister promised “to affirm, nurture and respect all God’s people for who they are in themselves and to give generously of the time and talents which God has so graciously given to me.” After the vows were signed and witnessed, all Sisters renewed their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. SC Associates renewed their commitment to share in the ongoing mission of Jesus and to serve all in need, especially the poor. The Liturgy concluded, appropriately, with the hymn “We Are Called.”

In the program booklet for the day, Sr. Ceil, as she is familiarly known, acknowledged family members and friends who encouraged her dream; the Sisters of Charity for



Fr. Michael Greene, CP, who presided at the Liturgy, blesses Sr. Cecilia during the ceremony.

nurturing the deepest desires of her heart; and “our Creator God who repeatedly calls us and loves us into life.” She also thanked those in the Congregation and on the College staff who had worked on the day’s components.

Sister currently is the Director of Campus Ministry at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. Previously, she had served as the Director of Religious Education at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in White Plains and had worked for many years with The Christophers, the nonprofit organization which uses the media to promote the message that everyone can make a positive difference in the world. ■

Diamond Jubilarians

February marked significant anniversaries in the religious lives of these six Sisters. Join us in gratitude for their combined 390 years of dedicated service.

70th Anniversary

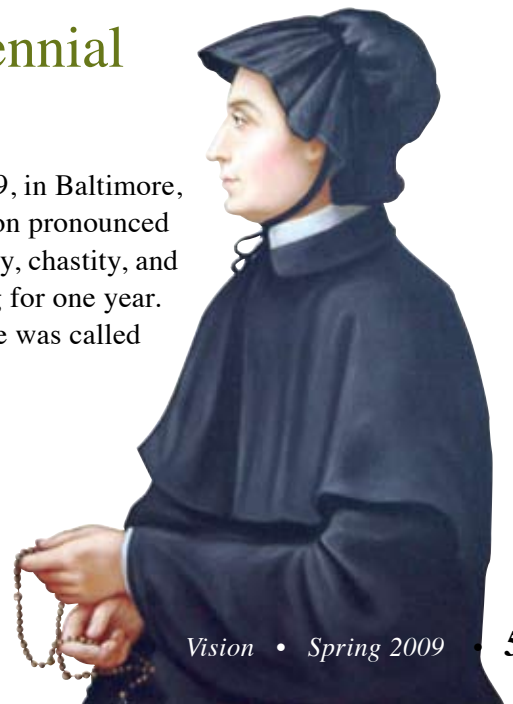
Sr. Miriam Anne Brennan
Sr. Cecilia Dolores Holmes
Sr. Angela Marie Rooney

60th Anniversary

Sr. Marie Dolorosa Henn
Sr. Marguerite Mahony
Sr. Patricia Maureen Mulryan

A Bicentennial Memory

On March 25, 1809, in Baltimore, Elizabeth Ann Seton pronounced her vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, binding for one year. From that time, she was called Mother Seton.



Sisters in Spiritual Ministries

by Sr. Regina Bechtle

*People are hungry
and one good word
is bread for a thousand.*

(David Whyte, "Loaves and Fishes," excerpt)

In 1809, St. Elizabeth Seton founded the Sisters of Charity in America to meet the needs of the Church in a growing nation. Two hundred years later, Sisters of Charity and Associates still offer "good words" to feed the spiritual hunger of God's people, in many creative ways. Here are just a few:

SETON SPIRITUALITY

SERIES:

On the second Wednesday of each month at Our Lady of the Rosary Church at the tip of Manhattan, a group meets after the 12:15pm Mass to hear a Sister of Charity speak about Elizabeth Seton's spirituality. The small, exquisite State Street church, built on the site of one of Elizabeth's homes, is the perfect setting for this informal gathering.

Whether daily Mass-goers or first-timers, workers, tourists or retired folks, all appreciate learning more about the parish's patron from those who know her as a friend and foundress.

In the question and sharing time, listeners easily discover connections between Elizabeth's life and their own, whether as a lifelong caregiver, as a person with strengths and flaws, or as a family provider in times of economic crisis.

A recent session on Elizabeth as educator featured three young women who spoke about the place of religious values and the impact of Sisters on their lives. Ms. Maureen Ryan, their principal at Notre Dame HS in Manhattan, added her

own heartfelt testimony. Presenters Sr. Margaret McEntee, the students' current religion teacher, and Sr. Constance Brennan, their elementary school teacher, were pleased and proud. And participants chimed in with their own wonderful stories of Sisters who influenced their decision to become a teacher, or who helped them to stay in school during family hard times.

This monthly presence helps to make today's Sisters of Charity visible. And, as landlords of Elizabeth's home, the

pastor, Rev. Peter Meehan, and his parish staff provide a "mi casa es su casa" welcome that surely must delight her.

CMSV ALUMNAE

RETREAT:

33 alumnae of the College of Mount Saint Vincent spent a January Sunday afternoon on retreat "In the Company of Charity." Sr. Jane Iannucelli, Director of Sponsorship Services for the Congregation, and I lead the retreat and reacquainted alums of all ages with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, in recognition of the 200th

anniversary of the Sisters of Charity, founders of the College.

I presented Elizabeth as a deeply relational woman, and invited all to explore their connections with her as daughter, sister, wife, mother, widow, single parent, friend, teacher, founder – not titles, but relationships. Sr. Jane portrayed Elizabeth as a woman fully engaged in her times: one who stood with people living in poverty, who called herself a "citizen of the world," and who was a midwife of the Church in America. Retreatants prayed and shared how the gift of their life experience calls them to bring forth life for others in our challenging times. ■

Sr. Regina Bechtle, as the Charism Resource Director, researches, writes about, and offers retreats and programs on Charity spirituality, especially for groups in the SC Federation and the wider Vincentian family. She has co-edited a multi-volume collection of St. Elizabeth Seton's writings.



At the November presentation at State Street (l to r), Sisters Charlotte Raftery, Maria Iglesias, Regina Bechtle, and Anne Denise Brennan flank Fr. Peter K. Meehan, pastor at Our Lady of the Rosary, and Fr. Robert A. Jeffers, retired pastor of St. Augustine's Church in the South Bronx.

The State Street after-Mass series, presenters & themes:

- Sr. Mary E. McCormick discussed Elizabeth's Seton's "Family Influences"
- Sisters Maria Iglesias & Charlotte Raftery spoke on "Living Through Adversity: Elizabeth Seton's Example for our Times"
- Sisters Nancy Kellar & Pauline Cinquini chose "Elizabeth Seton: Woman of Advent Trust"
- Sisters Constance Brennan & Margaret McEntee covered "Elizabeth Seton as Educator"
- Sr. Carol De Angelo's theme was "Elizabeth Seton as Mentor for Caregivers"
- Sr. Elizabeth Vermaelen discussed "Elizabeth Seton's Path to Holiness"
- Sisters Vivienne Joyce & Sr. Mary Ellen O'Boyle talked about "Elizabeth Seton and the Mystery of Suffering"

Spiritual Journeys

by Mary E. Mc Cormick

The first in a series of Seton retreats to be held during the Bicentennial year took place in February in Emmitsburg, MD. Members from seven Federation communities gathered in one of the sacred places of our founding to participate in a time of remembering, celebrating, and renewal.

Sr. Susan Jenny, SC (Seton Hill, Greenburg, PA) and I led the group in prayer, presentations, and sharing on topics that included Elizabeth as a relational woman whose mission was one of love and service, especially to the poor; a woman of prayer and discernment; a woman for whom the Eucharist was life.

We had opportunities to visit the Stone House and the White House, homes of the early Community, to go on pilgrimage to the mountain where Elizabeth and the first sisters gave religious instruction to the local children, and to have a firsthand look at the archival riches of our heritage. Our common, grace-filled connections with each other and the Charity charism were present as we listened to one another, shared the bread of friendship, and forged

ever deeper links in the unshakable bonds of charity.

At the beginning of Catholic Schools Week, a number of Sisters were welcomed at St. Peter's School, Yonkers, to visit each grade and share Elizabeth's story. Armed with the tools of the teacher's trade – handouts, props, holy cards, and our own enthusiasm – we met our grace, as Elizabeth would say, in the attention the children paid to us, their visitors.

In the fourth grade class, children remembered their own First Communion day as they listened to the story of Elizabeth's First Communion as a Catholic. The younger children were happy to color the pictures of Elizabeth and her children using, I must add, all the colors of the rainbow. The older students, with a little bit of prompting, recalled parts of the story that placed Elizabeth in the context of her times. It was

a morning of mutual enjoyment and enrichment for the Sisters, teachers, and students.

Elizabeth would approve: 'to speak the joy of my soul at the prospect of ... teaching little innocents to love God...' was her loving description of the beginnings of the great enterprise that would become, in time, the parochial school system of America. ■

Sr. Mary E. Mc Cormick is currently engaged in Retreat and Spiritual Direction programs and Charism Writing Projects for the Congregation.



Sr. Mary Mc Cormick, 2nd from left, leading a group discussion in Emmitsburg.

Sponsored Ministry Earns Honors

The Sisters of Charity founded Saint Joseph's Hospital in 1888 to meet the health care needs of Yonkers and surrounding communities. Over the decades, the facility was expanded and upgraded and it is now a modern, progressive Medical Center. It has been recognized twice since last summer for the excellence of its services.

The hospital's nursing home, Sister Mary Linehan Pavilion, earned the top rating – 5 stars – for overall quality in a nationwide review of nursing homes conducted by the federal government. The 200-bed facility, built in 1976 to alleviate a critical shortage of nursing home beds, was deemed to be performing much above average in the survey results that were issued in December.

The Medical Center overall was cited as a "Best Kept Secret" in June 2008 by the Hospital Value Index. The HVI is a national ranking of hospitals based on what

patients get for their money. It is one of the first organizations to rate medical centers not only for quality of care, but also for affordability, efficiency and patient satisfaction.

St. Joseph's has come a long way over 121 years, and even now it embodies the spirit of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton who committed her Sisters to the care of the sick and indigent with compassion and respect. The Sisters still sponsor St. Joseph's Hospital, its Nursing Home and its two senior housing buildings, Griffin House and Seton Manor. ■



A stained glass window of Mother Seton graces the hospital's chapel. It is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Elizabeth Seaton-Neuendorf, a one-time staffer at the Medical Center.

Photo courtesy of the Daughters of Charity in Emmitsburg, MD

A Banner Day *(continued from page 1)*



Almost a third of the New York Congregation itself marched. Sisters and SC Associates, their family members, friends, and colleagues in education, health, child care and housing ministries convened on E. 44th St.

Our community also extended invitations to other congregations in the Sisters of Charity Federation who serve in the New York City area. Representatives from the Sisters of Charity of Convent Station, NJ, and Halifax, Canada, as well as from the Daughters of Charity of Albany, NY, were present. Even some Sisters of Charity out of Greensburg, PA and Leavenworth, KS came to New York to take part in this unique event.



Sisters Dominica Rocchio, Alice Darragh and Jane Iannucelli marched in the row behind the banner, dressed in the traditional habit. They represented the first three Sisters sent to New York in 1817 by Mother Seton to care for orphans: Sr. Felicité Brady, Sr. Cecilia

O'Conway and Sr. Rose White. Today's three Sisters were honored to represent those first three pioneers and all the women in the New York community since then – all 4,000 of them.

As they passed the Cathedral, Cardinal Egan and



other bishops came into Fifth Avenue to greet the Sisters. Behind Sr. Dominica are Sisters Dorothy Metz and Donna Dodge. This was the last St. Patrick's Day Parade that the Cardinal reviewed as the spiritual leader of the Archdiocese of New York. He is retiring in April after nine years in office.

During the day, the Cardinal told *Catholic New York*, "Nothing could have made me happier than to learn that the St. Patrick's Day Mass and Parade would honor, in a very special way, our beloved Sisters of Charity. The work they have done is nothing short of heroic, and we could never thank them enough."

Sr. Anne O'Connell and Sr. Catherine Walsh were



among those cheering enthusiastically from the steps of the Cathedral as the Congregation passed by. Claudia McDonnell of *Catholic New York* interviewed the Sisters on their reaction to the day and their remarks appeared in the March 26th issue of the Archdiocese's paper.

Sr. Catherine (at right) said, "We are so proud of our sisters and our foremothers." Of her 54 years in religious life, Sr. Anne said, "It's been the most wonderful adventure with the Lord."

You could feel the love and gratitude for the



Sisters all along the 40 blocks of the parade. Cheers and shouts of “Thank you, Sisters!” were constant. Alumae/i called out the names of schools. One older man in a wheelchair took several deep breaths from his oxygen tank, then mouthed “Thank You” as the Sisters passed



him. A young man in the reviewing stands stood and repeatedly gestured from his heart to the Sisters.

An after-march reception was held at the Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center on Fifth Avenue. Among the attendees were, from left (seated) Sr. Eileen McGrory, her sister, Mary McGrory Dusatko, Sr. Margaret Ellen Burke and Sr. Wilda Asfour. Standing are Sr. Mary Ellen O’Boyle, Sr. Margaret Egan, Sr. Mary Jo Mutschler (SC of Greensburg, PA), and Associate Barbara (Bunny) Kennedy.

The Cooke Center was ideally located – right across

the street from the site of the original Mount Saint Vincent at McGown’s Pass, which is now part of Central Park. Many visited the site before boarding buses to return home.

Plans Well-laid

When planning started for this event, the goal was to find 200 willing to march behind the Sisters’ banner – one person for each year since the founding of the Sisters of Charity. On the big day, over 700 turned out – and there would have been more if enrollment hadn’t been closed down in February.

The original idea of marching came from Chris Haggerty, the Director of External Communications for the Congregation. Bill Hurley, Director of Development, used his contacts to reach the official parade committee which enthusiastically said “Yes!” to the idea ... and ultimately decided to dedicate the 2009 parade to the Sisters of Charity in recognition of all their good works over the centuries. Bill also procured impressive tri-color sashes for our aides to wear.

Sr. Mary Ellen O’Boyle chaired the Congregation’s Parade Committee, handled registration, attended planning meetings with parade officials, ordered the banner, rosettes, buses, and arranged for a light after-march lunch. Other Committee members who helped make the day a success included Sisters Donna Dodge, Margaret Egan, Margaret M. Kelly, Patricia McGowan, Margaret Murphy, and Claire E. Regan.

(continued on page 10)



A Banner Day *(continued from page 9)*



Some of our aides-de-parade: Bill Hurley with Sisters Jean Iannone (whose sash gave her carte blanche as a photographer), Carol Ruf, Margaret Egan and Mary Ellen O'Boyle, who chaired our parade committee.

March 17th was, as usual, a great day for the Irish. This year, it was an especially great day for the Sisters of Charity of New York, Irish and otherwise. When asked for their reactions to the day's events, most Sisters used the word "wonderful!"

Certainly the calls of "Thank you, Sisters!" will live long in memory. ■

For the Record

If prizes were given out for the longest distance traveled, they would have gone to Sisters who came in from Leavenworth, KS and down from Halifax, Canada.

The oldest participant might have been our own Sr. Florence Simpson (93) who traveled the 2 miles in a transport chair, as did several Sisters from other congregations. (Parade rules didn't allow for convertible automobiles.) Several young supporters traveled in strollers.



Sr. Patricia O'Brien was one of at least two birthday girls marching. (Sr. Mary Jo Mutschler, SC of Greensburg, PA, was another.) Sister's tri-color sash marked her as a Parade Aide.



Those in the Sisters' contingent were easily identified by the rosette badge which said "Sisters of Charity 1809 – 2009." Many also sported a green and white Elizabeth Ann Seton Bicentennial Scarf.

Our Partners in Ministry Marched With Us



Bill Baccaglini (gesturing), is the Executive Director of The New York Foundling, which the Sisters of Charity began in 1869.



Sr. Kathleen Aucoin, Director of Pastoral Care at the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center, is rear center in this group of colleagues from the ESPC and from the John A. Coleman School, both Manhattan and White Plains campuses. The Pediatric Center was established in 1987.



Among the marchers from St. Vincent's Hospital Manhattan, were Sisters Audrey Boylan, Catherine Sherry, Miriam Kevin Phillips and Henry J. Amoroso, President and Chief Executive Officer of Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers. St. Vincent's was the first Catholic hospital in New York City. Sr. Mary Angela Hughes opened it in 1849.



Michael J. Spicer, President and CEO, led the group of 25 from Saint Joseph's Medical Center in Yonkers. The Sisters founded St. Joseph's in 1888.



Charles L. Flynn, Jr., President of the College of Mount Saint Vincent, headed up a delegation of 143 staffers and alums. The College evolved out of the Academy that the Sisters began in 1847. It became the first women's college in New York City when chartered in 1910.



Eric Feldmann, Executive Director of the Sisters of Charity Housing Development Corporation, with his wife Judy. The Congregation sponsors over 600 units of affordable housing for families, the elderly and the chronically mentally ill.

Stepping Smartly

The Sisters of Charity contingent had a very special escort leading them up Fifth Avenue – the Cathedral High School All Girl Marching Band.

The Cathedral group included 45 musicians, eight color guards, a dance group of ten, the band director, and an alum who helps with practices. The band has won many prizes for its excellence over the years. Sr. Eileen Regina Leonard started the Cathedral band at the request of Terence Cardinal Cooke. After watching the Columbus Day Parade in 1980, the Cardinal turned to Sister and said that Cathedral should have its own band. She set out to make that a reality immediately.



Sr. Eileen Regina and the Band at the May 2, 1995 dedication in Central Park of the plaque marking the site of the original Mount Saint Vincent at McGown's Pass – off Fifth Avenue at E. 105 St.

Sister began her service to the school in 1963 as Chair of the Foreign Languages Department; she retired in June 2005 after 42 years. Since then, Sr. Eileen Regina has been teaching Spanish and helping Spanish speakers with translations at her parish in Rego Park.

Cathedral HS began in 1905, with a faculty of two – both Sisters of Charity – and a student body of 28. Since then, over 35,000 women have received a quality education there. In June, Cathedral will celebrate its 100th graduating class.

In addition to a demanding course load, today's Cathedralites still make time to serve the poor, work with AIDS children, tutor, help the elderly and are present where there is poverty and need. ■



The New York Celtic Medical Society (NYCMS) honored the Sisters of Charity of New York with their Healer's Award at a March 13th ceremony.

Sr. Dorothy Metz was honored to accept the award "in the name of all the Sisters of Charity who have been involved in the healing ministry here in New York." Sister spoke of Sisters nursing cholera epidemic victims, Civil War and Spanish American War casualties, and of their establishing a total of five hospitals in the city and in Westchester.

In her remarks, Sr. Dorothy recalled how Elizabeth Seton learned her love for the poor from her father, Dr. Richard Bayley, a noted medical man of his time who was appointed the first physician of the Port of New York.

Begun in 1891 as a mutual support society for Irish American physicians, the NYCMS is the oldest medical society in New York City. Its 80 members of Celtic descent represent all medical specialties. Since 2004, the society has bestowed its Healer's Award on a person who personifies the ideals of healing. This year, the society felt that it would be most appropriate to honor the Sisters for their many contributions to the health of New York City over 200 years. Many NYCMS members were educated by the Sisters and have collaborated with them in the city's hospitals and clinics. ■



Sister Camille D'ariento, RSM, who has been a Religion Commentator for 1010 WINS Radio over 30 years, dedicated her March 15th "New York Minute" to the

Sisters of Charity of New York.

In her remarks, which covered *Doubt* and the St. Patrick's Day Parade, Sr. Camille said, "They've earned the right to be in the front of this parade as they continue to respond to the reality inscribed on the walls of their New York Foundling Family Service Agency: 'Misery abounds with a changed face.'" ■

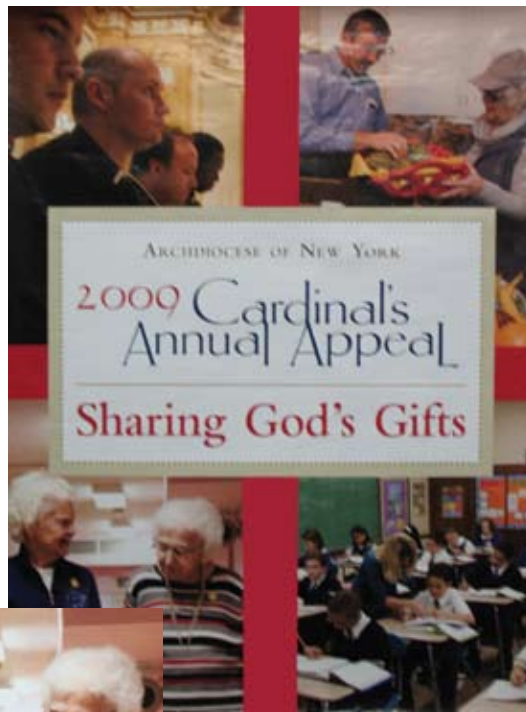
Appealing Sisters

If you're within the Archdiocese of New York, you know that the Cardinal's Annual Appeal is underway. What you may not realize yet though, is that this year's campaign features several Sisters of Charity of New York.

Look closely at the "Sharing God's Gifts" campaign poster that hangs in your church lobby and you'll see Sisters Agnes Connolly and Mary De Sales Collins in the lower left photo. The bottom right photo shows a classroom in Visitation School.

In the 10:22-minute-long campaign video, Sr. Agnes, who served as the Congregation's president 1979-1987, hosts the segment on "Retired Priests and Religious." She gives a tour of the Convent of Mary the Queen in Yonkers, and speaks of the loving care given there to the Sisters who served so many, so faithfully, over so many years. Among those seen in the video at the Congregation's innovative retirement facility are Sisters Marilda Joseph Aiello, Mary De Sales Collins, Maureen Dunn, Rose Marie Galligan, Regina Catherine Gorga and Alice Luby.

In her 2-minute segment, Sr. Agnes speaks of her love for



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
2009 Cardinal's
Annual Appeal
Sharing God's Gifts



Sisters Agnes and
Mary De Sales

The campaign poster



Sr. Rosemarie Connell

all the Sisters at the Queen and how, "...when a Sister retires, she wants to keep on doing some good in this world." She closes out with, "...we're in this world... to love God and to love our neighbors and we can show that through what we give and through what we do."

That segment is followed by one focusing on Visitation School in the Bronx, where the Sisters have served since May 1930. Sr. Rosemarie Connell has been principal there for almost 30 years.

In the video, Sr. Rosemarie speaks of how, "The children love to pray. Prayer is their communication with God." Thanks to the financial help the school gets from the Archdiocese, she reports that, "We're able to exist and continue the fine mission which is ours as Catholic educators."

Sr. Rosemarie isn't the only member of the Congregation regularly associated with Visitation School. Sisters Constance Brennan, Teresa Dermody and Frances Keegan teach and coach the students to many honors. (A future issue of Vision will detail the ministry at Visitation.) ■

Actress Applauds Sisters at Awards

On January 25th, Meryl Streep won the Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Leading Role for her performance as Sr. Aloysius in *Doubt*.

As is usual on these occasions, Streep thanked her colleagues on the film. In addition, she also acknowledged the Sisters of Charity. During her acceptance speech, she said, "Thank you to the Sisters of Charity. Thank you, Sr. Peggy. Big hug to everybody there. Your love and your work was so inspiring to all of us." (There was a bit of a catch in her voice during that last sentence.)

Doubt was the second major movie that Streep filmed at Mount Saint Vincent. She also filmed some scenes from 1982's *Sophie's Choice* at the Congregation's home base. ■



Photo courtesy of Miramax Films

In Memoriam

Sr. Margaret Foley • Educator

Religious Name: Therese Marian • Entered: 1949 • Final vows: 1957 • Age at death: 79

Margaret was born in the Bronx, but grew up in Utica. Her association with the Sisters of Charity began at St. Gabriel HS in New Rochelle, NY, which she attended when her family moved back from upstate.

During her religious life, Sr. Peg, as she was familiarly known, would serve in four dioceses. The first 21 years of her ministry were dedicated to elementary education – five schools in four counties.

After earning a MA in Theology, Sr. Peg focused on religious education. Eleven of the next 23 years were spent ministering to Vietnamese refugees in the Diocese of Harrisburg, PA. She also directed religious education programs in parishes in the Bronx, Nassau and Westchester Counties.

Sister believed in the ability of education to change the options available to even the poorest children. She moved easily and happily from one ministry to another, knowing that each was a way to love God and others. Poor health slowed her pace somewhat in her later years, but didn't stop Sr. Peg from achieving her goals.

Sr. Bernadette Sheridan • Educator

Entered: 1932 • Final vows: 1938 • Age at death: 93

Growing up in the Bronx, Bernadette was taught by the Sisters at St. Barnabas HS. She held a BA in Latin and a MSED in elementary education.

Sister served 12 elementary schools during her 54 years as an educator. Besides teaching, Sr. Bernadette also was Principal at Immaculate Conception in Manhattan (1963-65) and Administrator at St. John Evangelist in Center Moriches, LI (1971-81). She appreciated the talents of others and provided opportunities for individual growth among them.

From 1989 to 1998 Sr. Bernadette lived at St. Elizabeth Seton Convent in Shrub Oak, spending time with her sister Mary Jo (Sr. Agnes Carmita), who had entered the community in 1933. They did volunteer work together and enjoyed the companionship that years of ministry in different locations had made difficult.

Sr. Bernadette's gentle and unassuming manner belied the passionate dedication of her life as a Sister of Charity. She prayed daily for vocations until the time of her death.

Sr. Frances McGinn • Educator & Administrator

Religious Name: Sr. Marie Paul • Entered: 1950 • Final vows: 1958 • Age at death: 76

Sr. Frances first learned of her love for education as a teen under the tutelage of Sr. Madeleine Regina Nash, a lifelong mentor. She began as a volunteer at Saint Joseph's Hall in Brooklyn.

As an educator, Sister served throughout the New York Archdiocese at a total of 10 schools. She served as principal at St. Peter in Poughkeepsie (1968-70) and at St. Francis of Assisi in Mt. Kisco (1970-81). She was so inspired by the work of the kindergarten teachers that she opted to teach at that level herself in her next ministry. In recognition of her talents with the youngest students, Sister was appointed Director of the Archdiocese's Head Start program in 1991.

Later in her career, Sr. Frances served as Assistant to the Director of the Sisters of Charity Multi-service Center in Yonkers and taught part time at the Grace Outreach Program in the Bronx. There she continued her mission of urging students to hold themselves to high standards and to avoid discouragement.



Sr. Marguerite Caso • Educator • Administrator

Entered: 1944 • Final vows: 1949 • Age at death: 89

Sr. Marguerite grew up in New Jersey and crossed the Hudson to study chemistry at the College of Mount Saint Vincent (CMSV). She would earn AB, MS and Ph.D. degrees in chemistry and certification as a professional chemist and a nuclear scientist.

Sister taught at St. Gabriel HS in New Rochelle and at Holy Cross Academy in Manhattan, at Fordham University, and at St Joseph University in Philadelphia. Four years after joining the staff at CMSV in 1955, the Mount became the first Catholic women's college to be accredited by the American Chemical Society. During her 32 years teaching there, the CMSV chemistry department was known for its number of student awards, fellowships and research grants. In 1989 Sr. Marguerite began a 15-year ministry as Director of Adult Education and the College Emeritus program.

Sister retired at age 85. After science, she loved art and music, especially opera. Sr. Marguerite died one day shy of her 65th entrance anniversary and a month short of her 90th birthday.

Sr. Christine Marie Murphy • Educator • Artist

Entered: 1940 • Final vows: 1945 • Age at death: 87

Sr. Christine's artistic nature led her to earn a MFA degree from the Catholic University of America. Her abilities were recognized with a full-year scholarship to study Art in Florence, Italy; appointment to the NYC Commission on Cultural Affairs by two Mayors; election as President to the Bronx Council of the Arts; election to the Royal Society of Arts of London; being named an "Outstanding Educator of America;" membership in the National Society of Arts and Letters and in Kappa Pi International Honorary Art Fraternity ... among other distinctions. She designed chalices that are in Paris, France and stained glass windows for St. Margaret of Cortona Church in the Bronx.

Sister taught elementary schools for 21 years; then, in 1961, she began her 42-year association with the College of Mount Saint Vincent. There she taught Art, Chaired the Art Department, served as Archivist, and as Sacristan at the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.

Ill health limited her active ministries in her final years, but surely now in Heaven she has time – and the room – for that "quiet corner where I can paint" that she desired.

Sr. Regina Kraft • Educator

Religious Name: Sr. Maria Celestia • Entered: 1932 • Final vows: 1938 • Age at death: 95

Sr. Regina first encountered the Sisters of Charity as a student at Bishop McDonnell HS. She grew up in Brooklyn with her parents and five siblings. Her older sister taught her much about art and Sr. Regina earned a MFA degree from Catholic University.

After teaching elementary school for 11 years, Sister began a 16-year ministry at Cathedral HS, where she taught and chaired the Art Department. In 1961, Sr. Regina began her 29-year affiliation with Elizabeth Seton College in Yonkers. At this new school, she laid a firm foundation for the art program, chaired the department in its first 11 years, and then taught art until 1990. After 56 years of full-time ministry, Sister happily moved into volunteer work.

Like every good teacher, Sr. Regina taught her students more than content. She helped them with life goals, personal problems and spiritual advice. Her niece carries on this wisdom tradition in her role as principal of St. Athanasius School in the South Bronx.



Seasonalities



APRIL

- 7 :** *Doubt* now available for rental or sale in DVD and Blu-ray formats. In addition to the motion picture, these disks contain interviews with Sisters Irene Fugazy, Rita King, Mary E. Mc Cormick and Margaret McEntee who talk about their lives as religious women and give their perspective on aspects of the movie.
- 19 :** Annual commemoration of Mary Magdalene's rightful place in the Resurrection story. Celebrated with prayer, song, conversation, ritual, dance, and a presentation at Mount Saint Vincent. Sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of New York and the Elizabeth Seton Women's Center, www.teswc.org
- 21 :** Sr. Margaret Beaudette's sculpture group depicting "Blessed Edmund Rice and Students" will be dedicated at Iona College in New Rochelle during the school's Heritage Week.

MAY

- 1-3 :** Discernment Weekend for young women. Spend 1 or 2 nights with us at our Sisters Hill Farm in central Dutchess County, NY, to learn what a religious woman does in today's world. Transportation will be provided from Mount Saint Vincent. For more information, call 718-543-4898 or email vocationsc@scny.org
- 7 :** 2nd Annual Spring Benefit to support our ministries in service to the poor. Venue: The Yale Club in mid-town Manhattan, 6-9pm. Featured guest will be Fr. James Martin, SJ, Culture Editor of *America* magazine, and author of several books, including *My Life with the Saints*. For more information, contact Bill Hurley at 718-549-9200 x 234 or bhurley@scny.org
- 12 :** Deadline for applying to Charity in the City, a two week service program to the poor. Volunteer opportunity for women 18-25. For more information, contact Sr. Mary Katherine Hamm, SC, 718-549-9200 X 264 or email mkhamm@scny.org
- 13 :** Seton Spirituality Series: Sr. Theresa Capria will talk on the theme Elizabeth Ann Seton as Citizen of the World. *
- 23 :** Medals will be awarded at the Basilica of the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, MD as part of the Bicentennial foundation of the Sisters of Charity. Sisters Margaret Beaudette, Regina Bechtle, Mary Ann Daly, Irene Fugazy and SC Associate Peggy Cekoric are being honored for manifesting the ideals and exemplifying the mission and spirit of Mother Seton.

JUNE

- 10 :** Seton Spirituality Series: Sr. Ellen Rose O'Connell will talk on the theme Elizabeth Ann Seton and the Eucharist. *

* Seton Spirituality Series programs are held after the 12:15pm Mass at the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary / St. Elizabeth Seton Shrine on State Street in lower Manhattan. Each runs approximately 20 minutes. All are welcome. Free admission. No advance registration necessary. Refreshments will be served.

Reflection

"Patience and perseverance are the only ways to gain the blessings of heaven." — St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Sisters of Charity Center
6301 Riverdale Avenue
Bronx, NY 10471-1093

718.549.9200.
fax 718.884.3013
www.scny.org



SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
New Rochelle, N.Y.
Permit No. 5198