



# Echoes Horizons

across the

## Upcoming Events

### Christmas Vespers

7 p.m. | Saturday,  
December 16, 2017;  
2 p.m. | Sunday,  
December 17, 2017  
*Monocacy White House Chapel*

### Marian Hall Night at the Races Event

6 to 11 p.m. | Saturday,  
February 3, 2018  
*Mount Assisi Convent*

### Mount Assisi Academy Preschool Tea & Fashion Show

11 a.m. | Saturday,  
April 7, 2018  
*Mount Assisi Convent*

### 2018 Spring Fling

12 to 5 p.m. | Sunday,  
April 29, 2018  
*Mount Assisi Convent*



### 8th Annual Star Struck Gala

6 to 11 p.m. | Saturday,  
May 5, 2018  
*St. Francis Center for Renewal*

### Sisters' Pittsburgh Jubilee Celebration

11 a.m. | Saturday,  
June 2, 2018  
*Mount Assisi Convent*

### Sisters' Bethlehem Jubilee Celebration

11 a.m. | Saturday,  
June 30, 2018  
*Monocacy Manor*

### MAA Preschool & Marian Hall Golf Outing

11 a.m. | Saturday,  
August 25, 2018  
*Pittsburgh North Golf Club*

St. Francis Center for Renewal Marks 70 Years  
as an Oasis of Peace and Healing

## A Place of Peace

The world was a different place when St. Francis Center for Renewal opened its doors in 1948 – then as St. Francis Retreat House. The Center continues to thrive because the need for renewed spirituality, peace and healing remains.

In 2018, the School Sisters of St. Francis' ministry at St. Francis Center for Renewal in Bethlehem, Pa., will mark its 70th anniversary of bringing quality spiritual programming to Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley and beyond.

Back in April 1948 when the first retreats were offered, the sisters actually moved out of the convent to make way for the retreatants, and an enduring ministry was born.

The tides turned in October 1955 when 2,000 people joined **Sister M. Gerard Lampi**, then director of

the Retreat Center, and our sisters as the Right Rev. Msgr. Leo Fink blessed the cornerstone of a dedicated retreat center and academy building.

This paved the way for increased programming in a facility that lends itself to peaceful overnight stays and can accommodate large or small groups. Today, the Center offers many programs of its own and hosts countless others each year.

The program began exclusively as a Catholic endeavor but has grown over the decades into an oasis for people of all faiths. The Renewal

Center team prides itself on presenting a

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ST. FRANCIS  
CENTER FOR  
RENEWAL BY  
THE NUMBERS

**1948**

Year the first  
retreats were held

**14**

Programs offered  
that first year

**513**

Women who  
attended the first  
retreats in 1948

**8,750**

Participant days  
during the past year

**3,511**

Overnight stays  
during the past year

**959**

Teens and children  
who participated  
this past year

**35**

People who receive  
individual spiritual  
direction each month

Visit [www.stfrancisctr.org](http://www.stfrancisctr.org)  
to see all that St. Francis  
Center for Renewal  
has to offer these days



Early retreatants gather for a photo in the summer of 1954.

# A Place of Peace

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welcoming atmosphere for and honoring the traditions of all groups, whether it be local high school students, a parish community or Buddhist retreatants.

Programming ranges from *Simply Prayer* gatherings to weeklong retreats for groups of all ages. There are marriage encounter weekends, yoga classes, quilting and rug braiding workshops, book and film studies, crafts and baking classes, parish retreats, international music



“Those who come  
to our retreat center  
feel God’s presence  
as soon as they  
ascend our hill.”

Sister M. Virginelle  
Makos, OSF

workshops, and programs that raise awareness about critical social justice issues in our world.

Today more than 8,000 annual visitors of all faiths are drawn here, not only because of the beauty of the surroundings, but also because of the Franciscan spirit of peace that permeates the Center.

“All really *are* welcome here,” says **Sister Barbara DeStefano**. “And because of that lived warmth and hospitality, we have been recipients of many blessings.”



Sister Barbara Brown leads a *Simply Prayer* session earlier this year.





A group of pilgrims listens intently as Sister Nancy Celaschi explains the significance of San Damiano.

## Finding Francis

One of the most unique ministry positions held by our sisters is that of **Sister Nancy Celaschi** with the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs, an organization that offers about 30 pilgrimages each year to Rome and Assisi.

As a leader, Sister Nancy reflects on the lives of Francis and Clare and their early companions, where the events took place and helps the pilgrims apply these values to their own lives. Conferences and rituals enhance the message, including a particularly powerful reenactment of the “funeral” of the leper in 13th Century Assisi. “It really hammers home the impact of what Francis describes as the turning point in his conversion – when the Lord led him among the lepers and he did mercy with them,” Sister says.

Some of the trips are “off-the-rack” pilgrimages to Franciscan places, while others offer an understanding of Franciscan spirituality. There are even “designer” pilgrimages, made to order for special groups such as healthcare institutions, Franciscan university faculty, U.S. military veterans, and high school and college students. This summer, Sister Nancy led a group of pilgrims on a “St. Bonaventure Adventure” of sorts, a special trip to mark the eighth centenary of the birth of the Italian theologian and philosopher.

One of the program’s favorite pilgrimages is for U.S. military veterans, mostly Vietnam-era vets. “They reflect on Francis’ experience as a soldier, a prisoner of war, a veteran possibly suffering from PTSD, and a ‘pacifist,’” Sister explains. The staff includes a retired military chaplain and a psychologist who works with veterans. Generous donors help to keep the costs of this pilgrimage down, as “it has been a truly life-changing experience for the veterans,” Sister says.

Visit [www.franciscanpilgrimages.com](http://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com) to learn more about the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs.

## Calming Our Daily Chaos

No one knows the challenges of daily life better than women – the matriarchs of their families and chief organizers of their households. Enter **CARA**, or *Come Apart and Rest Awhile*, a new labor of love for **Sister Pat Marie Buranosky** and her small team of lay helpers.

CARA is a new program at Mount Assisi Convent in Pittsburgh whereby Sister Pat Marie and team host small groups for overnight mini-retreats. The idea was born when volunteer moms at Mount Assisi Academy Preschool expressed interest in escaping the hectic pace of their own lives, even for a little while.



S. Pat Marie

“God reveals himself best in silence,” Sister Pat Marie says. “I want to give people a chance to experience silence and solitude away from their fast-paced world.”

Envisioned as a sort of “bed and breakfast at the convent,” CARA offers roughly 18 hours of respite filled with programming of the visitors’ choosing or pre-planned by the CARA team. Visitors can experience silence and solitude in a variety of ways, including a completely unguided experience from Friday evening through Saturday afternoon. Groups may self-guide based on their spiritual needs or select an agenda developed by the CARA team. The experience is available to individuals or groups up to 12 and does not exclude men.

The private overnights may include any of a number of spiritual tools, or, as Sister Pat Marie says, “anything that promotes solitude.” She urges participants to leave their cell phones turned off and to immerse themselves in solitude. “I want them to know Jesus and deepen their interior life,” Sister says.

Time is allotted to enjoy the peaceful areas on the Mount Assisi campus (shown below). Registration ranges from \$30 to \$50 per person based on group size. To schedule an overnight stay or to be added to the CARA mailing list, contact Sister Pat Marie at [patburanosky@yahoo.com](mailto:patburanosky@yahoo.com) or **412-761-6004**.



# IN FOND MEMORY | MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

## **S.M. Damian Baloga, OSF** | April 24, 1924 - December 12, 2016

Born Theresa Baloga in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Sister Damian was the last living member of her family. She entered our community from Sacred Heart Parish in 1945 and asked to be named after her brother, Father Damian Baloga.

After making first vows in 1947, she taught the elementary grades in the Pennsylvania towns of McKees Rocks, Shenandoah, Ambridge, Emmaus, Tarentum and West Lawn; in the New Jersey towns of Clifton, Jersey City, Guttenberg

and Boonton; and in Webster, Mass. Sister also taught CCD, tutored and enjoyed helping little ones with their homework in afterschool care. After 61 years of active ministry, she retired to Monocacy Manor and served in prayer ministry.

She enjoyed gatherings, knew her way around a toolbox and loved to fix things. Sister is remembered for her dedication, quick wit, contemplative spirit and love of ketchup. She was 92 and in her 69th year of religious life.



## **S. Mary Manga, OSF** | August 30, 1933 - December 14, 2016

Formerly Sister Callista, Sister Mary was born in Tarentum, Pa., as one of six children. Her mother and the sisters who ministered at her home parish of St. Clement inspired to enter religious life.

A graduate of Mount Assisi Academy in Pittsburgh, Sister professed first vows in 1951. For 24 years she taught elementary grades in the Pennsylvania towns of McKees Rocks, Ellsworth, Perryopolis and Charleroi,

as well as in Clifton, N.J. She went on to teach the sciences, algebra and German at St. Francis Academy in San Antonio for 19 years. In retirement, she was dedicated to prayer ministry for 15 years.

Sister is remembered as being intelligent, humble, kind, cheerful, a loyal friend and a gentle soul. She loved nature, ice cream and the traditions of the church. She was 83 and in her 65th year of religious life.

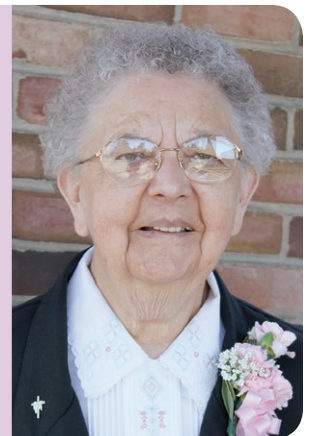
## **S.M. Bernadette Ann Bozak, OSF** | May 20, 1933 - January 26, 2017

Sister Bernadette Ann was born in Lower William Penn, Pa., to a steam shovel operator and a homemaker. She entered our community from St. Stephen Parish in Shenandoah, Pa., in 1951 and received the name Sister Thomas. She studied at Carlow College, Seton Hall University and Lehigh University.

Sister taught for 36 years in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, then spent 21 years in parish ministry in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

In her later years, she was faithful to prayer ministry. Sister loved God above all, but also loved lighthouses, which she considered to be symbols of light and hope. She is remembered as a warm and gentle visitor to many.

A true Franciscan, Sister Bernadette Ann loved all of God's creatures, especially cats. She enjoyed people, laughter, celebrations and telling stories. She was 83 and in her 65th year of religious life.



## **S. Genevieve Mary Jurick, OSF** | May 24, 1922 - February 26, 2017

Born in Clarksburg, W.Va., Sister Genevieve Mary entered our community from Holy Rosary Parish in Clarksburg in 1939 and received the name Sister Assumpta. She studied at Carlow College and Duquesne University.

Sister taught in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and West Virginia, including 21 years at the elementary level and 10 years in high schools. She had a knack for reaching young people

with encouragement and smiles. She was very dedicated to her community and family and spent years caring for her mother and sister. Later on, she enjoyed working with the elderly.

Sister is remembered as kind and caring with a deep sense of gratitude and a gentle spirit. She was, until the end, an inspiration to those around her. She was 95 and in her 76th year of religious life.





Our 2017 Jubilarians – Sisters Francesca Parana, Norberta Kralosky, Constance Frank, Roselyn Kuzma, Mary Martha Zammatore and Patricia Ann Mahoney – listen attentively at the Pittsburgh liturgy in June.



**Sister Constance Frank**  
70 Years



**Sister Norberta Kralosky**  
70 Years



**Sister Francesca Parana**  
70 Years



**Sister Roselyn Kuzma**  
60 Years



**Sister Patricia Ann Mahoney**  
50 Years



**Sister Mary Martha Zammatore**  
50 Years

# Our 2017 Jubilarians

There was a common theme that flowed through the School Sisters of St. Francis 2017 Jubilee Celebrations in Pittsburgh and Bethlehem this summer. *Commitment.*

The **Rev. Gregory Chervenak** underscored it during his homily, and **Sisters Frances Marie Duncan** and **Marian Sgriccia** recognized its rarity in an ever-changing world when they addressed the nearly 200 guests who gathered in Pittsburgh in June.

Commitment surely is not taken lightly by our 2017 Jubilarians, six lifelong sisters with diverse ministry experiences that total some 370 years in religious life. As young ladies barely across the threshold of adulthood, they took vows to serve selflessly. And this summer – surrounded by family, friends and community – they renewed those vows originally taken in 1947, 1957 and 1967.

**Rev. John Paul Kuzma** presided in Pittsburgh as his aunt, **Sister Roselyn Kuzma** (60<sup>th</sup> jubilee) and five other sisters celebrated their lives in ministry. Sister Roselyn met her infant nephew for the first time at her 25<sup>th</sup> Jubilee in 1982. “And today

he said the Mass,” she noted during the dinner that followed.

John Paul’s presence alone illustrated the legacies of this year’s Jubilarians, a point that **Rev. Chervenak**, cousin of **Sister Francesca Parana** (70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee), hammered home in a homily sprinkled with humor. “Those you’ve touched also bear fruit and so through them you are still bearing fruit yourselves,” he told them.

Many they’ve influenced were on hand for both celebrations, some traveling hours across many miles to attend. The liturgies, processions, music and more were all touched in some way by younger members of the Jubilarians’ families – nephews, great nieces, cousins, siblings and students, from those who first encountered **Sister Connie Frank** (70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee) decades ago, to the loyal nieces and nephews of **Sister Norberta Kralosky** (70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee), to new friends from **Sister Patricia Ann Mahoney’s** (50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee) new ministry.

**Sister Mary Martha Zammatore** (50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee), who hails from eastern Pennsylvania, welcomed her family to the Bethlehem-area celebration in August.

## facebook

More than 200 photos from the Pittsburgh celebration can be found on our Facebook page.



# Fun Festival Finale!

**W**hen the last bingo ball bobbed to the surface and drew an enthusiastic “Bingo!” yell from the crowd on April 30, 2017, it signaled the end of an era in the robust 104-year history of the School Sisters of St. Francis in the United States. It closed the final Spring Festival at Mount Assisi Convent in Pittsburgh, where the sisters have been hosting the perennial event since at least the late 1950s.

Earlier this year, our sisters voted to make this the final year for Festival. Most acknowledge it has become too massive a physical undertaking for our aging sisters and volunteers, but cannot deny their emotional attachment to the event. “The festival has meant so much to so many people,” **Sister Cecilia Jacko** says.

**Sister Pat Marie Buranosky** remembers helping with festival preparations as a candidate in the early 1960s, while **Sister Georgette Dublino** cherishes how the day has always embodied the best of the community. “I remember the many ways we made the festival look beautiful for all who came and how we had to shift with the weather,” she says. “But despite that, the people who came were so happy to see us.”

The festival saw many renditions over the years, from a three-day outdoor event to the single-afternoon indoor



**Sisters Rosalia Giba and Electa Barlok get a little silly in the photo booth.**

## Make New Memories at Spring Fling!

The sisters are cooking up a smaller-scale spring event for Sunday, April 29, 2018 at Mount Assisi in Pittsburgh. Planning is under way for a fun day with food and prizes. So clear your calendar and plan to join us on the last Sunday in April!



attraction of more recent years. Regardless of year or timing, the day has always set the backdrop for a kind of fellowship between the sisters and the surrounding community that has spanned generations.

The final festival day – which raised more than \$45,000 – was bittersweet for Amy Shelleby, who has made the last Sunday in April a regular date on her family calendar. “I remember coming with my mother to the festival when I was a child. She graduated from Mount Assisi in 1960 and loved bringing me to Bellevue to show me where she went to school,” Amy says. “I now bring my children to the festival, and they look forward to it every year!”

Through the decades, patrons have been led to Festival by their tastebuds to satisfy cravings for scrumptious stuffed cabbage, baked chicken, kielbasi, haluski and homemade baked goods. They came for the food then stayed for the fun at booths synonymous with certain sisters, like **Sister Genevieve Mary Jurick’s** clowns, **Sister Mercedes Benko’s** crafts, and the ice cream stand run by **Sisters Julie and Frances Jacko**.

“The festival always marks the start of summer and the end of winter,” says Pat Pressler of Avalon, Pa., who began bringing her now adult children to Festival when they were small.

Over the years, Festival has been a destination for folks as close as neighboring Bellevue Borough to as far away as Texas and Florida. Alumnae near and far have been part of festival preparations for the past 18 years.





**Sisters Frances and Julie Jacko serve up sweet treats in 2000. Their ice cream stand has long been a popular draw.**

## Festival Finale!

“Seeing all my ‘old’ teachers and classmates and the good feeling I get working at the festival – I’m right back in the ‘70s here at ‘The Mount,’” says Diana Anzelone Brown of Millvale, Pa., who helps with the bingo.

Diana is among a small army of Mount Assisi Academy grads who return annually to their beloved alma mater for Festival Day. Their ongoing enthusiasm makes it a must to engage Mount Assisi alumnae in the smaller scale spring event the sisters are planning for future years.

The festival team has operated as a well-oiled machine, mixing tasks like packaging baked goods on Festival Eve with the revelry of seeing old friends and recounting good times – just some of the little things that have contributed to the enduring sense of tradition.

“I have been coming here every year with my mother and grandmother – over 20 years of memories,” says Ashley Jericho of Shaler, Pa. “I will never forget all the great times and people I’ve met.”

**Visit our Facebook page to see more than 200 photos from our final Spring Festival!**

**Armandina Garcia and Colleen Flynn, alumnae from different decades and states, have become friends through years of Festival volunteering.**



## TRAVELOGUE

# European Endeavor

*Sister Frances Marie Duncan shares notes from her time attending the School Sisters of St. Francis Jurisdiction Ministers Meeting in Europe this summer:*

The Jurisdiction Ministers Meeting is a time when the leaders from each of our jurisdictions gather to discuss areas of concern throughout the congregation. As provincial minister of the United States Province, I attended, along with representatives from Italy, Chile, India, the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and South Africa. This summer the meeting was held in Slovakia.

We gathered in Bratislava for an opening Mass and then went on to a retreat center in Melčice-Lieskové, Slovakia, for the meeting. Through prayer, discussion and recreation, we deepened our bonds and vision for the future of our congregation. When our work was done, we travelled to many of the convents to visit with the sisters in the Slovak Province and stayed overnight in Trstená and Ružomberok. At each stop, we were greeted with prayers, good wishes and great food.



**The sisters visited with impoverished Gypsy children in the Slovak village of Lomnička.**

In addition to visiting some of the homes, we also visited

the Shrine to Our Lady of Fatima in Zakopane, Poland, built by the people of Poland in thanksgiving for the recovery of Pope Saint John Paul II after he was shot in 1981. But by far the most moving experience was visiting the Gypsy camp where our sisters minister in Lomnička, Slovakia. The unbelievable poverty at the camp and the wonderful work our sisters do for the children and families there will remain long in my memory.

I was also so moved by the hospitality of our sisters, as each went out of her way to make us feel so welcome. Since I had never been to Slovakia or the Czech Republic, I arrived two days before the meetings began, along with Sister Rose Thattil from India. We visited the grave of our foundress, Mother Frances Antonia Lampel, in Graz, Austria, and two other convents in Bratislava to see the sisters there.

After the meetings ended, I arranged to visit convents in the Czech Province. In three days, I was able to see all six homes where our sisters live and minister. The first day, we stayed overnight at the convent in Brno, while the following two days included visits to Hoješín, Slatiňany, Liberec, and the Motherhouse in Prague.

I then travelled by bus from Prague to Vienna and spent a day and a half with my nephew for a whirlwind tour of Vienna before I boarded the plane back to the U.S. It was, indeed, a trip I won’t soon forget.

*Sister Frances Marie Duncan | Provincial Minister | U.S. Province*

# Preschool Program Filled with Energy

Things are bustling at Mount Assisi Academy Preschool, where the program welcomed a whopping 102 students – one of its largest enrollments ever – for the 2017-2018 school year.

To accommodate the robust enrollment, the preschool has added a few new staff members, including a mom whose three young sons graduated from the program and an aide who, herself, attended the preschool from 2003 to 2005. **Sister Eve Błostic** continues her long-term ministry of teaching religion, and **Sister Rosalia Giba** works in the preschool office.

The innovative *Almost 3* program, begun two years ago to help acclimate youngsters to the school experience, is at maximum enrollment. In addition to existing students returning as 4-year-olds this year, the school welcomes a host of new faces, some who will even introduce diverse cultures into the program.

The parents of a Japanese-American boy will be sharing a list of important Japanese words to ease communication with their son when he becomes stressed. Also a child who bravely battled back from a life-threatening brain tumor last spring rejoined his classmates this year.



Preschoolers enjoy the Johnny Appleseed celebration this fall.



Sister Adelina Garcia leads the opening procession of this year's bilingual *Transitus* service at the Franciscan Resource Center in San Angelo, Texas.

## Franciscan Resource Center Makes Faith Accessible in Two Languages

The Franciscan Resource Center, our sponsored ministry in San Angelo, Texas, continues providing faith formation classes in Spanish, covering such topics as scripture, sacraments and morality. About 12 to 15 people gather weekly for sessions that always conclude with fellowship over “cafecito and postre” (dessert and coffee).

In addition to helping members grow deeper in faith, the class serves as a forum for participants to share life’s joys and struggles. The book of prayer petitions keeps groups attentive to the many needs of the community.

The Immigration Office of the Diocese of San Angelo continues to be housed at the FRC. We are

happy to be able to partner with the diocese in assisting with this service to “welcome the stranger.”

In addition to reflection days and book review days, the FRC also is home to various meetings related to the work of **Sisters Adelina Garcia** and **Hilda Marotta** in the Diocese of San Angelo, including gatherings of directors of religious education and Advisory Committee meetings. “People always comment how much they enjoy the peace and quiet of the Center and also appreciate the Franciscan art,” says Sister Hilda.

The FRC also hosts a bilingual *Transitus* service on October 3 each year, commemorating the death of St. Francis of Assisi.

### GET SOCIAL WITH OUR SISTERS

Please visit our website and follow us on social media to learn more about our community and share in our everyday good works:



WEBSITE: [www.schoolsistersosf.org](http://www.schoolsistersosf.org)

FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/schoolsistersosf](http://www.facebook.com/schoolsistersosf)



INSTAGRAM: [www.instagram.com/schoolsistersosf](http://www.instagram.com/schoolsistersosf)





Sisters traveled by ship from Europe to the United States, circa 1911.

# Women of Influence

Our U.S. Province was founded by strong, influential women who came from Europe with barely more than the clothes on their backs. They persevered, went on to establish schools, shape the lives of young children and pass their wisdom on to younger sisters who came after them. Here, today's sisters – who themselves have influenced the lives of students and others they've touched through ministry work – reflect upon the fiercest female forces in their own lives.

**Sister Frances Marie Duncan** – My Godmother has always been the most generous and altruistic person I know. She worked very hard, yet always had time to help her extended family.

**Sister Carolyn Mitrichka** – My cousin was wise, truthful and honest, always saying things the way they were.

**Sister Luceta Macik** inspired me in many ways, as she was kind, humble, loving and always looking out to help you. Sister Regis Slocik, who was wise and humble, inspired me to try to be just like her.

**Sister Connie Frank** – My second and third grade teacher at St. Joseph School in Manchester on Pittsburgh's North Side, told me many stories about the saints. I loved her and knew I wanted to be a sister when I grew up.

**Sister Mary Xavier Bomberger** – My grandmother taught me what it means to trust, have faith, love God and follow my dreams. My mother taught me what it means to have quiet courage and strength to do whatever needs to be done for others with love.

**Sister Roselyn Kuzma** – My mother was a great influence on my life growing up. I was the middle child of 11, but she loved all of us and spent time with each one. My cousin, Sister Ellen Gresock, cared about me and encouraged me

when I was going through a rough time. Today she is praying for me from heaven, and I feel her presence.

**Sister Rosalia Giba** – My own dear mother, Julia Poruba Giba, was a living saint. God was always first in her life. She raised us children with a love that fully permeated heavenly joy.

**Sister Norberta Kralosky** – The loving, patient comments of my oldest sister guided me as far back as I can remember.

**Sister Pat Marie Buranosky** – My grandmother (wise, courageous, holy woman); **Sisters Apolonia Kusnir, Boleslaus Kral** and **Maurus Yancha** (very special people); Sister Mary Glenn, CDP (pioneer in change); Dorothy Day (modern saint); Hillary Clinton (perseverance against all odds); and Teresa of Avila (mystic).

**Sister Barbara Ann Webster** – My grandmother was my mentor, baby sitter, care taker and jolly good playmate. **Sisters Immaculata Vavrek** and **Bonaventure (Anna Catherine) Melichar** took over where my beloved grandmother left off.

**Sister Amata Shina** – **Sister M. Eymard Papso**, my eighth grade teacher, taught me how to pray and to trust in God's love for me.

**Sister Nancy Celaschi** – The School Sisters of St. Francis throughout the world have had the biggest impact on me. I have been privileged to meet every living sister (and heard many stories about the deceased ones, as well). Also, the late **Sister Joan McMullen** was a gift to all of us, with her love of life and love of the Word of God.

**Sister Marietta Bankos** – My cousin, Liane, and Annamae, one of my students, are devoted, loving mothers who inspire me to thank God every day for all the good they gained by my example, thus, helping them to be good Christian women in today's world.

**Sister Dorothy Bucko** – I graduated from St. Ursula grade school in Bethlehem, Pa., where we had the Sisters of St. Joseph as our teachers. In high school, **Sister Magdalene Lovrich** taught me Algebra II, and **Sister Felicitas Konecny** taught me trigonometry. Both were excellent teachers.

**Sister Lorita Kristufek** – **Sister Boleslaus Kral**, my teacher at Divine Redeemer School in Ambridge, Pa., gave me several pieces of a sister's habit so I could play sister. Sister Bridget James O'Brien from the Sisters of St. Joseph was a radiant light of faithfulness and an example of growing older gracefully with strong feminine integrity and character.

# A Year of Milestone Mo

# Sisters in the

## Sister Marie Therese

**Sherwood**, pastoral minister for social concerns at St. Matthias Catholic Community in Somerset, N.J., was among those honored this year with the *Disciple of Mercy* award by Most Rev. James F. Checchio, bishop of Metuchen.



S. Marie Therese

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## Sisters Georgette Dublino

and **Marie Glodava** attended the installation of His Eminence, Joseph William Cardinal Tobin, CSsR, as the sixth archbishop of Newark in January at Sacred Heart Basilica in Newark, N.J. They were among more than 2,000 people in the standing-room-only crowd, including 60 archbishops and bishops and 500 priests and deacons. "It was quite a historical event for the Archdiocese of Newark," Sister Georgette says, "and the School Sisters of St. Francis were part of it!"



Sister Georgette



Sister Marie

Over the summer, the pair brought to a close their ministry at St. Mary Church in Closter, N.J. Sister Marie is now volunteering as a school tutor in West Lawn, Pa., and Sister Georgette is ministering to our elder sisters at Mount Assisi Convent in Pittsburgh.

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## Sister Roselyn Kuzma

prepared four men who were ordained as permanent deacons in May in the Diocese of Erie, Pa.. The men and their wives attended Sister's monthly methods course on teaching. All said they enjoyed their learning experience.



Sister Roselyn

**Sisters Teresa Misyak, Georgette Dublino and Mary Martha Zammatore** took part in the 44th annual *March for Life* in Washington, D.C. in January. "The day was cold, but the sun beamed down on us and made for a wonderful experience of solidarity in a peaceful and joy-filled expression," says Sister Georgette.

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Sister Teresa



S. Mary Martha

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Six sisters and two associates were among 23,000 participants in the City of Pittsburgh's St. Patrick's Day Parade in March. In a twist of fate, the region's unseasonably warm winter weather plummeted so dramatically the night before that by start time, it was barely 20 degrees, making for one of the coldest parade days in history. Our sisters bundled up in layers and fun, festive attire. **Sister Karen Bucu** was among those who braved the cold and bitter wind to interact with the crowd. "I love to give candy to all the children," she says. "You get going and you don't realize how far you've marched."



Sister Karen



Sisters who attended our annual Provincial meeting outside of Monocacy Manor on a sunny August day

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**Sister Kevin Berdis** was honored for 19 years as principal of Holy Family School in Erie. The school closed this summer to make way for a new urban academy established by the Diocese of Erie.



Sister Kevin

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**Sister Maria Derecola** was honored for her service to St. Matthias School in Somerset, N.J., during the Elizabeth Schrum-Cook Scholarship Fund Reception in June. Proceeds from the eighth annual event supported tuition assistance at St. Matthias.



Sister Maria

## Helpful Handiwork

The sisters of Villa Clare at Monocacy Manor in Bethlehem, Pa. – **Sisters Marietta Bankos, Carolyn Mitrichka, Dorothy Bucko, Amata Shina, Frances Pastusek and Mary Xavier Bomberger** – have been making personal care packets for distribution through the food pantry at Mount Carmel Guild in Trenton, N.J., the ministry site of **Sister Bernadine Marie Stemnock**. The sisters each contribute to buy the items and then prepare the packets.





# the Spotlight



ngs this summer in Bethlehem, Pa. gathered  
y for this "team photo."

Among them was **Sister Rosalia Giba**, who particularly enjoyed speaking in September at St. Cyril of Alexandria Church on Pittsburgh's North Side. She saw the familiar faces of many former St. Gabriel parishioners who now attend St. Cyril (St. Gabriel was the first parish our sisters ministered in when they came to the United States in 1913). They recognized her too, and she stayed well past Mass to catch up. "I just love getting out and talking to the people," she says.



Sister Rosalia



## Proud Product of Sisters' Influence

The sisters at Mount Assisi Convent in Pittsburgh were delighted to welcome the Rev. Alek Schrenk in June to celebrate Mass and give his first blessing. Father Alek (shown above blessing **Sister Mary Lou Metro**) attended Mount Assisi Academy Preschool as a youngster and also worked as a dishwasher at the convent as a teenager. He went on to the seminary, was ordained a deacon in 2016 and officially ordained a priest in June. He made sure to offer each sister a blessing following Mass.

\*\*\*\*\*



Sister Francine

**Sister Francine Garganta** was honored in June for 25 years of dedicated service to Incarnation of Our Lord Parish in Bethlehem, Pa. The celebration included a vigil Mass, dinner, presentation of gifts and plenty of warm-hearted gratitude.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Sister Patricia Ann Mahoney

spent July in San Antonio, Texas as part of a language immersion program. She strengthened her Spanish skills for her ministry at St. Regis Church in Pittsburgh, where many parishioners are of Latin American heritage.



Sister Pat

In September, Sister was honored with the Diocese of Pittsburgh's *Manifesting the Kingdom* award. Two weeks later, she spoke at the *Don't Let Worry Win* women's retreat at St. Paul Cathedral in Pittsburgh.

\*\*\*\*\*

Several of our sisters gave mission talks this year in parishes near their ministries.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sister Hilda Marotta** was honored at the 2017 Franciscan Federation Conference in Buffalo, N.Y. this summer. She was selected for her ability to embody the best of the Franciscan teaching tradition through her work as director of Evangelization & Catechesis for the Diocese of San Angelo and her pivotal role in establishing our Franciscan Resource Center there.



Sister Hilda

\*\*\*\*\*

### Sister Frances Marie Duncan

spent a week in Asbury Park, N.J., this summer volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. She worked alongside students from St. Peter's Preparatory School, where she taught math and science for 20 years.



S. Frances Marie

\*\*\*\*\*

Since retiring from the Catholic Cemeteries Association at the end of August, **Sister Elaine Hromulak** remains busy with the *Little Dresses Project*. In response to an article in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* last spring,



Sister Elaine

she continues to receive donations of material and phone calls from folks who want to join the small army of seamstresses. She also is the volunteer pastoral minister at Pittsburgh's John Paul Plaza senior highrise, where she leads the residents in, as she says, "anything of a spiritual nature."

\*\*\*\*\*

In August, **Sisters Barbara Brown, Frances Marie Duncan, Regina Ann Rokosny** and **Mary Martha Zammatore** attended the Vespers service for the installation of the Most Rev. Alfred Schlert as the fifth Bishop of Allentown.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Sister Barbara Ann Webster

has found innovative ways to recycle everyday objects – toilet paper rolls, plastic grocery bags, milk jug rings – into attractive decor. She shared a table with **Sister Roseann Velas** at St. Francis Center for Renewal's Craft Fair in November.



S. Barbara Ann

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It is with deep gratitude that we acknowledge and thank you, our generous donors, for your contributions. Only with your help are we able to continue our ministries. Therefore, you share with us in spreading the Gospel and building up God's Kingdom. Thank you for your support, and may God continue to bless you.

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**At left, Sisters Rosaria Shina and Loretta Motko bake kiffles for Spring Festival.**



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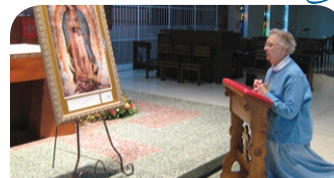
Michael Ziemianski

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Gerald Brna  
 Robert & Diane Klembara

## Sister Aurelia Cerny

Louis Machovsky  
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## Sister Bernadette Ann Bozak

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## Sister Bernadette Giba

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## Mary Wasko

Alfred & Elizabeth Kosman

## Planning Ahead

Are you interested in including the School Sisters of St. Francis in your will or otherwise leaving a lasting impact on any of our sponsored ministries? Please reach out to our Finance Office at **412-766-7349** for more information.



## Soup Sale Heats Up at Marian Hall

The perennial Soup Sale at Marian Hall Home in Pittsburgh returned with the chilly weather and with more soup varieties than ever.

The sale runs weekly through April 20, 2018.

Each week, three soup varieties are offered – each for \$5 per quart – with flavors repeating every six weeks.

For a printable week-by-week listing of flavors, visit [www.schoolsistersosf.org](http://www.schoolsistersosf.org). To order, call **412-761-6004** by 12 p.m. each Thursday, then pick up your order beginning at 1 p.m. on Friday. Proceeds benefit programs at Marian Hall Home.

Please note that due to holiday schedules, no sales will be conducted on November 24, 2017 (Thanksgiving), December 29, 2017 (Christmas), January 3, 2018 (New Year's) or March 30, 2018 (Easter).



Kate Guay, assistant administrator, and Sister Beena Jose, nurse, take part in dementia training at Marian Hall Home.

## window into their world

The staff of Marian Hall Home – one of our sponsored ministries in Pittsburgh, Pa., – got an eye-opening look into the world of dementia when they completed the *Virtual Dementia Tour*® earlier this year.

Many read about the debilitating disease or experience it as caregivers but don't realize until the end of the mere eight-minute virtual experience what living with dementia is really like. "This is the closest you can come to experiencing dementia without actually having dementia," says educator Jenna Reo. "You're walking in their shoes."

Along with Bethany Morgan, Jenna gave our Marian Hall staffers a unique opportunity to move through the world with the diminished physical and cognitive skills of those they care for. "Part of dementia is not knowing what is happening around you or what others are trying to tell you," Bethany says. "Those we train come out of this asking themselves, 'What did I just experience?' It replicates cognitive decline in a powerful way."

After viewing an video interview with a real-life dementia sufferer, each trainee was outfitted with devices – gloves, shoe inserts, glasses and headphones

– that simulated the physical decline of aging. The equipment dulled fine motor skills, vision and hearing and mimicked the foot pain of neuropathy. After being led into a darkened room filled with simple bedroom furniture, each trainee was given simple tasks to perform. Things most take for granted – folding laundry, arranging silverware, finding clothes in the closet, penning a brief note to a friend – were anything in the simulated world of dementia.

Training was conducted in the former bedroom of one of our late sisters who struggled with severe cognitive impairment in the final years of her life. Perhaps it was her way of contributing to an understanding she was unable to communicate in life. The training also was offered to our sisters who wanted to better understand the dementia experienced by many of our community's aging members.

Spending mere moments in sensory overload creates a lasting impact among caregivers who complete the virtual experience. "It was beautiful," says **Sister Beena Jose**, who ministers in Marian Hall. "It gives you a different point of view about caring for dementia patients."

## MARIAN HALL IMPROVEMENTS

The following improvements were made to our 62-bed personal care facility over the past year:

- The third-floor handicapped ramp was renovated
- The back fountain was enclosed with railings to enhance safety
- A third-floor office was converted into a chapel, including new lighting, air conditioning and dedicated electrical circuits
- The large bathroom in Mount Assisi Center was renovated
- The large bathroom in Antonia Hall was renovated
- A CCTV system was installed



# Experiencing the Splendor of India

More than 250 people filled Mullen Hall on the grounds of Monocacy Manor in Bethlehem, Pa., for the seventh annual Star Struck Gala last May. They were greeted by women resplendent in colorful saris and tables draped with beautiful flowing material and flowers. An enormous elephant donned in fabric and jewels stood centerstage.

Guests sampled Indian *hors d'oeuvres* and enjoyed a fine, festive meal. During dessert they were captivated by the Vandante Indian Dance Troupe as they shared their culture and heritage through graceful movement and beautiful dress. The Silent Auction and Star Struck Raffle offered impressive prizes and satisfied winners. Since the School Sisters of St. Francis have always been involved in education and formation, St.



Sisters Ancy Francis and Beena Jose of the Region of India (but who minister in our U.S. Province) wore traditional saris, as did Sisters Georgette Dublino and Marguerite Stewart, who both spent significant time ministering in India.

Francis Center for Renewal chose to shine its light on Philip Fromuth, PhD, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Allentown. Four outstanding *Women of Strength* were honored as well – Milissa Bolcar, Pamela Tuskes, Teresa Connors (all former graduates of St. Francis Academy) and **Sister Regina Ann Rokosny**. A San Damiano Crucifix was

presented to Ellen Kraft in remembrance of her mother, Joan Kraft, friend and benefactor of the Renewal Center.

With *oohs* and *ahhs* the guests affirmed the talents and dedication of the Gala Committee. **Sisters Ancy Francis** and **Beena Jose** from the Region of India also attended the Gala in traditional Indian dress. They too complimented the committee on their efforts to bring the splendor of India to life.

## MARKING A MILESTONE

The eighth annual Star Struck Gala will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Francis Center for Renewal, honoring Msgr. John Murphy. The event will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2018. Be sure to visit [www.stfrancisctr.org](http://www.stfrancisctr.org) for gala details and a listing of retreats and programs.

## Donations Made in Honor of ...

**2016 Jubilarians**  
Rosemarie Batra

**Sister Marietta Bankos**  
Mary Bogle

**Sister Patricia Brennan**  
Kristen McGuire

**Sister Karen Bucu**  
Dr. Beverly Michael Higgins

**Sister Patricia Marie Buranosky**  
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**Sister Patricia Ann Mahoney, OSF**  
Betty Bellisario  
Catherine Kroepil  
Jane Milcoff

**Sister Marguerite Stewart**  
Lone Star Educators Agency

## Let Prayers Ring Out!

Our American sisters will be praying for our sisters in the Czech Province over the next year. Each of our mission homes has a small bell as a reminder to send prayers to our sisters overseas each time it rings.



## echoes across the horizons

Autumn 2017

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Website: [www.schoolsistersosf.org](http://www.schoolsistersosf.org)  
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# School Sisters of St. Francis

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## A Bounty Blooms in Bethlehem

It's been a busy and fruitful time for the Monocacy Farm Project, our sponsored ministry in Bethlehem that provides access to affordable, fresh produce for low-income families.

Thanks to an energetic army of supporters – rallied passionately by **Sister Bonnie Marie Kleinschuster** – who went online to vote daily last spring, the project received a \$10,000 SPARK grant from the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation to continue enhancing the farm grounds at Monocacy Manor. Following the installation of a new water supply system last year, a greenhouse and shed were constructed this year.

The 10-acre farm was visited this summer by a group of fellows from the Mandela Washington Fellowship, a flagship program of the Young

African Leaders Initiative. The Farm Project was among organizations that hosted 100 competitively selected fellows seeking to learn about innovation and positive change.

As summer waned, harvesting began. Ten community organizations passed onto needy families produce grown at Monocacy, a true testament to the charisma and mission of the School Sisters of St. Francis. Individuals who leased out plots of land for the growing season literally saw the fruits of their labor, as well.

As word of the project's good works spread, the spotlight widened. Monocacy Farm Project was featured

on *Fig*, a website that highlights local shopping, dining, arts and culture, history, education and community in several Pennsylvania towns.

It all came to a celebratory crescendo in October with the second annual *Monocacy Farm Food Festival*, featuring local foods and artisans, hands-on activities and demonstrations, speakers, farm tours, music and activities for kids.

### GROW YOUR SKILLS

Monocacy Farm Project is seeking volunteers and interns for the 2018 growing season. Volunteers and unpaid interns can gain hands-on farming and gardening experience during flexible shifts from April through October. Contact **Bob Drake** at [bdrake@schoolsistersosf.org](mailto:bdrake@schoolsistersosf.org) or **610-867-8494**.

