



SISTERS
of CHARITY
NEW YORK

Vision

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3, Summer 2009

Charity in the City

by Sr. Mary Katherine Hamm

July 31, 1809

Elizabeth Seton and her companions began their religious life in Emmitsburg, MD. These Sisters of Charity are the first American congregation of women religious.

In this issue:

- Cheers for Volunteers
- Bicentennial Honors
- Mentoring Leaders
- Spring Benefit
- Planned Giving



The volunteers had plenty of time to see NYC as tourists. Here, Morgan and Melissa ride the SI Ferry.

Armed with subway and bus maps, the 2009 Charity Volunteers came into New York City eager to engage with the people and culture beyond midtown. Nine extraordinary young women from the US and from Canada spent two weeks with the Sisters of Charity of New York in their ministries, meeting those who were served and setting the Vincentian Spirit loose wherever they went.

The first week, the volunteers spent time at The New York Foundling, the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center, the John A. Coleman School, St. John's Bread and Life, LEFSA and the

Midnight Run. At each ministry, they saw in practice what Love looks like. Each volunteer has a story of being lifted up, touched or taught by the ones they were serving. Each one heard from experienced ministers of the joy and challenge that comes with serving those on the margins of society.

On Friday and Saturday, the young women went to the Sisters Hill Farm in Stanfordville where they learned how to harvest turnips, kale, and Swiss chard from Farmer Dave and this year's interns, Maureen and Bria. At the food distribution on Saturday, the shareholders from the area gave them a sense of the community that forms around this kind of project.

The second week, they spent time in focus ministries such as St. John's Bread and Life, St. Peter and Paul School, St. Joseph and St. Vincent Hospital and LEFSA. Visiting with Sisters in Mary the Queen and the Convent were also great experiences in discovering the power of story. Many different sisters' communities opened their homes in hospitality even to the point of sharing roof views and secret compartments – not to mention delicious home cooked meals and scrumptious desserts. How do you make memories of Vincentian Community and Service? In exactly this way... and it does take a village.

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Charity in the City





Letter From the President

Dear Sisters, Associates and Friends,

Whom do you think profits most from volunteerism – the ones being served or the ones who serve them? It is an interesting question.

I recall my own experience as a teenager volunteering in a rehabilitation center for children. Clearly I learned a lifelong lesson from those children who, despite daunting disabilities, exhibited a joyfulness that I found hard to comprehend at first. They may have been in poor health, but that certainly did not equate with being poor in spirit. They exuded joy and I couldn't help but be inspired by them.

Many years later as an adult, I had the opportunity on several occasions to visit Guatemala where I met many indigenous people who were poor. Once again I discovered that being poor in earthly goods did not necessarily equate with being poor in spirit. On the contrary, the people I encountered shared freely and gladly of the little they had. It was another time and country but, once again, I couldn't help but be inspired by them.

So for me, the answer to the question I posed at the beginning is very clear. The person who volunteers by serving others profits the most, oftentimes by learning many lessons about what is important in life. In this issue of Vision, you will read several stories about volunteers of all ages and about what they have learned.

Many studies have been conducted with results showing how volunteering is good for your mental and physical health! Bob Hope, who went on many strenuous trips to bring joy to the members of our Armed Forces, once said, "If you don't have any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble."

Closer to home, our own founder, St. Vincent de Paul, also known as the "universal patron of charity" suggested,

*"We should assist the poor in every way
and do it both by ourselves and by enlisting the help of others.
To do this is to preach the gospel by word and by work."*

My hope is that one of the articles you read in the next few pages will lead you to try a new experience of volunteering and that you will reap the reward of being inspired by those from whom you would least expect it.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sr. 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.

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Sr. Alice Darragh
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Where Does Hope Come From?

by Sr. Mary Katherine Hamm

Was your answer a class of seventh graders from St. Joseph's School in Bronxville, NY?

These energetic, creative youth have been involved for the past year in bringing hope to a Sister of Charity Multi-Service Center for immigrants located not 15 minutes from their school.

The Center, also known as Casa de Esperanza (House of Hope in Spanish) is a multi-service literacy center founded by two Sisters of Charity, Sr. Jean Bocian and Sr. Terese McElroy. Over the past 10 years, it has grown to meet the complex set of needs faced by the people of Yonkers. What you notice first at Casa is that it is a community of support, learning and friendship.

Mrs. Linda Ricci, the seventh grade teacher at St. Joseph's, heard about Casa just over a year ago, at a fundraiser to which she was invited. The rest, as they say, is history. Together the students, their families and school community have found ways to support and connect with the families at Casa throughout the year.

How Casa de Esperanza Makes a Difference



Sisters Jean Bocian and Terese McElroy at Casa. The wall displays hold the names of those who support this mission.

The husband of a woman at Casa was unable to work due to an illness which required emergency surgery; the couple has five children to care for. Before undergoing the necessary procedure, the man first would have to pay a large sum of money, which he did not have.

Sr. Jean Bocian was able to get a check to help with the cost from Share and Build, an emergency account funded by Sisters' donations to assist the needs of the poor. She then called the insurance company to ask about payment details. When she told the representative that the Sisters of Charity would be paying the initial \$500, the rep cut the total bill in half – to \$600 – leaving only a \$100 balance for the family to pay.

The wife was so grateful she burst into tears. ■



Sr. Mary Katherine Hamm with the seventh graders at St. Joseph's School.

At Thanksgiving, the group participated in a craft and bake sale which raised over a thousand dollars. Spurred on by this initial success, Maddie and Nicole explained "We brainstormed more ideas and even formed a 'Casa Crew' to be an ongoing action committee."

"At Christmas," Andrew chimed in, "we made cookies, wrapped presents with the families and played with the children. It didn't seem like a project. It was really fun."

At Easter, the seventh graders were able to see for themselves how what they did made a difference. "Everyone got to participate," Chris explained. "We formed an assembly line, then added candy to the Easter Baskets and finished them off with personalized cards."

For the May Tea Fundraiser, they made a gardening theme basket to be raffled off. Who knows where these opportunities to participate in the mission of charity will lead?

When asked why a class should get involved in volunteering for something like this, the consensus of the group was expressed by Gina who said, "We love to do it! It might have started as a project but now it is something much more."

The students felt a certain satisfaction, even fun, in putting their gifts at the service of others. Lauren said it had taught her that life was not just about taking but about giving back. What a profound truth to have learned at 12!

Look out, world – there's an energy for good in these young people that won't be stopped. We can imagine how many wonderful things they are going to be involved in over their lifetime. We are grateful to them for planting these seeds of hope. ■

Sr. Mary Katherine Hamm, a Sister of Charity – Halifax, is the Coordinator of Volunteer Programs for the NY Congregation.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities with the Sisters, visit our web page www.scny.org/becomevolunteer.html or contact Sr. Katherine at mkhamm@scny.org or 718.549.9200 x 264.

Ministry Report from the MSV Convent

by Sr. Marie Paula Holdman



Many hands make light work ... and satisfying sandwiches. Here, starting at the left and going clockwise, are Sr. Regina Regan, Sr. Marion Hunt, Sr. Mary T. Boyle, Sr. Maria Thérèse Ruckel, and her sister, Sr. Laura Ruckel (back to camera).

In a mission initiative to reach out to neighbors in need, the Sisters of Charity at the Mount Saint Vincent Convent have teamed up with parishioners at St. Peter's Church, just a few blocks away.

Under the leadership of Sr. Elaine Owens, SC, and Sr. Janet Jeffers, IHM (Scranton, PA), administrators of the MSV Convent, the resident Sisters gather monthly to prepare and package sandwiches. Then Idelsa, a woman who works at the Convent, brings the packets to St. Peter's. She and other parish volunteers scatter throughout their southwest Yonkers neighborhood, and distribute the food to the homeless and to the unemployed waiting in the streets for job opportunities.

Encouraged by members of the Capuchin Friars of the Renewal, especially Padres Gabriel and Jose, Idelsa's family and their companions also gather on Saturday mornings at St. Peter's to pray the rosary for all those in need. After communal prayer, the group prepares a hot dinner which they serve to needy members of the neighborhood at the Juan Diego House, a homeless shelter a few blocks away from the church.

Idelsa and her volunteers periodically hold neighborhood clothing sales. The proceeds of these events, to which Sisters have contributed for many years, support the on-going program of hot dinners.

Almost half the Sisters at the MSV Convent volunteer to make sandwiches. ■

Sister Helped Parish

Mount Saint Vincent lies within the parish of St. Margaret of Cortona in the northwest Bronx. During all Masses on the feast day of its patron saint, the parish recognized the various ethnic groups that have enriched it since its founding in 1887. To do this, approximately a dozen parishioners read offertory prayers in different languages; among them was Sr. Paula Holdman, SC.

Sister has enjoyed participating in the parish life at St. Margaret's for 56 years, since joining the staff at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in 1953. She was suggested as the German petitioner by a College colleague and fellow parishioner who was on the liturgy planning committee for the parish feast day.

Sr. Paula had recently returned from the newly-established papal pilgrimage route called Benediktweg or Benedict Trail, which visits sites in Bavaria where the Holy Father grew up.

Her colleague remembered that Sister had read an offertory prayer in German at St. Patrick's Cathedral during the celebration of the Congregation's 175th anniversary. Who better to represent the parishioners of German ancestry than Sr. Paula?

Sister's invocation in German dealt with the Holy Father's leadership of all people, particularly the oppressed of the world.

During her tenure at the College, Sr. Paula taught English and German, chaired the German Department, moderated the College's chapter of Alpha Mu Gamma (the first and largest national collegiate foreign language honor society in the US), and moderated several year books. She also served as the College historian for 10 years and wrote oral history projects. For the Congregation, Sister served as its Director of Communications. ■

The parish of St. Margaret of Cortona will celebrate the bicentennial of the Sisters of Charity at a special Mass on Sunday, September 20th at noon. A reception will follow in the school hall. More details will be available closer to the actual date. The rectory number is 718.549.8053.

Associates Celebrated

The commitments of Associates of the Sisters of Charity of New York were celebrated during the March 14th Congregation Day at Mount Saint Vincent. The occasion was marked by a prayer service in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, during which commitments of two new Associates were received and those of eight others were renewed. Associates' families and friends joined with the Sisters in the celebration and the luncheon which followed.

The two new Associates are Barbara (Bunny) Kennedy and Marie O'Shea. The Associates who renewed their commitments this year are Jean Anthony, Marlene Jean-Baptiste, Theresa Geraci Bellacosa, Christine Gallagher, Lucille Gallaher, Roberta Lener, Amanda Sarmiento, and Josephine Ortiz Thomas. These eight women represent 84 years of living the Sister of Charity mission as Associates.

The ceremony began with a welcome from Sr. Dorothy Metz, the President of the Congregation, and an introduction by Sr. Mary Gallagher, Director of the Associate Program. All those in the chapel prayed with the Associates and the Congregation's choir provided music. The two new Associates came to the altar to sign their contracts and read excerpts from their commitment statements. These statements are personal expressions of why they wish to become or continue as Associates. All ten Associates gathered in the sanctuary where Sr. Dorothy presented each with a violet plant, symbolizing fidelity and the Associates' continuing response to the call of Charity.



Sr. Dorothy pins Marie O'Shea as Barbara Kennedy awaits her turn. In addition to the pin, the new Associates were presented with a copy of the Congregation's Mission Statement and the New Testament.

Associates of the Sisters of Charity of New York are lay women and men who feel called to be associated with us in our charism, spirituality and mission without membership in the Congregation. Our Associates live the charism in their relationships, in their communities, in their homes; in health care, education, social services, and pastoral ministry.

For more information, contact the Director of the Associate Program, Sr. Mary Gallagher, at 718.549.9409 or mgallagher@scny.org ■



Knitting Pretty

Many of the Sisters at our two main convents enjoy knitting for others.

One regular outlet for their beautiful handiwork is the annual Christmas Boutique at St. Patrick's School in Bedford. There, the Sisters sell the afghans, sweaters, baby sets and hand-made Christmas ornaments and decorations they created over many months. Last November, the Congregation's sales table was staffed by Sisters Marie Morris, Josephine Rog and Catherine Smith. Needles are already knitting and purling for the 2009 Boutique. Proceeds benefit the Convent of Mary the Queen.

Last year, knit goods were needed for a special event – the Vincentian Family Celebration held in Australia just before World Youth Day. Warm hats, headbands, scarves

and gloves were sought for young adults from Pacific countries where such clothing is never needed. But Down Under it was winter in July, so our Sisters were among Vincentian Family members who created dozens of snug accessories for attendees.

Closer to home, our Sisters also knit to benefit the homeless and residents in local shelters. Sr. Cecilia Harriendorf in Campus Ministry at the College of Mount Saint Vincent coordinates distribution by students during Fall Midnight Runs.

Our nimble-fingered Sisters include Joan Anderson, Dorothy Emmanuel, Marion Halpin, Margaret Hannon, Mary Martin Meehan, Maria Louis Octavio, Laura and Thérèse Ruckel, Helen Scoltock, Paula Spaight and Patricia Walsh. They are joined by Lois Ann Leiser and Eileen Savage who volunteer at the Convent of Mary the Queen. ■

Charity in the City *(continued from cover)*



At The New York Foundling, reading letters from mothers who had to give up their babies.

As these young Charity Volunteers move on with their lives, I believe they will look back on these two weeks as important and fun. As the Sisters move on with their lives, I believe they will look back on the moments of sharing and remember the volunteers who were so earnest, so full of energy and generosity, and remember – they were here.

Thank you, Morgan, Mary, Allison, Bridget, Jessica, Melissa, Kim, Sun and Allison. God's blessings on your life's journey! ■



In Brooklyn, with Sr. Kathleen Byrnes, Director of the Mobile Soup Kitchen from St. John's Bread & Life, and her staff.



At Sisters Hill Farm, with Sr. Kati Hamm, Sr. Mary Ann Garisto and Farmer Dave Hambleton



At the Sisters of Charity Center, Sr. Jean Iannone and Bill Hurley prepared dinner for the volunteers. Sr. Jean recently received an AAS degree in culinary studies.



At Mount Saint Vincent, helping Sr. Maria Louis Octavio make sandwiches for the Campus Ministry's Midnight Run program.



At the Convent of Mary the Queen, Kim, a second year volunteer, visits with Sr. Elizabeth Quinn.

Bicentennial Honors

Four Sisters of Charity of New York and one SC Associate were awarded the “Seton Legacy of Charity Medal” at a May 23rd ceremony held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, MD.

This honor was bestowed upon Sisters Margaret Beaudette, Regina Bechtle, Mary Ann Daly and Irene Fugazy and SC Associate Peggy B. Cekoric by the Daughters of Charity. It was in recognition of their contributions to social services, education, health care, promoting the awareness of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, or spiritual formation in the spirit of the Seton Legacy of Charity.



From the left, Mrs. Peggy Cekoric, Sr. Mary Ann Daly, Sr. Irene Fugazy, Sr. Regina Bechtle and Sr. Margaret Beaudette at the award ceremony.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, D.D., of the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pa, presided over the ceremony and presented the medals to a total of 51 diverse people from around the world. Sr. Dorothy Metz headed up the delegation of SCNY Sisters and Associates who came down for the ceremony. Also present were family and friends of the awardees, the general public and media representatives.

About the SCNY Honorees

Sr. Irene Fugazy has been tireless in raising awareness of Elizabeth Ann Seton. Her early ministries were in the classroom; Sister taught at six elementary schools, two high schools, and at Elizabeth Seton College, formerly of Yonkers. Following the canonization of Mother Seton in 1975, Sr. Irene became the de facto PR rep for the new saint. Later, as Director of Special Seton Projects, she started the Elizabeth Ann Seton Compassionate Educator Award in the NY Archdiocesan Schools. Sister established the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Multimedia Traveling Museum, and developed prayer cards and coloring books that are still popular today. Sr. Irene was instrumental in founding the Instructional Television service

for the schools of the Archdiocese and worked there for 19 years.

Sr. Margaret Beaudette's inspirational religious sculptures, including ones of Saints Elizabeth Seton, Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, are found across the US and abroad. After teaching for many years, she turned to full-time sculpturing in 1987 at her studio at Mount Saint Vincent. Three of her works have been installed locally in recent months: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, at the Passionist Spiritual Center in the Bronx; Edmund L. Rice and Students, at Iona College in New Rochelle; and Jesus with Students, at Holy Family University in Philadelphia.

Sr. Regina Bechtle is a lecturer, spiritual director, writer, poet, theologian, and former member of the Congregation's Council. She is noted for her retreats and presentations on Saints Elizabeth Ann Seton, Vincent de Paul, and Louise de Marillac, among other themes. Sister has co-edited a 3-volume collection of Elizabeth Seton's writings, is an at-large member of the Vincentian Studies Institute, and is active in the Sisters of Charity Federation.

Sr. Mary Ann Daly has been the Executive Director of the Sisters of Charity Federation since March 2007. In that position, she represents and speaks on behalf of the Federation and directs its ongoing administration. Sister tells the stories of Saints Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac and Elizabeth Ann Seton in one-person presentations, is active in retreat work, and gives lectures to the entire Vincentian/Setonian Family.

Peggy B. Cekoric is a wife, mother, grandmother, school nurse, catechist, retreat leader, holder of a Master's Degree in Theology, a long-time member of the Sisters of Charity NY Associate Team and also has strong ties to the Sisters of Charity at Convent Station, NJ. Peggy is co-founder of Charity Associates and a member of the Federation Connections Committee. She has been inspired by Elizabeth Seton since first grade, when drawings by Sr. Marie Liguori Leyer, SC graced the classroom walls of her Staten Island school.

These medals are once-in-a-lifetime honors developed for the Bicentennial. The award ceremony is but one of many events this year that celebrate the founding of the Sisters of Charity by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton on July 31, 1809. ■



The Seton Bicentennial Medal



The day's presenters included, from the left, Sr. Kathleen Byrnes and Sr. Jane Iannucelli. CMSV President Charles L. Flynn, Jr., also addressed the group.

Born Leaders

Who better to have as mentors in a program to develop young women as leaders, than Sisters of Charity of New York?

Sr. Jane Iannucelli was again on the planning committee for the second annual "Some Leaders Are Born Women" conference. Thirty undergraduates from the College of Mount Saint Vincent (CMSV) were invited to spend a full day at the Sisters of Charity Administrative Center to learn about leadership and service from a value-based foundation. The agenda included presentations on The Power and Inspiration of Women Leaders, Styles of Leadership and Why Be a Leader in the Not-for-profit World of Business – this last by Sr. Jane, who is Director of Sponsorship Services for the Congregation.

Sisters Regina Bechtle, Kathleen Byrnes and Donna Dodge also spoke, as did lay faculty and staff from the College. Other members of the Congregation who took part in the leadership program that day included Sisters Dorothy Metz, Theresa Capria, Carol De Angelo, Margaret Egan, Mary Kay Finneran, Mary Ann Garisto, Cecilia Harriendorf, Helen McGovern, and Dominica Rocchio. There was much interaction and many practical exercises during the day; even lunch was a lesson in business etiquette.

The day was a huge success. The burgeoning leaders learned much about themselves and others. Their evaluations included remarks such as "women were very profound," "don't be afraid of unfamiliar situations; they allow you to grow," and "leadership and spirituality go hand in hand."

The students enjoyed working with the Sisters and look forward to building on-going relationships, as does the CMSV staff. Perhaps some who took part in this day will head up the medical centers, universities, charitable service organizations and major not-for-profit corporations of the future. The seeds have been planted. ■

Alumnae Excel

Two graduates of Sisters of Charity schools have been tapped for prominent positions lately.

Sonia Sotomayor received her elementary education at Blessed Sacrament and her secondary education at Cardinal Spellman HS, both in the east Bronx. Judge Sotomayor was nominated by President Obama to serve as a Justice of the United States Supreme Court on May 26th and was sworn in on August 8th.

Ursula M. Burns, a graduate of Cathedral HS, was named chief executive officer of Xerox Corp. She has been president of Xerox and a member of the company's Board of Directors since April 2007. Mrs. Burns assumed her new position on July 1st. She is the first black woman to be CEO of a Fortune 500 company.



Rose McTague, a graduate of the College of Mount Saint Vincent, was honored by the Council on Independent Colleges and Universities with its Alumni Hall of Distinction Award. CMSV recognized her achievement at a champagne reception during its annual reunion in June.

She is currently Head of School and CEO at Mother Cabrini HS in Manhattan. Previously, she was in administration at DeWitt Clinton HS in the Bronx which was noted for its excellence during her long tenure there.

Ms. McTague is the child of Irish immigrants and a first-generation college graduate. Her career in education has increased her awareness of the economic and academic deprivation of students from multinational backgrounds. She has said, "Poverty need not stop a person from getting an education and using that education to serve others."



The College of Mount Saint Vincent has been awarded a \$77,087 grant to provide scholarships for disadvantaged nursing students. The Mount is a minority-serving institution and has actively educated nursing students to serve the needs of the surrounding community. Nearly 67% of the CMSV nursing student population is financially disadvantaged. Congressman Eliot Engel was instrumental in helping obtain this grant from the Health Resources & Services Administration, a division of the office of Health and Human Services.

College Celebrates Founders Day

by Sr. Cecilia Harriendorf &
Sr. Mary Ellen O'Boyle

On April 16th, the College of Mount Saint Vincent celebrated Founders Day. This annual event pays homage to the Sisters of Charity of New York who established this institution in 1847. The College continues to draw inspiration from Saints Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac and Elizabeth Ann Seton.

A full schedule began with breakfast at 8am and concluded with a Midnight Run at 9pm. In between were Employee Service Awards, a special Liturgy, a tour of the campus, a forum on Spirituality and a festive Italian Dinner. The campus was decorated with white and gold helium balloons.

Throughout the day, Sisters of Charity visited classes in Business/Economics, English, Math, Italian, Nursing, Sociology and Teacher Education to which they had been invited by faculty. They gave brief presentations on their charism and history to help students appreciate the importance of the occasion. The questions and answers that followed were lively. One professor commented that this was a most enjoyable way to communicate the spirit of the day.

Sisters who gave presentations included Regina Bechtle, Constance Brennan, Mary Ann Garisto, Mary Katherine Hamm, Maria Iglesias, Frances Keegan, Mary Ellen McGovern, Mary Ellen O'Boyle, Charlotte Raftery and Claire E. Regan. Sr. Carol Finegan, Director of Institutional Research at the College, chaired the Founders Day Committee. ■

Sr. Cecilia Harriendorf is the Director of Campus Ministry at the College. Sr. Mary Ellen O'Boyle is Secretary to Sr. Dorothy Metz, the President of the Congregation, and her assistant, Sr. Donna Dodge.

Notes:

Every year for Founders Day, Sisters Theresa Capria and Cecilia Harriendorf in the Campus Ministry Office create and distribute "favors" – cards (with a candy attached) with mini-bios of Sisters of Charity who were especially significant to the College. Ten Sisters were profiled and 1,500 cards distributed.

For Sr. Doris Smith, the 3rd President of the College (1973-92), they cited her establishing coeducation and the Communications Dept. and revising the Nursing Program to include Graduate Nursing. Sr. Doris believed that "the core curriculum exposes people to a wide breadth of knowledge" which enables students to discover their individual talent. Smith Hall (formerly South Hall) was named in her honor.



Sr. Mary Aquin Flaherty with some friends at the Transfiguration Fundraising Dinner. Sister is a valued substitute teacher there and at St. Patrick's Old Cathedral School.

Transfiguration Honors Its Roots

The Sisters of Charity were honored at the 13th Annual Transfiguration Education Association Fundraising Dinner on May 8th for being "distinguished and extraordinary women of New York." The Congregation was represented by about 18 Sisters. Sr. Dorothy Metz and Sr. Jane Iannucelli were speakers that evening.

In the program journal, Transfiguration pastor Fr. Raymond Nobiletti, MM, noted, "We honor the indelible impact that the Sisters of Charity have made through their dedicated religious service throughout their 200 year history." Fr. Nobiletti had worked with Sr. Virginia Unsworth in the Far East about 27 years ago.

The Sisters opened the Transfiguration School in November 1856 and staffed it through 1899. By that time, the parish had changed from Irish to Italian immigrants and Don Bosco Sisters took over the school. In 1949, the Maryknoll Sisters came to serve the Chinese immigrants. Today, 98% of the school's students are Chinese.

The ministry at Transfiguration began just seven years after Sr. Mary Angela Hughes opened St. Vincent's, the first Catholic hospital in New York City. The parish and the hospital have retained close ties to this day in service to succeeding immigrant populations. ■

In the Beginning...

...There was St. Patrick's

The Sisters of Charity are celebrating more than one bicentennial this year. In addition to the founding of the Congregation on July 31, 1809 by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, they also celebrated the 200th anniversary of the laying the cornerstone of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral.

The Cathedral bicentennial was celebrated on Sunday, June 7th, one day before the actual anniversary. The festivities began with a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan. That was followed by a parade with floats, a street fair, an alumni reunion, and an open house at the parish school and convent.



Sr. Marita Regina Bronner, in contemporary dress, and Sr. Carol Ann Ruf, in habit, rode on a float dedicated to the Congregation. The children are sitting at school desks.

Sr. Marita Regina Bronner, in contemporary dress, and Sr. Carol Ann Ruf, in habit, rode on a float dedicated to the Congregation. The children are sitting at school desks.

At the celebration, Sisters Mary Eucharia Carrigan, Alice Darragh and Carol Ann Ruf wore the traditional habits and were constantly asked to pose for photos.

Sr. Marita Regina, who taught 7th and 8th grades at the parish school from 1955 to 1964, was interviewed by Catholic

New York, the Archdiocesan newspaper. She recalled that the parish and school had "good family spirit" and that her years there "were very happy." Sr. Kathleen Aucoin told The Villager community newspaper, "This is home. This is our cradle."

For the open house, a committee of Sisters produced table-top photo displays and a four-page brochure that paralleled the role of the Sisters of Charity with the growth of the Church in the 19th century. This work was done by Sisters Regina Bechtle, Constance Brennan, Nora Cunningham,



Many Sisters were among the 800 at the bicentennial Mass. Here, from the left, in the front pew, are Sisters Rita McGivov, Francis Marita Sabara, Audrey Boylan and Miriam Kevin Phillips. Behind them are Sisters Eileen T. Kelly, Alice Darragh and Mary Eucharia Carrigan.

Mary Katherine Hamm, Jane Iannucelli, Charlotte Raftery and Dominica Rocchio.

Many Sisters were among the 800 at the bicentennial Mass. Here, from the left, in the front pew, are Sisters Rita McGivov, Francis Marita Sabara, Audrey Boylan and Miriam Kevin Phillips. Behind them are Sisters Eileen T. Kelly, Alice Darragh and Mary Eucharia Carrigan.

The Congregation and St. Patrick's have a long association. This was the first mission of the Sisters of Charity in New York. It also was home to Mother Elizabeth Boyle for 22 years.

At the request of Bishop John Connolly of New York, Mother Seton sent three of her Sisters to care for the Catholic orphans in lower Manhattan. Sisters Felicité Brady, Cecilia O'Conway and Rose White arrived on August 20, 1817, after a seven-day journey from Emmitsburg. In 1822, the Sisters established the parish school and staffed it until 2000. St. Patrick's was the first parochial school in the city and is the longest continuously operating school in the New York Archdiocese.

Over the next six years, St. Patrick's Old Cathedral will celebrate other historic milestones of its ministry of worship and service to the community. May 14, 2015 will mark the 200th anniversary of the actual dedication of the Cathedral. You can be sure that our Sisters will be there. ■

Spring Benefit – A Celebration of Ministry

By Bill Hurley

Within the Charity Family, the first Thursday of May is now a day of celebration. It is the day for our Annual Spring Benefit. This event, sponsored by our Charity Response Team (CRT) celebrates six ministries: Fox House, Seton House, the Elizabeth Seton Women's Center, POTS, Casa de Esperanza, and Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association. Whether they feed or shelter the poor, counsel women, or care for the needs of young families, they each serve those in great need.

This year, our second annual event was another success. Through it, we were able to distribute to each of the six ministries \$9,180. These funds go directly to assist them with their missions. Through the generosity of hundreds of individuals and corporations we were able to succeed in a very difficult economic climate. Our benefactors are very caring individuals. While attendance was down – it poured rain that afternoon – ticket purchases remained just about the same.

Our auction was filled with gifts established at various opening bids. Theatre tickets, our weekend in Manhattan and Yankee tickets went very well – sorry, Mets fans. Our more creative items also did well. Someone will soon receive



Fr. James Martin was the featured speaker.

dessert for eight, inclusive of delivery. Another winner will receive a “dessert of the month” for each of twelve months, also including delivery.

We are extremely grateful to Rev. James Martin, SJ, for his presence and delightful talk. Father is the Culture Editor at the Jesuit magazine *America*. He spoke to us briefly about his latest book *My Life with the Saints* and more at length about his relationship with the Sisters of Charity. His words were both humorous and insightful.

A very special thank you to our planning committee volunteers: Nellie Donnelly, Kathleen A. Dunn, UBS's Harold Elish, Rita L. Houlihan, Colleen Griffin Wagner, Arleen K. Ketchum, SC, Karen McCauley, Richard Pluta (Merrill Lynch), Claire Regan, SC, Florence Speth, SC, Grace Strazzire, Carolyn Walsh and Regina Zuvich. The directors of each of our CRT ministries are grateful to you.

Another thank you to all who donated an auction item, sponsored our serving tables, purchased a raffle or event ticket, or sponsored a program ad. Thank you also to the staff of the New York City Yale Club and Elegant Flowers. It was a wonderful evening. ■

Bill Hurley has been Director of Development for 13 years and an Associate for nine years. He is a “Certified Fundraising Executive” (CFRE), and serves on the Board of the National Catholic Development Conference.



Sr. Margaret Kelly introduces the principals of the CRT ministries. From left, Sr. Florence Speth (Fox House), Sr. Arleen Ketchum (the Elizabeth Seton Women's Center), Sr. Dorothy Galant (partially obscured) and James Addison (both of LEFSA), Sr. Claire E. Regan (Seton House), Sr. Mary Alice Hannon, OP, (POTS), Sr. Terese McElroy (Casa de Esperanza), and Jack Marth (POTS). Not pictured, Sr. Jean Bocian, (Casa).

Sister Understudies Shanley at Awards

Catholics in Media Associates (CIMA) selected *DOUBT* as its film of the year. Author and director John Patrick Shanley asked Sr. Peggy McEntee, his first grade teacher and the inspiration for his character Sr. James, to accept the award on his behalf. She was flattered to do so and went to Los Angeles for the March 29th award ceremony.

After the event, John Kelly of CIMA reported to Shanley that: “We’re still sorry you couldn’t be here - But elated Sr. Peggy was. She effortlessly won everyone’s heart simply by being herself. You knew you were in the presence of someone who took sheer delight in her faith, her friendships, and her life. She was heart-warming. Funny. And contagious. And transported the room.”

Sr. Peggy has been interviewed by representatives of many newspapers, magazines, TV and radio shows in connection with *Doubt*. Her students at Notre Dame School in Manhattan teasingly refer to her as “Sister Hollywood.”

Reflecting on his drama, Shanley noted, “I have been fortunate in the uniformly positive reactions I have received from the Catholic community to ‘Doubt’ and I am gratified beyond words. American Catholicism has shown itself to be generous and robust in its embrace of new ways of looking at the Catholic experience.”

The CIMA Awards were created in 1992 by prominent



Sr. Peggy McEntee, center, with other CIMA honorees.

Catholics in the entertainment industry to promote and applaud individuals, films and TV programs that uplift the spirit and help us better understand what it is to be part of the human family. These awards honor entertainment industry professionals and their work as a ministry that influences people all over the world.

Each CIMA Award is an original – a luminous prism representing the imperfect reach of humans to capture the Light of the Trinity in illuminating their work. ■

Photos by Sr. Rose Pacette, FSP

When in *DOUBT*, Contact SCNY Archives

By Sr. Constance Brennan

By now it is a well known fact that the movie *DOUBT*, based on the award-winning drama (Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award, among others), was dedicated to Sr. Margaret McEntee, SC.

Sr. Peggy, as she is known to friends, taught author John Patrick Shanley in the First Grade at St. Anthony’s School in the Bronx. She exhibited to young Shanley the love and concern that has earmarked Sister of Charity educators since the days of their foundress, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Less publicized is the number of theater groups that have staged their own productions of this drama. The Archives of the Sisters of Charity of New York has been deluged with appeals for help with costuming, staging, and background knowledge which would help the actors and actresses to live their parts.

DOUBT has been produced in many states throughout the country, including Alaska, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New

Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Productions also occurred in Dublin, Ireland, and Vienna, Austria. The Archives even hosted a Theater Director from Canada who flew in especially for an appointment and, in turn, passed on the information she received to a neighboring company. A costume director in far-away Croatia showed great interest in the Sisters of Charity Community Rosary.

The experiences of communicating with many people who were dedicated to the authenticity of their productions, gave me and my archive associate Sr. Rita King many opportunities to share our knowledge about the ministries and charism of the Congregation.

Through this popular drama, many people have come to appreciate the contributions of the Sisters of Charity to life in New York in the 1960s. ■

Sr. Constance Brennan is the Archivist for the Congregation. She has been in education her entire religious life (teacher, librarian, catechist). At Visitation in the Bronx, Sister has been the Director of Religious Education in the parish since 1992, and taught in the school for 16 years.

Making a Planned Gift Work for You

By Bill Hurley

In our recent appeal letter we provided an enclosure titled, “*Make the Charity Connection with New Online Tools!*” In it, we discussed our new website, emphasizing our “Other Ways to Give Page” which discusses a variety of planned giving choices available to you. I am sure you have all reviewed the page by now and I would like to continue this topic by providing a bit of a quiz which I hope you will find both educational and entertaining. I have the answer book so I will also provide answers to you with some additional explanations – just don’t tell the teachers among us!



- 1) What is the best definition of the term “planned gift”?
- A. It is making a gift in your will
 - B. It is the gift of a building
 - C. It is the idea of making a meaningful gift to a charitable organization during life or at death
 - D. It is the donation of \$25 cash

C. Planned gifts can be large or small...made from your will or done today during your life... they just require some amount of planning in advance.

- 2) Which of the following are planned gifts?
- A. Single outright lifetime gift
 - B. A gift in your will
 - C. A charitable trust
 - D. All of the above

D. Because a single outright gift made during your lifetime, a gift left through your will or a charitable trust all require some level of planning in advance, all are considered planned gifts.

- 3) One example of an outright gift made during your lifetime is
- A. Long-term appreciated and readily marketable property given today
 - B. A bequest in a will
 - C. A gift of personal property after you’re gone
 - D. A gift of your home after you’re gone

A. Because this gift is made during your lifetime, it is an example of an outright gift. The other three choices include gifts made after your lifetime.

- 4) Life insurance gifts typically involve large administrative expenses or one to two years of red tape.
- A. True
 - B. False

B. False. The gift does not involve administrative expense or settlement costs.

- 5) A charitable remainder trust provides donors the greatest tax advantages. Which of the below is not one of these advantages?
- A. An immediate income tax deduction
 - B. Future tax deductions every year
 - C. Avoidance of upfront capital gains tax
 - D. Potentially increased lifetime income

B. Charitable remainder trusts allow the donor to receive a one-time income tax charitable deduction for the year in which the gift is made. Future year tax deductions are not allowed, unless the donor has to carry over his or her deduction due to ceiling limitations.

- 6) If one of your financial objectives is to avoid the tax on capital gains, the best gift might be
- A. To contribute appreciated stock that you have held for at least a year
 - B. To make a bequest in your will
 - C. To give a gift of real estate that has lost half of its value
 - D. To give cash

A. This gift allows you to avoid paying any capital gains tax on the full amount of the appreciation.

(continued on page 14)

(continued from page 13)

- 7) If you have special possessions suitable for a favorite organization's retention and use, you should consider a donation of this valuable collection.
- A. True
B. False
- A. True. Larger deductions are allowed if the object can be used "as is" in the charity's mission. Lesser deductions apply if the object cannot be used or will be sold for cash**
- 8) Other than cash, the simplest and most frequently used alternative gift is
- A. A gift of a stamp collection
B. A gift of long-term appreciated and readily marketable property, such as stock and real property
C. A gift of a vacation home
D. None of the above
- B. Due to their strong tax advantages for donors, appreciated securities and real estate can be the best tax-wise assets to give to charity.**
- 9) You should consider making a planned gift if
- A. You're interested in furthering an organization's mission
B. You're interested in reducing taxes
C. You're interested in possibly increasing your income
D. All of the above
- D. All planned gifts help support an organization's mission. Plus, depending on the type of planned gift you select, your benefits normally include an income tax deduction now or an estate tax deduction later. Further, a special type of planned gift called a life income gift can possibly increase your current income. ■**

We hope you'll be able to join us at our annual golf outing on Thursday, October 15th. For the third straight year, it will be held at the North Hempstead Country Club in Port Washington, LI. Noted American golf course architect A.W. Tillinghast designed the 18 holes.



This is a beautiful facility with excellent amenities – especially the food! Enjoy:

- Brunch on the patio, 10:00am – 11:30am
- Lunch on the 10th hole, 11:30am – throughout the day
- Cocktail reception at 5pm, followed by a buffet dinner in the clubhouse

Check-in opens at 9:30am. The shotgun start is at 11:30am. The format is best ball of four. Carts and caddies are provided. Create your own foursome or request placement with a specific partner. There'll be prizes awarded after dinner. As at our past two events, we'll be selling raffle tickets for the excellent merchandise that will be on display at the club.

This outing is a fundraiser for our retired Sisters. Some of them will be there that day to greet old friends and make new ones. We hope you'll be among them.

You can sign up online at our web site – www.scny.org – to play, sponsor or volunteer. Eight levels of sponsorship are available.

If you have any questions, call Bill Hurley at 718.549.2248. ■

Prayer Cards Available

Show others that they're in your thoughts and prayers. Send them prayer cards from the Sisters of Charity of New York.

Choose from four themes: get well, special occasion, in loving memory, and a gift of prayer. Each has a photo of a

beautiful flower and a relevant Biblical verse on the front, and a quote from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton inside. All are on display at our web site.

You can order cards three ways:

- Online at www.scny.org/prayercards.html
- By email to bhurley@scny.org
- By calling our Development Office at 718.549.9200 x 266

Those you name in these cards will be remembered at a special monthly Mass offered in each of our Retirement Homes and in the daily prayers and good works of all our Sisters. There is a suggested donation of \$5 per card upon use which contributes to the support of our retired Sisters. ■



In Memoriam

Sr. Mary T. Linehan • Administrator

Religious Name: Sr. Marita John • Entered: 1948 • Final vows: 1956 • Age at death: 83

When St. Vincent de Paul said we should “wear ourselves out for Charity,” he might have been anticipating Sr. Mary, who devoted 58 years of her religious life to hospital administration.

When Sister came to St. Joseph’s Hospital, her mission was “to move it, improve it, or close it.” She opted to improve it, to best serve the needs of the area. Under her guidance, the hospital was expanded and upgraded; many outpatient and satellite programs were developed; and a 200-bed nursing home was built to alleviate a critical shortage in the area. She also spearheaded the construction of two apartment buildings for seniors.

Sr. Mary received her early education from the Sisters of Charity: at St. Augustine School in the Bronx and at Cathedral HS. She obtained her Bachelor of Business Administration in Management from St. John’s University and her Masters of Health Administration from Columbia University’s School of Public Health. Sister was certified by NY State as a Nursing Home Administrator, was a Fellow of the American College of Health Executives, and a member of the Hospital Financial Management Association.

She served on many Boards, committees and commissions related to health care, especially at St. Vincent’s, NY and to the ministries of the Sisters of Charity.

Sister was predeceased by her Irish-born parents and one brother; she is survived by three brothers, including Fr. Brian Linehan, OFM.

Hospital Ministries

Staten Island

- St. Vincent’s Hospital (16 years)
 - Admitting Officer, 1951-53
 - Controller, 1953-56
 - Assistant Administrator, 1956-67

Yonkers

- St. Joseph’s Hospital (40 years)
 - Administrator, 1969-80
 - President, 1980-2000
 - Trustee, 2000-2009

Honors

- In 1987, the Yonkers Academy of Medicine cited her contributions to health care in its city.
- In 1989, Sister was the first woman grand marshal of the Yonkers St. Patrick’s Day Parade.
- In 1994, St. Joseph Medical Center bestowed its Distinguished Service Award for her 25 years of service as CEO and renamed its nursing home in her honor. Yonkers renamed a long stretch of Vark Street after her.

Sr. Maria Esther Regan • Educator

Entered: 1932 • Final vows: 1937 • Age at death: 95

Sr. Esther was a remarkably open woman and a lifelong learner. She specialized in the education of young children for 50 years throughout the Archdiocese of New York.

At the age of 70, she began volunteering at the Intercommunity Center for Justice and Peace in Manhattan, and worked at the Sisters of Charity administrative center. Sister was active in faith sharing groups and belonged to many committees. She retired at age 84 to a ministry of prayer, service and witness. Although ill health beset her later years, she always said she was “tip-top” when asked how she was doing.

She began her association with the Sisters of Charity in first grade, at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Manhattan. She graduated from Cathedral HS and the College of Mount Saint Vincent.

Sister was predeceased by her parents, both born in Roscommon, Ireland, and her five siblings, including Sr. (Margaret) Vincent Mercedes, SC, who entered in 1933.

Educational Ministries

The Bronx

- St. Raymond, 1941-47 & 1962-67
- St. Athanasius, 1947-48

Manhattan

- Sacred Heart, 1970-83

Staten Island

- Sacred Heart, 1948-53
- Our Lady Star of the Sea, 1967-70

Suffolk County (Center Moriches)

- St. John Evangelist 1953-62

Orange County (Port Jervis)

- St. Mary, 1933-41



Seasonalities

AUGUST

- 29:** Sisters from four Charity Congregations in the NYC area will be joined by SC Associates, family and friends on Circle Line Cruises around Manhattan. This is the borough where Elizabeth Seton lived and where many of our Congregation's most important ministries have been.

SEPTEMBER

- 12:** We celebrate the Golden Jubilees of 13 of our Sisters, and the Silver anniversary of one. The Liturgy and reception will take place at Mount Saint Vincent. By invitation only.
- 13:** Vespers at St. Peter's, Barclay Street, lower Manhattan. Preceded by a walking tour of the area and followed by a reception.
- 20:** Our local parish, St. Margaret of Cortona, will honor all Sisters of Charity with a Liturgy and reception. The Sisters staffed the parish school from 1926 – 1997. Before that, the Sisters taught the children of the area at St. Vincent's Free School from 1875 – 1910, in Le Gras Hall, where their administrative offices are now located.

OCTOBER

- 7:** Dr. Bernadette McCauley will speak on the Sisters of Charity impact on health care. Dr. McCauley is the author of *Who Shall Take Care of Our Sick?: Roman Catholic Sisters and the Development of Catholic Hospitals in New York City*. Lecture will take place at the College of Mount Saint Vincent.
- 9:** The New York Foundling opens its "homecoming" weekend (Oct. 9-12) to locate and bring together adoptees, former foster children and those who cared for them. The Foundling is celebrating its 140th year of service. It was opened in 1869 by Sr. Mary Irene Fitzgibbon.
- 15:** Join us at our third golf outing at the Hempstead Country Club in Port Washington on Long Island. (For details, see p. 14.)
- 16:** Fordham University's Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education will bestow its Sapiientia et Doctrina Award on the Sisters of Charity of New York. This award acknowledges those who do the daily work of the Lord, often without adequate recognition for their contributions.
- 18:** St. Raymond Parish in the Bronx will celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Charity at its Annual Parish Reunion. Recognition will be given to the many Sisters of Charity who have taught at the three parish schools and all the women those who entered our Congregation from the parish.

Reflection:

"Oh my God, forgive what I have been, correct what I am, and direct what I shall be."

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

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