

Ministry of Education Today



Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821)
Mother + Convert + Educator + Foundress

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Vision

From the President

Lord Jesus, teach me by your example....Make me, through the vigor of my efforts, set the world around me on fire.

—St. Vincent de Paul

Dear Friends,

Our story as educators continues to unfold. For over 200 years, we have served students and families in New York, Pennsylvania, the Bahamas, and beyond. I salute and honor our Sister Educators who have served from our earliest days until now.

Today, we serve in a variety of different settings. Our partners in mission have been pioneers envisioning new ways to empower others through the education process. New generations of leaders have deepened the spirit of Charity and make a difference in their lives and works.

If you read the life of Sr. Frances Devine, you experience the gift of one Sister of Charity making a difference in students' lives. There are so many other stories of our Sisters' work in classrooms— find a Sister and let her tell you her story. Like Elizabeth Ann Seton, providing quality education was at the heart of every teacher's work.

Today, through the Sisters of Charity Ministry Network, the leaders, boards, and staffs of our sponsored works share stories of the spirit of Charity and the impact their ministry has on the most vulnerable among us.

Enjoy this issue of *Vision*. These pages tell powerful stories of commitment to new forms of providing quality education.

It is through leadership that they have enabled so many to reach and expand their personal and professional potential. Yes, their gifts can and will set the world around them on fire. May each of us use the gifts we have to do the same.

Blessings,



Jane Iannucelli, SC



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



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Cover photo: *Elizabeth Seton and Children*, by Margaret Beaudette, SC, at The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, MD

Photo courtesy of the Seton Shrine in Emmitsburg, MD

A photograph of three people, two women and one man, standing in a greenhouse. They are surrounded by rows of green plants, identified as spring brassica transplants. The greenhouse has a wooden frame and a translucent covering. The people are smiling at the camera. The text 'Apprentices (left to right) Sarah Pagan, Andrew Coy, Isabel Cochran with the spring brassica transplants in the greenhouse, April 2018' is overlaid in a purple box in the top right corner.

Apprentices (left to right) Sarah Pagan, Andrew Coy, Isabel Cochran with the spring brassica transplants in the greenhouse, April 2018

Sisters Hill Farm Apprenticeship Program

Servant Leadership in Education

By Lisa Shay, Associate

Throughout their history, the Sisters of Charity have responded to the signs of the times in the spirit of Saints Vincent de Paul and Elizabeth Ann Seton. Their vision of providing affordable education has undergone many adaptations over the years and now includes an education system they would never have envisioned: an apprenticeship program at Sisters Hill Farm. This program embodies another characteristic of the charism of charity now familiar to readers of *Vision: Servant Leadership*. The farm's past and present directors, Sr. Mary Ann Garisto and Farmer Dave Hambleton, are Servant Leaders who are developing other Servant Leaders.

Sisters Hill Farm is a not-for-profit Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, located in Stanfordville, about eighty miles north of the Bronx. As an expression of the Sisters of Charity's reverence for creation, its mission is to grow healthy food that nurtures bodies, spirits, communities, and the earth. Farmer Dave hires three apprentices for each growing season. Over the last 20 years, the farm has shared over 1.25 million pounds of organically grown, fresh, delicious produce. In addition to selling affordably priced shares, the farm donates at least 10 percent of each week's harvest to local charities.

Vision

Sister Mary Ann conceived the idea of the farm after spending part of her 1990 sabbatical at Genesis Farm in Blairstown, NJ. As a biology teacher at Iona Prep, she had become interested in ecology and sustainable agriculture. During her sabbatical she had the inspiration to use the land in Stanfordville, a farm that was donated by the Halloran family to the Sisters of Charity in 1917, to start a CSA farm as a way of both taking care of the land and providing healthy food for local residents and the

poor. Like many grand visions, implementation required persistence and hard work by a group of sisters who did research and visited many farms before the first growing season in 1999.

Pioneering

In the late 1990s there were no organic CSA farms in Dutchess County. To get started, Sr. Mary Ann consulted the manager of Wethersfield, an estate and gardens run by Kevin Malloy, who gave the sisters advice and help in preparing the land. Sister Miriam McGillis, OP, who ran Genesis Farm, put the sisters in touch with an organic farmer in New Paltz, Dan Gunther, who became a mentor. When the time came to hire a farmer, Dan introduced the sisters to Dave Hambleton, a recent college graduate who hoped to start an organic farm. As soon as they interviewed Dave, they knew he was the right person for this mission: he shared their vision of building not just a CSA farm, but a community.

Empowerment

When he first started, Dave ran the apprenticeship program in a directive manner: each morning he would arrive with the day's plan, assigning tasks to each apprentice. He soon realized there was a better way. This is a production farm with an enormous amount of work to be done. An apprenticeship program should develop and train the apprentices, but with such a small staff, there is no time for formal classroom sessions. Dave realized that one of the most valuable things he could give the apprentices is insight into the thought process that goes into the planning and execution of the farm work. So now every morning at 6 AM, Dave and the apprentices discuss the crops, the weather, and upcoming events and jointly decide on the day's plan.

Continued, see page 14, bottom



Director of Campus Ministry, Matt Shields
(bottom row left), with the 2018 graduates

2018 Seton Service & Leadership Graduates

By Maryellen Blumlein, SC

On May 19, 2018, the College of Mount Saint Vincent celebrated its 106th commencement. Among the graduates were twelve students who, upon their entrance to the College, had merited the Seton Service and Leadership Award. The scholarship was initiated six years ago when the Sisters of Charity offered to provide room and board to deserving students. Those who applied for the award were to be students who had been accepted by the College, had achieved high academic standing, and had provided hours of community and school service during their high school careers.

The award is named for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, foundress of the Sisters of Charity. In 2012, the Congregation and the College decided to grant the award to incoming freshmen. At this time, the scholarship is jointly funded by the Sisters of Charity and the College.

The 2018 graduates who were Seton Service recipients are Sirinda Arturi, Brandon Briones, Matthew Bunyan, Jaclyn Hahn, Keith Ignacio, Olivia O'Neill, Faith Pangillan, Nicole Quaranto, Sean Rice, Sean Shea, Owen

Smith, and Sarah Trosa. When they entered the College as freshmen they were expected to maintain at least a 3.0 index and perform at least four hours of community service each week. Needless to say, each student far exceeded the requested number of hours of service.

The Seton Service students live together in one of the dorms and from the start of freshman year begin to work on forming community. This year's graduates, as a community, have formed bonds that will last well into the future. They were able to live together well, and they also worked well together in a number of different ministries. During their time at CMSV these students worked in the Midnight Run, Project L.I.G.H.T., POTS, the Green Team, the Tuesday Farm distribution, LEFSA, the College Blood Drive, the Grand Central Outreach, Habitat for Humanity, helping set up for meetings and other functions for the Sisters of Charity, liturgical ministry, and community nights.

In addition, several of the Nursing students spent time in Guatemala working with the local doctor in various clinics.

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Gratitude

Each of the Seton Service students is grateful for having received this award. For many, it made it possible for them to attend CMSV. Just a few of the comments from this year's graduates:

This award has helped me shape who I am today, and affirm my commitment to help and serve others.

Sirinda Arturi

I have been so blessed to be given four years with the Sisters of Charity. Without their help and support I wouldn't have been able to complete my degree. They have made a significant difference in my life.

Sean Shea

This award has opened many doors and opportunities, and I have created memories that will last a lifetime. I am just so grateful that I was able to become a member of this program and for all that the Sisters have taught me.

Jaclyn Hahn

I'll forever be thankful for the Sisters of Charity, for all I've learned from each and every one of them, for their mission, and for the opportunities of service with which they provided me.

Olivia O'Neill

I am forever indebted to the Sisters—so many of whom have become my friends and mentors, for all of the wonderful opportunities they have given me over these past four years.

Nicole Quaranto

All of the Seton Service students express their deepest gratitude to the Sisters of Charity—for their mission, their example, and their love and support. These students walk into the future with a clear vision of what it means to serve.



Elizabeth Seton—*Educator*

By Mary E. Mc Cormick, SC

What exactly was Saint Elizabeth Seton's first school like? How was St. Joseph's Academy organized? What textbooks were used? What about discipline? How much religion was taught?

Thanks to biographer Annabelle Melville, we have some answers to these questions, as well as some understanding of the role Elizabeth Seton played as a pioneer of Catholic School education in the United States.

One insight into Elizabeth's school comes from a letter she wrote to her friend Eliza Sadler: "The days passed in quiet and order, and the little head-mistress went about with her manner of looking upon twenty people in a room with affection... showing an interest in all, and a concern for their concerns."

How Was the School Organized?

Mother Seton was head of school, overseeing every aspect. Sister Kitty Mullen, the Sister in charge of discipline, preserved good order during class and recreation periods, and was responsible for decorum when the girls went abroad as a group. Mother Seton was informed in weekly reports of any "capital fault." There were four other Sister Mistresses of Education who taught the major subjects.

What Textbooks Were Used?

The expense account for the school's first year shows that catechisms, spellers, and grammars were the three chief texts purchased. As the school grew, and it grew by leaps and bounds, the curriculum expanded. The principal subjects were



“Mother Seton visited each class once a month to make suggestions to both teachers and pupils.”

reading, grammar, geography, arithmetic, music, and needlework. The languages of French, Spanish, and Italian were offered as electives.

What Was the Schedule of the Day?

Because for the most part the students were boarders, the routine of the school day varied very little over the course of the school year.

They rose at 5:45 AM and were allowed a half hour to dress. Prayers, Mass, and

study took place before breakfast at 7:30. Classes began at 8:00 and continued until 11:30, when “beads took place.” From dinner until 3:00 PM the students enjoyed a recreation period. Classes were then resumed, interrupted by a brief period of recreation, until 7:00 PM, when the evening meal was served. After supper one of the older girls read from a spiritual book, which was explained by Mother Seton or one of the girls. The older girls could then study until retirement.

Were There Rewards? First Honors? Demerits? Plan Books? Teacher Observations?

Teachers at St. Joseph's were expected to make daily notes on the achievements of their pupils. One “bad point” had to be remedied by two “good points” by the end of each month. Mother Seton visited each class once a month to make suggestions to both teachers and pupils. Medals and certificates were used as rewards and the top six girls were also given books as special rewards.

How Much Religion Was Taught?

Not only was religion taught, but periods of prayer were interspersed throughout the day. It is a matter of record that after the girls left the peace and tranquility of St. Joseph's, they often wrote to Mother Seton expressing gratitude for their formation and stating that the habit of prayer and recollection accompanied them throughout their lives.

(Adapted from *Elizabeth Bayley Seton*, by Annabelle M. Melville. Sculpture, *Elizabeth and Child*, by Margaret Beaudette, SC.)



General Assembly 2019

By Mary E. Mc Cormick, SC

A General Assembly is *the* major event occurring every four years in the life of our Congregation. It is here, as Sr. Jane Iannucelli reminded us in her announcement to the Congregation, “that we will again call on the Spirit in a special way to open our minds and hearts as we strive together to deepen our mission, make decisions about our future, and elect the women who will lead us for the next four years.”

The Assembly, scheduled for March 26–31, 2019, will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Tarrytown, NY. There, seventy-seven elected delegates with an additional five ex-officio Council members, along with non-voting Assembly partners, Assembly pray-ers, invited guests, members of our Guatemalan local communities, and Associates will engage in the work of creating our shared future.

The Steering Committee, selected by the Council with input from the Congregation, has been meeting to prepare for this sacred event since February 2018. With the help of facilitator Sr. Sherryl White, CSJ, they continue the task of crafting an Assembly that will be faithful to the needs and aspirations of the Congregation. In one of their early meetings they chose the theme and logo *Charity Rising ... Now more than ever!* An Assembly prayer, composed by Steering Committee member Claire Regan, SC, and containing the logo, was distributed on Congregation Day, June 9th, in both English and Spanish versions.

To solicit input from the members on topics for discussion at the Assembly, the Steering Committee will hold Area meetings in various locations in September, November, and January. Results of the Area meetings will contribute in large part to the Assembly



Above: The 2019 Steering Committee, which has been meeting regularly since February 2018, includes: (front row from left) Sr. Mary Mc Cormick, Sr. Jane Iannucelli, Sr. Sherryl White, CSJ (facilitator), Anne Gray (secretary), and Sr. Ellen Rose O’Connell; (back row) Sr. Donna Dodge and Sr. Claire Regan.

agenda. Congregation days scheduled for October, December, January, and February will give the members opportunity to receive timely information from our Council.

Sisters, Associates, and Companions have also been invited to join a pre-Assembly and/or an Assembly work committee based on their interest and skills.

A General Assembly is an important and grace-filled event in the life of the Congregation. Sisters of Charity, their Associates, and Companions look forward to the ways, sometimes surprising, that our God will lead us into a new era of Charity Rising.

Ed. Note: In the last issue we reported that the Assembly was scheduled for April 26–31, 2019. The correct dates are March 26–31.

2018 Service & Leadership Graduates

Continued from page 4

Others visited the House of Charity in New Orleans and assisted in rebuilding projects in ongoing recovery from hurricane Katrina. Students also went to the St. Francis Inn in Philadelphia to work with the poor, to Bethlehem Farm in West Virginia to assist the people there, and to different parts of Appalachia to work among the poor.

During their time at CMSV, being a part of the Seton Service and Leadership program has enabled the students to grow personally and spiritually, and raise their awareness of the importance of reaching out to those who may be less fortunate. The students recognize the changes within themselves and will carry their learnings with them throughout their lives. Like Elizabeth Seton, and Vincent de Paul before her, these Mount students have learned to recognize the face of God in all whom they meet.

Sisters of Charity Ministry of Education: *The Story Unfolds*

By Regina Bechtle, SC



Board meetings aren't usually known as times of inspiration. But the June meeting of the Sisters of Charity Ministry Network (SCMN) Board proved to be an uplifting exception as Executive Directors or CEOs and Board Chairs in the Network highlighted the year's

good news in their ministries. Sister Karen Helfenstein, Director of Sponsorship Services, later wrote, "As the stories unfolded I kept thinking of our Congregation's years in education at every level." Here is a taste of that unfolding story of education, carried on by ministries in the Network and in other Sisters of Charity ministries:

» Programs to prepare the next generation of caring and competent teachers, clinicians, and care providers are in place in several ministries. For example, the **Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC)** in White Plains, NY, extends learning opportunities to young professional therapists. CRC is a national center of excellence providing physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and special education for children who live at home in the Bronx, Westchester, and other counties. Each year young professionals spend time with the staff at CRC to learn the skills needed to take care of this unique group of children and young adults.



» **The Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center** in Yonkers serves medically complex children in a nationally recognized, state-of-the-art setting. Its leadership and staff have a growing concern for children who, at 21, "age out" and need to transfer to another facility. Children who have spent most of

Elizabeth Seton PEDIATRIC CENTER

their life at the Pediatric Center and know it as their home find

this transition extremely traumatic. The Center is currently seeking land and financing to build a young adults nursing home for its children/young adults.

» **The John Coleman School** for medically complex children (White Plains campus) provides children from early years to age 7 with special education, speech therapy, and physical and occupational therapy. It has one of the highest percentages of children who then are ready to be mainstreamed into schools near their homes. Each June, the John Coleman School graduates about sixty children. The ceremony showcases the children's achievements, their parents' courage and love, and the teachers' devotion and skill.



» Historically, only 10% of children who grow up in foster care go to college and only 2% of them graduate. **The New York Foundling** believes that in today's world everyone needs a college education. In response to this need, The New York Foundling is proud of its **Dormitory Project** for those in the foster care system who "age out" of financial support from the city on their 18th birthday. This relatively new program provides 100 young adults, 18 and older, with housing (twelve months a year for four years) and education at three college campuses: College of Staten Island, Queens College, and City University (CUNY). Next year 150 students will be in residence, with 200 expected in the following year. Resident



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Sister Frances Devine — Celebrating 100 Years of Life

By Patricia McGowan, SC

Above photos from left: Frances at age 20; at her graduation from the College of Mount Saint Vincent with nephew Donald Devine and niece Patricia Dolan; Sr. James Marie with her mother, Julia E. Devine.

Go out to all the world and tell the Good News...

—the responsorial psalm for the Mass of August 4, 2018, the second 100th birthday celebration for Sr. Frances Devine (Sr. James Marie)
—and there could not have been more appropriate words.

For the past seventy-nine years that has been her sole mission as a beloved teacher, department chair, high school principal, administrator, pastoral minister and, perhaps her favorite title, “itinerant minister.” It also has been the advice she always gave to lay people with whom she worked. Whenever they came up with ideas for a new project her answer always was, “Then go do it.” And as one person said, “But it was never about Sr. Frances or about us as individuals. It has always been about God and how he works so mysteriously, so wonderfully in our lives.”

As the youngest of six, Sr. Frances admits a lot of attention was given to her because she was the baby. She even admits that she might have been, “stubborn, a bit willful, perhaps, even a bit spoiled.” Once she even threatened to put her hand through a glass door if she could not have a piece of the strawberry cake her older sister was saving for a male friend. Today we might call that “spunk” a glimpse into her future. For determination is definitely one of Sr. Frances’ chief assets, one that has enabled her to share so many life experiences with so many different groups of people.

She proudly considers herself a Brooklyn girl because she moved there when she was still a preschooler. Still a staunch fan of the New York Mets—don’t call her when they are playing.

The Sisters of Charity of Halifax were her teachers in grammar school and she wanted to enter that community after she graduated from Bishop McDonnell High School. When her mother insisted she had to go to college first, she, her mother and brother drove to Halifax to check out the college there. But it was 1936 and the roads were bad enough for her mother to say she would never make that trip again. So, Francis went to the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale and there she met Sr. Miriam Rose who was to become her sponsor into the Congregation.

Frances was the first in her family to go to college and she believed that teaching was “in her genes” because both of her sisters had become teachers. So when she graduated in 1939 (and said goodbye to her steady beau) she entered the Sisters of Charity of New York and prepared for the world of academics.



Young Frances at age four at home in Brooklyn.



After forty-two years in education, Sr. Frances was called to Parish Ministry. One of her many projects was creating a transportation program for parishioners who could not get to Mass.



Nephews (from left) Donald Devine, James Dolan and Seminarian Patrick Dolan. Fr. Patrick was ordained to the priesthood in June 2018.

Her first year in the classroom was at Blessed Sacrament School in the Bronx. Then, after a year as a history teacher at her high school alma mater, she was sent to Cathedral High School. During her eighteen years there she was teacher, department chair, and advisor for both the athletic and the forensic teams. Even today many of her Cathedral students stay in touch. (Several of her former basketball players were at her *first* 100th birthday party in July in Wantagh, Long Island.) She was then missioned to Cardinal Spellman High School where she was teacher, chairperson of the History department, and Assistant Principal. In 1966, when Mother Miriam Evelyn Schneider asked her to become Principal of the Girls Department of that school, Sr. Frances' answer foretold the life changes she was to make in the near future. With some trepidation she accepted the assignment and wrote, "believing that courage is fear that has said its prayers," she saw this as an "opportunity for service to all those with whom I come in contact." Following her time there, she spent eight years as principal of Resurrection Academy in Rye, NY.

Sister Frances says she has always been called to a life of prayer. In fact, as far back as her days at Cathedral High School, she had seriously contemplated

entering the Poor Clares. Instead, after forty-plus years as a teacher and administrator, relying on that faith and courage she wrote of when she first accepted the role as Spellman High School principal in 1966, she travelled cross country with her friend Sr. Miriam Matthew and away from academia per se.

"...believing that courage is fear that has said its prayers," she saw this as an "opportunity for service to all those with whom I come in contact."



Her sabbatical year (1982–83) at the Jesuit and Franciscan Schools of Theology, Berkeley, CA, was "a turning point" in her life. It was there she realized she was being called to "Parish ministry." During that year she even took a course in massage therapy, thinking it might help her beloved sister Mildred, who had suffered from Huntington's Disease from childhood. Her sister's illness always played an important part in

Sr. Frances' outlook on life. Even though Mildred lived a long happy life, as they were growing up her life seemed tenuous and that imprinted in Sr. Frances' mind the importance of vulnerability in all our lives. Perhaps, she says, that is how *hope* became such an essential part of her own outlook on life.

For one year after her return to New York she worked as a Pastoral Minister at St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, Shrub Oak. Then, at age sixty-five, she moved to Maria Regina Parish in Seaford, Long Island, where she served as Outreach Coordinator. In 1993, she began the "People of Hope" ministry for small groups by hosting programs (which began with four women and expanded beyond her wildest dreams) for stay-at-home mothers, "Women of Hope" who were looking for camaraderie and support; for widows and widowers; for families mourning the loss of children; for senior citizens who needed transportation to appointments; and weekend play and pray retreats for married couples in Ventnor, NJ. Her ministries always had two basic mantras: 1. there was space for everyone in these programs and 2. numbers were not important "*Where one or two are gathered in my name...*"

During those years, Sr. Frances also took summer courses in spirituality at

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Assistants (RAs) are hired by The New York Foundling, since these young people have particular needs that require skilled professional services. The New York Foundling, Children's Services Administration (CSA), and City University collaborate on this innovative educational program.

» Aware that children in the child welfare system face unique educational challenges that traditional schools are not equipped to deal with, The New York Foundling opened **Mott Haven Academy Charter School** in 2008. This unique charter school in the South Bronx is the first of its kind, specially designed to meet the needs of children in the child welfare system, who make up two-thirds of the student body. The rest of the students come from the surrounding neighborhood, one of the most impoverished congressional districts in the nation. Haven Academy serves 290 students in grades K–5 and 36 pre-kindergarten students. This year, with 52 dedicated full-time staff, 4 part-time staff, and 16 volunteers, it has expanded to include middle school grades.

» In response to the widespread opioid crisis, **Saint Joseph's Medical Center**, Yonkers, NY, through the staff of its campus at **Saint Vincent's Hospital, Harrison**, provides programs to teach high school faculty how to detect opioid abuse and how to administer an antidote if a student overdoses at school. This outreach began in local Catholic high schools and is expected to expand to public high schools. Saint Joseph's also provides dental services at public schools via a mobile van/dentist's office with a dentist aboard. Children receive dental cleaning and attention they may need to improve their nutrition, their overall health, and thus their ability to learn.



**Saint Joseph's
Medical Center**

Other ministries not presently included in the Ministry Network also continue the legacy of education for which the Sisters of Charity of New York have long been known. Previous issues of *Vision* (and this issue, page 3) have highlighted the young adults whose post-college year of internship at **Sisters Hill Farm** has inspired many of them over the years to begin their own organic farms. They leave the farm with a well-stocked tool kit of skills and techniques, plus a profound love and respect for the land, all generously shared by current Farm Director Dave Hambleton and Sr. Mary Ann Garisto, the founding director. In addition, the apprentices absorb invaluable life lessons. Betsy, a 2017 apprentice, came with a goal of finding balance in life despite pursuing a demanding, labor-intensive career in farming. She wrote:

"More and more I am discovering that a sense of balance for me has a lot to do with the perspective I maintain



Betsy Jackson, 2017 apprentice at Sisters Hill Farm.

throughout the course of the workday. It is far too easy let myself get bogged down by the endless tasks that await us each morning, especially as the week progresses and my physical weariness starts to catch up with

me. I have found, however, that so much beauty exists around me if I look for it with intention, and experiencing beauty revives my spirit in a way that almost nothing else can. If I pay attention, I can experience it with all of my senses and find refreshment amidst the challenges and, at times, tedium of my day-to-day work."

In a mutually enriching educational partnership, nursing students at the **College of Mount Saint Vincent** complete their community clinical requirement by spending five weeks working with **Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates (LEFSA)**. Many of LEFSA's clients struggle with physical conditions related to lack of housing, stress, and poor nutrition. Student nurses offer a listening ear and practical advice. In return, Director Karolina May and LEFSA team members, joined by LEFSA Board member Rev. Chris Keenan, OFM, and Rev. Ben Taylor, OFM, speak in CMSV nursing classes about the experience of being homeless. In the true Vincentian spirit, those who teach learn from those who are taught.



In Guatemala, the programs of the **Barbara Ford Peacebuilding Center** seek to equip that country's next generation with skills in leadership, human rights advocacy, community organization, and nonviolent conflict resolution. These are rooted in the Charity heritage and the Gospel vision of human dignity, justice, and connection with creation. Farmers learn improved conservation and irrigation techniques. Health promoters learn ways to identify and prevent violence against women, linking women in crisis situations with resources, and teaching them their legal rights. Numerous programs at the Center offer education in economic opportunities for young people, some of whom are victims of violence. They learn sewing and tailoring; produce natural soaps and shampoos; raise bees, goats, and medicinal plants; and market their products.

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How did the SISTERS of CHARITY INFLUENCE your *life*?

My journey and the lifelong influence the Sisters of Charity had on my life began on September 8, 1958, the year Our Lady Star of the Sea School opened its doors. During the first school year, classes included only grades one through three, which were held in the annex, a building behind the old church. In the meantime, our new school was under construction just around the corner. The following year we moved into our new school building, with Francis Cardinal Spellman presiding over the dedication and blessing of our classrooms.

As always, we began and ended our classes in prayer. We learned about our Catholic faith, church history, and the lives of the saints. We also learned about Mother Seton and the ministries of the Sisters of Charity. We enjoyed our walks over to the old church for First Friday Masses and Stations of the Cross on Fridays in Lent. The May crowning of Mary was held in the school at Our Lady Star of the Sea. Corpus Christi Mass was held on the school lawn and the girls would be in uniform, wearing their communion veils.

Over the years, we received an excellent education in academics and learned how to live our Catholic faith. We learned to always do our best and, most importantly, to make a difference helping others, especially those in most need. Each of the sisters gifted us with something unique to touch our lives. During eighth grade, Sr. Mary Nazaretta Shayne loved to share her stories about the years she was missioned to the Bahamas. Sister Miriam Ambrose was busy as principal and our sixth grade teacher. She had her sister, a Dominican Sister, substitute and she taught us our

prayers in French. Sister Francis Mary brought our seventh grade class to spend a Sunday at the Mount Saint Vincent Motherhouse. We were impressed by everything on our visit but most of all by being in the Immaculate Conception Chapel with the postulants, novices, and professed sisters as they sang evening prayers. I also have fond memories of staying after school helping Sr. Miriam Barbara in her first grade classroom; she would share stories of her previous ministry at The New York Foundling, caring for the infants and children there.

I went on to St. Joseph By-the-Sea High School, living and learning alongside many more dedicated and inspiring sisters. I am sure Sr. Joseph Marietta would be pleased to know that this eighth grade student followed in the sisters' footsteps in many ways. My career included working and living at the Mission of the Immaculate Virgin as a child-care counselor for nine years and teaching for two years in another child-care institution. I worked in service coordination for developmentally disabled adults for sixteen years, as a nurse in a hospital for two years, and I am now

approaching twenty-one years as a pediatric nurse practitioner in a physician's private practice. All were vocations, not jobs. My life has been dedicated to serving others.

Recently in *Catholic New York*, Cardinal Timothy Dolan wrote in his column: "More than anything, I'm asking the reason for the fact that a radiant part of our Catholic tradition is that our young people are prepared for and encouraged to seek a life of service and care for others." This indeed is what our Sisters of Charity have accomplished for us over the past 200 years and continue to do. I am eternally grateful.

Evelyn Willson Johnson

Our Lady Star of the Sea School, Class of '64
St. Joseph By-the-Sea High School, Class '68



Kids Say the FUNNIEST Things to SISTERS!

It was the last day of school, summer beckoned, little was done. Several of the braver kids volunteered to entertain their classmates. A few sang a song, one girl danced an Irish jig, then Richie announced he would recite a nursery rhyme. When the groans subsided he began:

Hickory dickory dock,
The mice ran up the clock.
The clock struck one,
The other one escaped
with minor injuries

On one of my very first days of teaching, a little first-grade girl put an apple on my

desk as we started the day. She gave me a big smile, which I returned with a "thank you." At 12 noon, the same little girl came up to my desk, took the apple and said, "Thank you for minding my apple." I guess it was easier for her to part with the apple when her tummy had recently had breakfast.

Sr. Theresa Courtney

My first teaching assignment was at St. Gregory School in Harrison. I taught the 6th grade and in a fill-in-the-blank history quiz, one of the questions I asked was to name the fierce leader of the Huns. I was more than surprised when one of the answers I received named Mother Seton as the "fierce leader of the Huns." I puzzled over it for quite a while and then realized that the answer had come from a boy who struggled with reading. His reading of the question was to name "the first leader of the nuns ..." so he gave the right answer to the wrong question.

Sr. Janet Baxendale



The Barbara Ford Peacebuilding Center teaches a human rights leadership training course to young adults.

A technology expert in the U.S. whose children were taught by Sr. Virginia Searing when Sisters of Charity served in Florida, NY, several decades ago, is now using his skills to develop computer-based programs to teach Guatemalan children in a school in Lemoa, Quiché, to read. Another friend of the SC's, a retired NYC public school teacher with years of experience, serves as consultant for this project long-distance, answering questions, offering creative strategies, and preparing comprehension questions. Several staff members of the Barbara Ford Peacebuilding Center coordinate this program, which has potential to impact the quality of primary education for many Guatemalan children.

Through the Elizabeth Seton Women's Center, volunteers help students at Saint Raymond Academy in the Bronx with college applications, college financing, and preparation for SATs. Fresh from having guided their own teenage children through this daunting process, these women, in collaboration with the Guidance Department, bring a wealth of experience to their service as mentors to the young women at Saint Raymond's, whose principal, Sr. Mary Ann D'Antonio, zealously fosters the spirit of Charity in education.



Former students often remind Sisters long retired from classroom teaching that their ministry has made a lasting difference. The impact of education truly spans decades and cultures. Sister Louise Sullivan, DC, reminds us: "Both Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac were teachers and as such were keenly aware of the vital place of education in a holistic approach to service of the poor." The mission of education bequeathed to the Sisters of Charity by Elizabeth Ann Seton, the mission that flourished in the parochial schools with which many are familiar, looks very different today. Yet these vignettes make it abundantly clear that today's SCNY ministries and ministry leaders are passionate and creative about the mission, tirelessly seeking unmet needs, and creating programs and services to give young people the best future possible.

Sister Frances Devine Celebrates 100 Years

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several universities: Notre Dame, Loyola of Chicago, and Fordham University. God forbid she would not be up-to-date with the latest in theology and spirituality.

There is no doubt that Sr. Frances is an "upbeat" person. There is no doubt she is more than willing to listen to others and to help those who are looking for more spirituality in their lives. As one of her retreatants said recently, "She is so spirit-filled herself, she is able to help me see the Spirit within myself."

There is no doubt that Sr. Frances loves music. Even today many of the people who attended her group retreats can easily recite the hymn Holy Ground because she always played it on her cassette recorder to remind them, as they have said, that "whether they work in unchartered territory or familiar turf, the Lord stands with them." And that love for music is evidenced by the prayer card for her next birthday party, which reads, "He was born singing LOVE. He died singing LOVE. He died...and if the song is to continue WE must do the SINGING."

And there is no doubt that Sr. Frances and her entire family love a party. A few years ago at one of Sr. Frances' birthday

parties, her nephew, Johnny Dolan gave us an inkling of this when he spoke of the "Eight Devine Commandments." One is "Parties are a priority," and this family "commandment" will be followed in October when her recently-ordained grand-nephew, Patrick C. Nolan, SJ, will celebrate the Mass to begin the *third* 100th birthday celebration with her extended family.

In the 1980s, during her sabbatical year, Sr. Miriam Rose quipped that like so many others during those times Sr. Frances was "finding herself." Well, she did do that and what she found was a woman who has touched many, many lives and still does so today. At the age of 100, she easily navigates her iPad to stay in contact with so many.

Again, there is definitely no doubt this "itinerant" preacher has spread the Good News far and wide.

As one of the early members of the young mothers group "Women of Hope" at Maria Regina Parish has said, "In HER, we found a good preacher. WHY? Because she spoke God's words to us and, more importantly, enabled us to speak His word to each other. She taught us to love HIM—and each other—more intensely."

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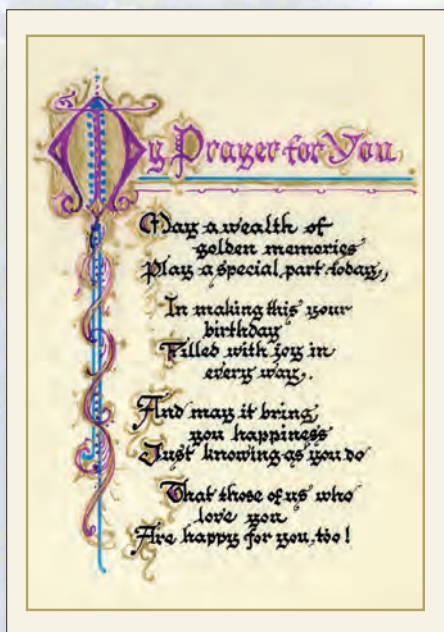


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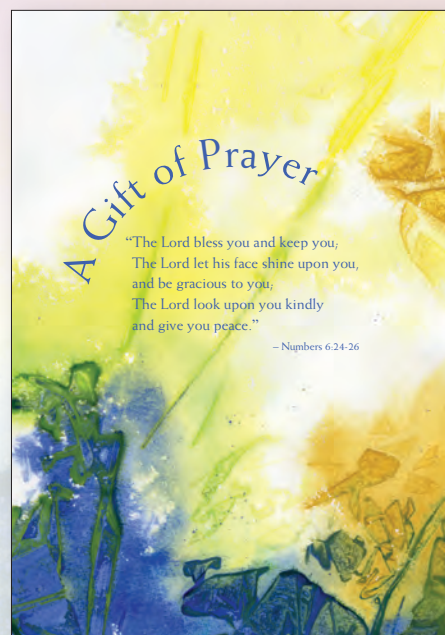
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Saint Joseph Medical Center Honors Sr. Jane Iannucelli



Sister Jane (left) and Marianne DiTommaso at the recently-dedicated Sr. Jane Manor

Saint Joseph Medical Center (SJMC) dedicated a new residence in Staten Island for forty-nine residents on July 31, 2018. The new facility, “Sr. Jane Manor,” honors Sr. Jane Iannucelli, President of the Sisters of Charity, and the entire Congregation. With the assistance of Marianne DiTommaso, V.P. of Residential Services for SJMC, Michael Spicer, President and CEO, dedicated the building in honor of Sr. Jane, who has a special bond with SJMC and with St. Vincent’s behavioral health programs. “Throughout her life, she has reached out to communities and people in need to provide education, food, and support for the homeless, and health care for the neediest among us. On Staten Island, her work as

and staff member. Congratulations to all who have brought you to this moment of time.”

The newly renovated building at 101 Tompkins Avenue houses three separate programs, all fully funded by the New York Staff Office of Mental Health. Sr. Jane Apartments, a 19-unit supportive residence for adults with mental illness, provides apartment suites with on-site supportive services. Chait House and Chait Residence are two community residence programs that provide transitional housing. All programs are staffed 24/7 and provide recovery-oriented behavioral health supportive services. Saint Joseph Medical Center is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Charity Ministry Network.

Sisters Hill Farm Apprenticeship Program

Dave also gives the apprentices a chance to try their hand at almost everything. I interviewed all three apprentices and each cited opportunity as the best part of their program. When they meet apprentices from other farms as part of the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (CRAFT) program, they are surprised and envious of the empowerment of our apprentices. Isabel Cochran, the Assistant Manager, stayed for a second year on the farm because of those opportunities. She is asked to think more critically: to do good work, to know why it matters, and to learn how to communicate this to others. Sarah Pagan, one of this year’s apprentices, summed it up: “Dave is a trusting person. There are lots of things that we get to do that others don’t. He gives us tractor experience. He values our opinion and lets us learn from own mistakes. He’s farming the next generation of farmers.”

Service

Andrew Coy, the third 2018 apprentice, served as a Peace Corps worker in Uganda, where he experienced first-hand the importance and pervasiveness of food security issues. He sees the mission of the farm in that larger context: the Sisters of Charity were ahead of their time in starting the farm to help preserve the earth, protecting this land from development,

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and serving the community and the poor in the local area. He also observed that by focusing on the local community, the Sisters of Charity can make more of an impact on people’s lives. “Small concentrated projects benefit people fully, whereas a state-wide or national policy might not have as much impact on individuals by the time it gets implemented.”

Appreciation

Erin Bullock is one of many thankful former apprentices. Her testimony highlights how they appreciate Dave: “You are truly a mentor in the highest sense of the word. Thanks for everything—for trusting me with equipment, giving me responsibility, working alongside me digging potatoes, challenging my creative problem-solving skills, understanding when I goof, saying ‘thank you’ everyday, greeting us with smiles every morning, showing us how things really work, taking time to explain, and being a superb farmer all around.”

For more information:

Sisters Hill Farm: www.sistershillfarm.org

CRAFT program: craftfarmapprentice.com

Dave Hambleton interviewed on the Farmer to Farmer podcast: www.farmertofarmerpodcast.com/episodes/hambleton

With Love and Appreciation We Remember...

Visit our website at www.scny.org/news for complete biographies

Sister Marianne Robertson, SC (*Sister Marian Dominic*)

Entered: 1954 + Date of Death: August 2, 2018 + Age: 86

Sister Marianne's first assignment was to St. Vincent's Hospital, Manhattan, as a staff nurse in psychiatry. She later became an instructor at St. Vincent's School of Nursing, then Assistant Director, and later the Director, of St. Joseph's Hospital School of Practical Nursing in Yonkers. She returned to St. Vincent's Hospital, Manhattan, where she became Assistant Director of Nursing Service. She then became the Staff Coordinator, a position she held until 2010. Sister Marianne continued to volunteer her time and energy throughout the process of the closing of St. Vincent's Hospital.



Sister Marie John Jimenez, SC

Entered: 1951 + Date of Death: August 10, 2018 + Age: 86



Sister John's teaching ministry spanned elementary school through college. She began at St. Athanasius, Bronx, then moved to St. Stephen in Manhattan. She followed this with eight years of teaching Spanish in high school at Blessed Sacrament, Manhattan, St. Joseph By-the-Sea, Staten Island, and Cardinal Spellman, Bronx. The next twenty-

eight years were devoted to teaching Spanish at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. After retiring from teaching, Sister John continued her services in the Business Office and the Facilities Management Department of the College. She later volunteered as a translator at the Family Health Center of Saint Joseph Medical Center, Yonkers, and offered services to the retired sisters in Mount Saint Vincent Convent.

Sister Eleanor Fitzgerald, SC (*Sister Mary Maurice*)

Entered: 1956 + Date of Death: September 13, 2018 + Age: 85

Sister Eleanor's ministry was in the field of elementary education. She taught at St. Joseph, Yonkers, St. Mary, Wappingers Falls, Sacred Heart, Hartsdale, and St. Margaret of Cortona, Bronx. Sister Eleanor also served at the Elizabeth Seton House of Prayer in Hartsdale. The Sisters with whom she lived in Rosary Hall remember the many evenings she left to join other céilí (Irish) dancers, learning new sets and tapping to the old favorites. Early the next morning she went off with a spring in her step to teach her class at St. Margaret's. She was also known for her Irish soda bread. Sister Eleanor retired from education in 2012.



Jubilarians 2018

We honor, we celebrate, we thank our Sisters who celebrated milestone Jubilees on September 8, 2018.

Sixtieth Anniversary

Sister Margaret Dennehy, SC
Sister Eileen Gallagher, SC
Sister Margaret Mary Kelly, SC
Sister Katherine King, SC
Sister Marguerite McGilly, SC
Sister Mary Lou McGrath, SC
Sister Kathleen McHugh, SC
Sister Inez Mela, SC
Sister Elaine Owens, SC

Sixty-Fifth Anniversary

Sister Alice Maureen Darragh, SC
Sister Thérèse Maria Dunne, SC
Sister Monica Griffin, SC
Sister Madeleine Maria Mahoney, SC
Sister Eileen Martin, SC
Sister Kathleen McAvo, SC
Sister Margaret C. McEntee, SC
Sister Gabriel Miriam Obraz, SC
Sister Theresa Rybarik, SC
Sister Katherine Seibert, SC
Sister Helen Maureen Wade, SC
Sister Mary Edward Zipf, SC

Seventieth Anniversary

Sister Gloria Degnan, SC
Sister Rita King, SC

Seventy-Fifth Anniversary

Sister Marita Regina Bronner, SC

*Thank you for your loving service.
God bless you for all you have given
and continue to give every day!*





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Fifth Annual Fall Luncheon at Xaviars X2O, September 12, 2018

