



Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill
Volume 27, Number 1

Celebration



Robin's Snow
Sister M. Fides Glass, SC (1889-1955)

Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, responsive to the signs of the times — yesterday, today, and tomorrow!

Mission Statement

The Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill is an international, apostolic community of women religious, baptized in Christ, and vowed to continue the mission of His Church. In the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Elizabeth Seton, the congregation conceives its purpose to be an active ministry on behalf of the Kingdom.

This service is: informed by Gospel values, responsive to the needs of a changing world, guided by the prudent use of available resources, respectful of human dignity, protective of human rights, devoted especially to the poor and oppressed, rooted in faith, animated by prayer, supported by the common life, and performed in humility, simplicity and charity.

Editor:

Jane Strittmatter

Graphic Design:

Sister Mary Kay Neff

Contributors:

Sister Barbara Einloth

Sister Alicia Costa, SSF

Julia Trimarchi Cuccaro

Sister Louise Grundish

Sister Colette Hanlon

Sister Mary Noël Kernan

Sister Vivien Linkhauer

Sister Maureen O'Brien

Sister Miriam Richard Soisson

Sister Edie Strong

Lynn Wagner

Contents

- 4 "I Was in Prison and You..."
- 8 *Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill and the Sisters of the Holy Family — Friendship and Charism Past, Present, and Future*
- 13 *Sister Melanie DiPietro — St. Thomas More Awardee*
2018 marks 85 years of ministry for the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Tucson, Arizona. 2017
- 14 *Sister Jon Frances Vallade— Serving Her Sisters as Benefits Advocate and Administrator*
- 16 *Celebrating Centennial — Seton Hill University*
- 18 *Q&A — Interview with Dr. James J. Kelly*

"The dreamer turns her back upon the future; she sees only the past, and keeps it with her in the present. The visionary faces only the future, and learns nothing from the past. The wise woman from her vantage point in the present contemplates the vista of history; she comprehends the reality of the past and the possibilities of the future."

~ Sister Mary Electa Boyle, SC



February 2018

Dear Friends,

These late winter days make us long for gentle spring days with buds and birds, longer days, softer light, and Easter on the horizon. Lent has begun. (The word Lent comes from the German "lente," meaning the time of lengthening days.) During this season, we find ourselves pondering what it means to be a committed follower of Jesus. Questions help us probe our responsibilities. How much time do we give to prayer? How much to watching or playing on electronic screens? Maybe we are challenged with our consumption patterns. What do we really need, and how much is enough? What can we do for the sake of others who experience hardships with family responsibilities, employment, or illness?

As Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, we frequently ponder these questions. Due to your constant generosity, we are able to continue our ministries to those who are vulnerable and need our help. Also, many of you share in our ministries as volunteers. Without you, our capacity to care for God's most disadvantaged people would be severely limited.

In our last Chapter (a gathering of the community to set priorities), the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, United States Province made a commitment to respond to the signs of the times with passion and urgency through:

- Vibrant Vincentian-Setonian Spirit
- Focused ministry with vulnerable populations
- Sustainable partnerships for action
- Expanded opportunities for participatory leadership

In this issue of *Celebration*, we share the story of a relationship between our community and the Holy Family Sisters of New Orleans, a long-standing interracial partnership. We spotlight sisters involved for many years in prison ministry. In addition, we share our pride in Seton Hill University as it celebrates 100 years ministering to young people through higher education. It is our hope that as you see us responding to the needs of our times, you will realize how much you share in this response.

May this Lent bring you a deep sense of longing for what is of eternity, Divine Love.

In the name of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton,

Sister Catherine Meinert, S.C.
Provincial Superior
Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill



“I was in prison and you....”



Sisters Mary Noël Kernan and Edith Strong

We are familiar with Jesus’ words about visiting the prisoner, and we hear about others who are involved in ministry to the incarcerated, but some people actually live out the mandate. Sister Edith Strong is one who does just that in Western Pennsylvania.

She has shared many experiences over the years that illustrate some of the ways that she brings comfort to prisoners. One time she was in the local facility in Greensburg to attend Mass with the men, and she noticed a man in the lobby sitting near a box of his belongings. He told her he thought his bus was due in the morning and so had skipped breakfast, but then he learned he would not be leaving until afternoon. Several hours later Sister Edie found him still there, so she went and bought him a supersized meal from Burger King. He dove into the food as if it were his last meal, when instead it was his first as a free person. She talked with him about “paying it forward” and said he would have opportunities to make a difference—even in a small way—in others’ lives. A week later one of the guards handed Sister a wrinkled envelope on which the former inmate had written her a thank you note.

Ministering to prisoners has a long history for the Sisters of Charity. In addition to Sister Edie, Sisters Mary Agnes Schildkamp, Marian Clare McGurgan, Mary Philip Aaron, Zachary Endress, Mary Dorothy Huber, Mary Noël Kernan, Lois Sculco, and others participated in various ways. They taught GED classes and also attended Mass with the men. One event that helped the prisoners get through the holidays was the annual Christmas party. For a few hours, the men were able to forget where they were and join in the spirit of joy that fills the rest of the Christian world as we celebrate God’s choice to become one of us.

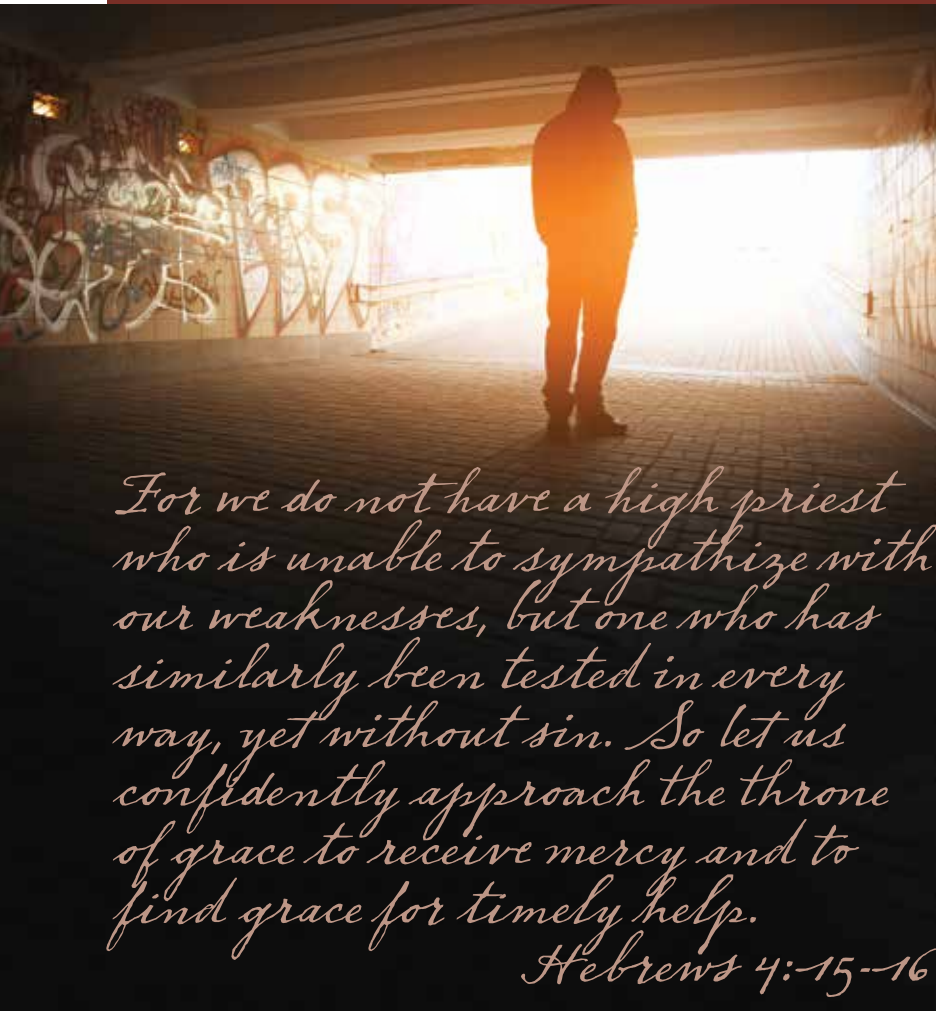
The sister volunteers collaborated with Father Lawrence Hoppe who was the priest chaplain there. Together they encouraged the men to grow in prayer through times of

quiet, reading the lives of the saints, praying the rosary and celebrating reconciliation. As they continued to investigate the place of the Spirit in their lives, the men began to learn how to express their growing realization of God’s presence.

Once, as Sister Edie passed a cellblock with bars between her and the inmates, she began a conversation with one



man, inquiring as to whether he had seen Pope John Paul II on TV. She says his reply, “No, he doesn’t mean much to me. You are the one who comes to see me,” was a life-changer for her. She realized just being among the men, having



For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.
Hebrews 4:15-16



Contact us at prayer@scsh.org, or by phone at 724-836-0406, ext. 6610, or visit our website at www.scsh.org with your prayer intentions or to request a prayer partner.

conversations, and offering comfort was enough to lift their spirits.

On a number of occasions, she was able to drive released prisoners home—some who lived nearby and some from a distance. She found that it did not matter to the men if they were in fancy clothes or in their “browns,” because they were so happy to be released. On one occasion, Sister Edie was at a Christian concert when a man reached out to get her attention. He was a former inmate whom she had driven home. He remembered her kindness and wanted to assure her he was doing well. Knowing that was a special treat for her.

She and others who taught in the prison system helped students there finish high school and obtain their GED diplomas. Unfortunately, after many years of doing this, they had to relinquish their volunteer teaching ministry due to union employees wanting to make those positions paid.

Not to be discouraged, Sister Edie learned in the 1980s that the county prison did not have Catholic religious services. She was able to provide ministry to the women on a weekly basis, and to the men by rotating services with the Protestant ministers who were involved there. When Sister Edie was leaving Greensburg to serve in West Virginia, Sister Eleanor Dillon took up where she left off.

The Department of Justice closed the Greensburg prison in June 2013 and moved the prisoners to Benner, Erie, and other institutions. This was very hard for Sister Edie and the other members of the Catholic community who had been assisting in many ways and had become close to the prisoners. She and others continue to write to some of the men. In addition, Sister Edie sometimes takes mothers to visit their sons because public transportation is not available.

Ever grateful for the role God has given her through the persons she has met in her ministry, Sister Edie tells the story of one inmate who was sent to Benner. He was technically paroled several years ago, but had to stay in jail because he had no family and needed to wait until a home plan was approved for him. With the help of some special people, Sister found a landlord willing to accept an ex-inmate as a tenant. This man realized that there are many state prisoners needing a home after their release

and he has made it his mission to help these released prisoners get a new start in life. As she reflected on how God worked through this man and others like him, Sister Edie commented, “Such a saint has a special place in the heart of God.” Sister went on to describe the challenges, supports, and setbacks that the released prisoner experienced:

“The man I was recently helping in prison was an ex-inmate for about five months. The experience of journeying with him was such a blessing for me. Budgeting money, paying bills, keeping track of appointments, learning the public transportation system, and using a cell phone are all new experiences for him.

Even more importantly, he has learned there are many good people in his world and in his parish. He was warmly welcomed to the Thanksgiving dinner for those who had no family with whom to give thanks. He was deeply grateful for his freedom, enjoyed the sun, the people he met.

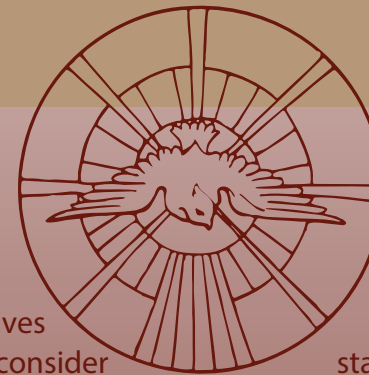
Unfortunately, he is temporarily back in prison for a parole violation. He has learned that freedom from addictive behaviors is much harder to attain than physical freedom. It requires wanting it badly enough to do the work of changing one’s life by using every help available. It means recognizing that God surrounds him with mercy and can do in him infinitely more than he could ever imagine.”

One of those whose mercy has touched him and many others, who lives out Jesus’ words of visiting the imprisoned, is Sister Edie.

Sister has recently accepted a ministry for the Catholic community in Mt. Pleasant where she provides opportunities for faith formation, coordinates ministry to the homebound and grieving families, and assists the people in fulfilling Christ’s mission.

Although reluctant to talk about herself, Sister Edie said, “It amazes me how God’s plan for my life has unfolded and how blessed I have been at each turn in the road. I am grateful that our Lord has used me in visiting prisoners and acting in God’s place to serve those so loved by our Creator.”

The prisoners came to recognize the importance of prayer in their lives and learned to consider the work of the Holy Spirit through the efforts of Greensburg Catholic Diocesan Chaplain Father Lawrence Hoppe and the sisters who



ministered to them. Sister Edie’s class members composed a gratitude statement. “These men know the God of Mercy and they read the scripture and they pray in a way that humbles me,” declared Sister Edie.

Grateful for the Gifts of the Spirit Among Us

Gratitude,
Respect for all people,
Zeal to share our faith with others,
Inviting others to the faith
Encouraging others,
Admonishing others,
Generosity toward others’ Wisdom,
Freshness in living our faith.

Sister Edie’s students at the prison also wrote a statement to answer the question, “How can we be ‘Church’ so clearly that this institution and all who live here will recognize our faith community as disciples of Christ?” Their pledge of commitment prompted Sister Edie to say, “These statements certainly strengthened and enlightened my faith.”

Pledge of Commitment

Openly bless ourselves before meals.
Respond to the needs of others with kind words, friendliness, encouragement, and spiritual guidance.
Be **proud** of our faith and open about the articles of faith that we use.
Reflect on the scripture.
Pray personally and communally for others.
Welcome newcomers to Mass.
Befriend inactive Catholics and those who search for the meaning in life.
Greet and respect others.
Avoid being judgmental.
Be **grateful** and express our gratitude.

Sisters of Charity Louise Grundish, Vivien Linkhauer, Miriam Richard Soisson, and Sister Alicia Costa, SSF with Jane Strittmatter, Director of Public Relations for the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill

Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill and the Sisters of the Holy Family

Celebrate

FRIENDSHIP AND CHARISM PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

New Orleans is well-known for its spectacular Mardi Gras celebrations. But last fall, three Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill traveled there for another impressive event – the grand finale of a year-long celebration of the 175th Anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of the Holy Family. As honored guests, Sisters Miriam Richard Soisson, Louise Grundish, and Vivien Linkhauer enjoyed another splendid New Orleans affair. They rode in a motorcade from the motherhouse to the Cathedral Church to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving. Accompanied by blaring sirens of police escorts, they were greeted by an honor guard of the Knights of Peter Claver. The liturgy, celebrated by 14 prelates and 27 priests, assisted by 10 deacons, had a festive spirit. Following Mass, guests savored a gourmet creole dinner. The occasion gave the three sisters from Greensburg an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, reminisce about shared ministries, and reflect on the close bond between the two communities of different cultures, both founded by women with a preferential love for the poor.



Sisters of the Holy Family were happy to welcome three Sisters of Charity to their 175th Anniversary Celebration. It was a grand reunion of dear friends. From left to right are, Sisters Miriam Richard Soisson, Sylvia Thibodeaux, Louise Grundish, Vivien Linkhauer, Alicia Costa.

Photo courtesy of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

Although Elizabeth Ann Seton, and the Holy Family Sisters' founder Henriette Delille were alive at the same time for a period of nine years, it is unlikely that they knew each other. When Henriette was born in 1812, Elizabeth was already in Emmitsburg in the early days of her community there. Both women felt the call to proclaim the Gospel, teach the little ones, care for orphans, and open their hearts to the poor. Elizabeth became the first native-born American to be declared a saint and Henriette is the first native-born African American to be on the way to sainthood. Their paths have crossed, however, in the long and deep friendship between their respective religious communities of sisters that began almost a century ago.

After the rise of the KKK in 1915 and the Race Riots of 1919, a plea for help went out from the Director General of the Colored Mission Board to communities of women religious from the North to help educate black Catholic Sisters ministering in the often violent, racially-segregated South. In 1921, Mother Mary Joseph Havey responded by sending six Sisters of Charity to New Orleans to teach summer classes to the Sisters of the Holy Family. Although the African-American sisters had been teaching children in the South for many years, state regulations and segregation practices prohibited their attendance at local schools, preventing them from meeting educational regulations imposed in the 1920s. The

Sisters of Charity developed a curriculum to help the Holy Family Sisters attain teaching certificates from the State of Louisiana. After four summers, ten candidates passed the Louisiana State Teacher's Exam with high scores.

A new problem surfaced when Louisiana began to require college credits for teaching certification. Black students were refused admission to Southern colleges in those days. Fortunately for the Sisters of the Holy Family, Xavier University, the first black Catholic university, accepted them as students. With this development, the Sisters of Charity limited the summer program to courses that prepared their Southern students for university studies. The summer sessions continued

through 1957 when civil rights legislation enabled the Holy Family Sisters to establish a junior college to educate their teachers. When the program ended, Mother Claudia Glenn wrote on behalf of the Sisters of Charity to Mother Mary Philip in New Orleans, "Our interest in your beloved Community will never change." Mother Mary Philip's reply read, "Thirty years is a long time . . . we know this mutual relationship will not be severed."

Mother Claudia had already taken steps to strengthen the relationship. She established a scholarship program at Seton Hill as a gift to Sisters of the Holy Family on the occasion of the

100th anniversary of their foundation in 1942. The sisters who came to study in Greensburg grew in their understanding of the North. They gave their classmates, who had little exposure to diverse cultures, the opportunity to meet black women religious. Holy Family Sister Sylvia Thibodeaux (then Sister Rita Frances) was a scholarship recipient and a 1967 Seton Hill graduate. She went on to become the superior of her community and to found a community of Sisters in Nigeria. Now one of Seton Hill University's distinguished alumni, Sister Sylvia says that being educated at the Hill was "a life-changing experience" for her. The scholarship program remained in effect until 1976.



“I learned many lessons of discipline, management, and how to relate to students and parents,” explained Sister Miriam Richard. “I felt accepted within the community and the school system in Louisiana.”



Sister Miriam Richard and Sister Maria Consilia Saizan, SSF, were teaching colleagues in the music program of the New Orleans Catholic Schools.

Both communities were involved in elementary and high school education, and as the civil rights movement escalated in the mid-1960s, the Sisters of both communities inaugurated a faculty exchange program to bring about racial integration among faculty members in schools of both congregations. From 1967 to 1979, this initiative gave the sisters from both groups the experience of a culture different from their own, and gave the Catholic schools where they taught the benefit of integration of the races at a time when it was sorely needed.

Sister Miriam Richard Soisson was part of the teacher-exchange program at St. Joan of Arc School in New Orleans from 1967 to 1969. Her principal, Holy Family Sister Roberta Marie, now deceased, was very gracious to Sister Miriam Richard, helping her adapt to Southern culture. “She had a smile one could not forget. I learned many lessons of discipline, management, and how to relate to students and parents,” explained Sister



Miriam Richard. “I felt accepted within the community and the school system in Louisiana.” Sister Miriam Richard participated in the Sisters’ Choir for the Archdiocese of New Orleans and headed the music program for the dozen or so schools of the system. She also learned to drive at that time with the assistance the Holy Family Sisters who genuinely loved their “Seton Sisters.”

Friendships among members of the two communities were many. When Sister Vivien Linkhauer became the Provincial Superior of the United States Province, she met up with her classmate Sister Sylvia, who was then the Superior of the Holy Family Sisters. Sister Sylvia offered to send Holy Family Sister Alicia Costa, who had just completed her doctorate, to Seton Hill to teach as a gesture of thanks to the Sisters of Charity for the years that they taught in Louisiana. Sister Alicia taught in the Education Department of the University from 2004 to 2009 and lived with her Charity Sisters. During those years, many sisters got to know Sister Alicia, enjoy her beautiful singing voice, learn about the New Orleans tradition of “the second line,” grieve with her over the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina, and contribute to helping the Holy Family community recover from the aftermath. All the ministries they offered were devastated. “The Sisters of Charity immediately came to our aid once again,” said Sister Alicia. “Seton Hill University, through Sr. Lois Sculco, sent our sisters a cell phone because the 504 area codes were not working. . . I emptied my closet and bank account to send to my sisters and the Sisters of Charity followed suit.” Sister

Louise Grundish, who had become a good friend of Sister Alicia, observed, “It was difficult for Sister Alicia to be in Greensburg while her sisters and family were suffering the devastation of the hurricane. She used her time well to help from afar and tell the story of their needs.” A second time, the community evacuated their buildings, this time in preparation for Hurricane Isaac. Two Greensburg sisters were in New Orleans fundraising for missions in Korea and Ecuador, and they offered to stay and assist their Louisiana friends.

Currently the Treasurer General for her congregation, Sister Alicia was a key planner for the 175th Anniversary celebration. “The Sisters of Charity added to our wonderful celebration,” she reflected. “When I worked with them at Seton Hill University, I was impressed with how they lived up to their motto: “The Charity of Christ Urges Us.”

At the annual Seton Hill “Lunch with Liz” in 2006, Sister Alicia gave a powerful presentation explaining how the Sisters of Charity worked “out of the charism



Sister Vivien Linkhauer was happy to share memories with her Seton Hill classmate Sister Mary Charlotte Rubit, SSF.



passed onto them by Elizabeth Ann Seton”, naming the Sisters of Charity “trailblazers of charity and social justice.” Sister Alicia explained, “The ‘Black Caps,’ as the Sisters of Charity were fondly called, . . . dedicated themselves for the long run with heartfelt concern to fight injustice with the greatest weapon they had—education . . . when others in the South would not or could not.” To help the Sisters of the Holy Family, it was necessary for the Sisters of Charity to begin to overcome the prejudicial ideas and ethnocentric biases that were so much part of the culture in the 1920s.

The Sisters of the Holy Family, who had been spurned by their white counterparts in the South, had to learn to relinquish their reservations about the white ‘Black Caps’ from the North in order to become successful in their educational pursuits. In doing so, they embodied the charism of their founder, Henriette de Lille, who became a prophetic witness of compassion, liberation, healing, and empowerment to all peoples.

Speaking at Seton Hill University, Sister Alicia gave her audience a vision of the impact spawned by the Seton Hill/New Orleans connection. “The fruits of the Sisters of Charity have spanned generations of African Americans in New Orleans through the work of the Sisters of the Holy Family.” Students of the Sisters of the Holy Family “have risen to leadership positions in local government and other professions around the country: the first female Police Captain in New Orleans as well as the Deputy CAO of the City, activists, principals, teachers, college professors, computer scientists, architectural and civil engineers, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. Added to the proud heritage of the Sisters of the Holy Family are also good Christian African American men and women, mothers and fathers.”

The strong bonds of friendship between the Sisters of Charity and the Sisters of the Holy Family will thrive in the future through students they have empowered to be agents of change in our world. Students of the two communities will pass on the legacy of their teachers, torchbearers of compassion and justice, who educated them to see the inherent goodness of each person. Imagine the intercultural bonds of friendship that will continue to be made!

Sister Barbara Einloth

Sister Melanie DiPietro—

2017 St. Thomas More Awardee

Bishop David Zubik and the Honorable Joy Flowers Conti congratulate Sister Melanie.

We congratulate Sister Melanie DiPietro, recipient of the Thomas More Award, presented October 19, 2017, at Pittsburgh’s Duquesne University following the annual Red Mass. The local chapter of the St. Thomas More Society conferred the award. It demonstrates

the members’ recognition of Sister Melanie’s keen intelligence, legal acumen, service to the national and international Church, and commitment to justice and religious liberty. Sister Melanie joins a long list of distinguished jurists and lawyers who have been recognized for their outstanding skills and service.

The banquet room was filled with members of the bar and bench, other

public servants, Sister Melanie’s family, friends, and religious community who joined Bishop David Zubik of the Diocese of Pittsburgh in the celebration. Both the Honorable Joy Flowers Conti, Chief District Judge of the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Pennsylvania, and Bishop Zubik spoke with feeling and gratitude, as they highlighted some of Sister Melanie’s particular gifts and many contributions to the legal community and the Church.

In her acceptance speech, Sister Melanie both inspired and challenged her colleagues to continue the legacy of women religious in education, healthcare, and welfare. In doing so, Sister Melanie turned the focus of the evening from herself to the responsibility of her colleagues to go beyond the inspiring stories of the founding of these institutions to the application of Catholic Social Teaching and the complex management and employment questions arising in “the ordinary course of business” of these works that we call ministries.

Photos courtesy of St. Thomas More Society and photographer Chuck Austin



2018 marks 85 years of ministry for the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Tucson, Arizona.

2018 marks 85 years of ministry for the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Tucson, Arizona. A celebration to mark this milestone will be held at Saints Peter and Paul School at a date and time yet to be determined. Please watch our website (www.scsch.org) and our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/scsch.us) for more information. Pictured with Father Patrick Crino, pastor of Saints Peter and Paul Parish, are Sisters Hyunme Kim, Jeanne Bartholomeaux, Maria Consuelo Pacheco, Hae Rok Na, and Claudia Rushlow.



Sister Jon Frances Vallade—

Serving Her Sisters as Benefits Advocate and Administrator



"Sister Jon Frances is an extremely detailed-oriented person who is unwavering in her commitment to do the very best for every sister in regard to her Social Security and health benefits. As a Province, we are very grateful to Sister Jon Frances for her knowledge, dedication, and meticulous work on our behalf."

—Sister Catherine Meinert

Persons reaching retirement age often become overwhelmed with choices that will ensure that their future years are truly "golden years." After signing up for Social Security benefits, senior citizens face the daunting task of choosing Medicare coverage and supplemental insurance that will provide adequate benefits for evolving healthcare needs that come with aging.

Then comes the mind-boggling experience of filling out the forms and managing claims from multiple insurance plans of the Medicare mix. Having an advocate is a great help.

As Coordinator of Health Insurance and Social Security for the congregation, Sister Jon Frances Vallade is no stranger to the bureaucratic systems she navigates. In her out-of-the-way office, she is surrounded by beautiful African Violets and gentle classical music playing in the background. There this self-proclaimed "paper pusher" calmly processes mountains of mail, sifts through stacks of statements, and generates numerous reports each month. "It is important to me that each sister receives the best services and benefits," says Sister Jon Frances.

Prior to taking on the role of benefits advocate and administrator for her congregation, Sister Jon Frances served as a teacher and principal in Catholic schools of the Dioceses of Greensburg, Altoona-Johnstown, Wheeling, and Steubenville for 48 years. In 2007, when Sister was recuperating from knee surgery in Greensburg, she was asked to help the late Sister Barbara Mary Koval, who was at that time, in charge of health insurance for the Sisters of Charity. Sister Jon Frances began to learn about the processes involved with enrollments and claims as she filed records. After Sister Barbara Mary's retirement, Sister Jon Frances became fully responsible for health insurance administration for the

community. Three years later, Sister Jon Frances started to assist the late Sister Jeanne Ellen Morris who handled Social Security matters for the sisters. Sister Jon Frances assumed those responsibilities when Sister Jeanne Ellen retired.

Over the past ten years, Sister Jon Frances has utilized the knowledge she acquired to streamline health insurance and social security processes for members of the congregation. Her self-taught computer skills have optimized efficient processing and filing of paper and electronic documents for enrollments, claims and benefits. Her Internet savvy and people skills have empowered effective advocacy for the members of her congregation. She stays abreast of legislative changes on government benefits by studying agency websites and attending public information sessions sponsored by human service agencies. This knowledge prepares her to tackle difficult issues. The members of the U.S. Provincial Council rely on Sister Jon Frances' knowledge and careful research when they must make decisions about insurance providers and benefit services for the congregation.

For sisters still actively employed, Sister Jon Frances monitors funds the congregation pays into Social Security on their behalf. These payments are based on the code of regulations for members of religious orders who have taken a vow of poverty. When a sister becomes eligible for Social Security, she assists her with enrollment procedures and forms. Sister also monitors the direct deposit of funds for each sister receiving benefits to ensure that the correct distribution is made to the beneficiary's place of residence. And in the event of a sisters' death, she notifies the Social Security Administration.

Medical insurance issues are a little more complicated. When a sister reaches 65 years of age, Sister Jon Frances provides assistance with Medicare enrollment and verifies the sisters' eligibility for state-provided benefits that help to cover all medical costs. These programs include Medicaid and the PACE program, which help with the cost of prescription drugs. If a Medicare-eligible sister is not qualified for state assisted programs, Sister Jon Frances

helps her to enroll in a supplemental insurance program. When sisters have medical claims, she makes sure all claims are paid on the sisters' behalf and resolves problems when claims are in question. Sister Jon Frances also works with consultants to help administer the insurance of sisters still actively employed and receiving benefits through their employment.

To most, it would appear that Sister Jon Francis has fun with her clerical and administrative duties but the work is not easy. Her biggest challenge, according to Sister Jon Frances, is keeping up with the workflow. However, Sister has refined the system to an art form and her organizational skills and methodical thinking make her a calming presence to those she helps. Her service to the congregation is a labor of love. "I loved teaching, but I also love helping my sisters," she explains. Even in her free time, Sister Jon Frances, relaxes by helping others. She spends many hours crocheting baby items, no doubt while listening to classical music, to donate to underserved families in Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

Sister Susan Jenny understands the benefit of having support with insurance services at a time when it is most needed. "I don't know what I'd do without Sister Jon Frances!" exclaimed Sister Susan. "She's been an advocate for me when confusing charges appear on my medical bills. She understands both government programs and our private insurance policies. When she says, 'Just send that bill to me and I'll take care of it,' I relax, knowing that she'll research, write letters, and make phone calls on my behalf until everything is resolved."

With a great sense of humor and a gracious personality, Sister performs her duties in humility, simplicity, and charity to support the common life of her community. Having an advocate like Sister Jon Frances is a great blessing to the Sisters of Charity.



Celebrating the SHU Centennial



Seton Hill University is a hallmark of the vision shared by two gallant women. The first is Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, foundress of the Sisters of Charity, for whom the school is named. Elizabeth educated students with faith values in order to fit them for the world in which they were destined to live. The second is Mother Aloysia Lowe, who purchased the Seton Hill property and the former Stokes mansion for the Sisters of Charity, envisioning the hill as a wonderful academic setting.

The Reverend Daniel Richard Sullivan, president of Seton Hill College from 1924 to 1931, acknowledged Mother Lowe's foresight by engraving a key to the Stokes mansion building with these words: "I opened not merely the door of this house. I swung the gates of an era." This year, Seton Hill University celebrates a 100-year legacy of love in the service of higher education that began with the vision of "our founders." Sister Maureen O'Brien, Director of Campus Ministry at Seton Hill University, shares with us her gratitude for this legacy and vision of how Catholic education in the Setonian tradition will continue on "the Hill" into the next century.



Sister Maureen O'Brien



January 26, 2018, marked a significant moment in the history of Seton Hill University as the Community gathered to "swing the gates of a new era," a new century in the life of the Institution.

In preparing for the Centennial Year, we pause to give thanks for all that has been and to look forward to the "new" in this century which lies before us.

We cherish the memory of those courageous women who, in spite of countless obstacles, kept their eyes on the prize of a new beginning. We stand on the shoulders of countless women who shaped our past, our present, and continue to shape our future. Did our foundresses have a glimpse of "what could be" as they forged ahead in spite of challenges and obstacles?

Countless changes have taken place in these 100 years: new buildings, new programs, challenging athletic programs, expansion, technological advancement and so much more. What has remained constant is our identity as a Catholic Liberal Arts College/University rooted in the spirit of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and the Sisters of Charity, her daughters. The four pillars which define us are as strong and steady as they were 100 years ago: Welcoming, Learning, Celebrating, and Serving.

The charge of the Office of Campus Ministry is to enable our students, staff, and faculty to live these pillars, to live our Setonian tradition at its best. The challenge of this Centennial Year is to deepen our commitment to our Mission, to make it visible to the world. In the words of Elizabeth Seton: "to transform that world in which we are destined to live".

Students are eager to be agents of transformation in that world which can place obstacles in their way. We, along with them, realize that defining and living the principles of Catholic Social Teaching can be a formidable task. But, we continue to Hazard Yet Forward; 100 Years Forward!

When asked to respond to the query, "What does the Centennial mean to you as a member of the Class of 2018, the Centennial Class, Fitzgerald Robertson responded:

"To me, the centennial celebration highlights how well Seton Hill's mission and vision are incorporated into academic and extracurricular life. As a graduating senior entering into my final semester, I have had time to reflect on the total panorama of my experience at Seton



Sister Maureen shows Fitz Robertson where she was sitting for the 1975 Canonization of Elizabeth Ann Seton in Rome on a picture of the event appearing on the "Centennial Wall" displayed at Seton Hill University. The mural depicting milestone events of the University's 100-year history is located in the second floor hallway of the Administration Building.

Hill I am proud to be a member of a community that is rooted in strong traditions that guide us to become strong, compassionate and grounded leaders, with firm ethical and moral compasses. The centennial celebration also serves as a charge to the graduating seniors to ensure that we use our unique educational experience to enhance and impact our local, national and global communities."

We will continue to celebrate the Centennial throughout 2018 in ways spectacular and simple. As we remember, celebrate and look forward, we are reminded of the words of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton: "Look up, and be thankful for the good that yet remains".

Sisters who are currently serving at Seton Hill University include: Sisters Lois Sculco, Ann Infanger, and Vivien Linkhauer (seated from left to right) and Sisters Maureen O'Brien, Mary Kay Neff, Victoria Marie Gribbschaw, and Susan Yochum (standing from left to right).





8.11.2017

INTERVIEW WITH DR. JAMES J. KELLY

by Julia Trimarchi Cuccaro, Esq., Director of Development for the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill

This is the seventh in a series of *Celebration* interviews that applaud the remarkable accomplishments of some of our friends, contributors, partners, and volunteers. These are people who in some way demonstrate a great appreciation for their communities and for the mission of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill. This interview is with Dr. James J. Kelly, who is a 1967 graduate of Saint Anselm High School and past president of Menlo College in the Silicon Valley town of Atherton, California. Two Christmases ago, Jim sent us a lovely card, writing that he was happy to see Ken Gormley's Interview in *Celebration* and photos of some of the sisters who taught him at Saint Anselm. "It is nice to know," he wrote, "that this same group of sisters produced two university presidents." However, in Jim's case, he has an added bonus—Sister Patrice Hughes' father delivered him! Jim and his sister, Mary Ann Raymer, who also attended Saint Anselm, visited us at Caritas Christi last August. Several members of the Saint Anselm faculty were there to meet them, including Sisters Joan Marie Madden and Marie Therese (Sister Paul Marie) Rishel. It was in Sister Paul Marie's classroom that Jim and his classmates first learned of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Q: Jim, how did a man born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and educated at Saint Anselm School by the Sisters of Charity end up in California's Silicon Valley?

A: Well, after getting my PhD from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, I received an opportunity to work in gerontology and social work at the University of Hawaii. While finishing up a post-doctoral fellowship at UCLA, I met a doctor and fell in love! We stayed in Los Angeles, and forty-three years later, we are still together and happily married. You know when I worked in Hawaii, Sister Marie George, who taught me Algebra at Saint Anselm, came to take classes at the aging institute I led. She studied how to help the elderly. Sister ran the Alzheimer's unit at Assumption Hall. She was an amazing person who made me show up after school every day until I learned Algebra. During World War II, she taught aviation to military folks. She was an amazing person.

Q: Yes, I've heard about her. Speaking of amazing, your career is very broad. You are a professional social worker, having taught at California State University, Long Beach, for seventeen years. You then became the Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences at California State University, Los Angeles, before becoming the Interim Provost for Academic Affairs at Cal State, East Bay. From 2005 to 2006, you administered the East Bay Small Business Development Center for Alameda County, California, with the U.S. Small Business Administration, before serving as the president of Menlo College from 2011 until 2014. Menlo went from a two year to a four year institution under your leadership and has a tremendous business program. How in the world did you move from social work to business?

A: It was an evolution. I come from a business family. My uncle owned a bar in Braddock, and he had the true spirit of an entrepreneur. At Cal State I solved problems. They moved me around to save struggling programs. I am mission driven, and I love to start growth by enhancing the mission of a program. I worked in health programs and continuing education programs, and then had the opportunity to move over to Menlo College. It's a private school that concentrates on business, but it was floundering at that time. At Menlo, I became very interested in working on business and ethics. I like to say that I inherited a job where the past president described the place as a capitalistic institution, and I turned it into a Catholic institution with a provost who had been a Catholic priest and a former nun who was the Dean of Arts and Sciences!

Q: Oh yes, Dr. Marilyn Thomas! She gave a beautiful tribute to graduates in the Menlo Magazine in which she said, "I admired some of you because you were such devoted athletes or musicians, or because you had such winning and caring personalities, or maybe because of the grace with which I saw you handle pain and loss in your lives. In

short your lives were my chief concern." Menlo's website shows a list of the school's core values: understanding different ideas and individuals, treating people with fairness and equity, protecting the local and global environment, and considering one's responsibilities to others. In my mind, this is a vision that necessitates a deep respect for human diversity. These themes are studied in liberal arts programs, but why is this important in business?

A: I loved being in charge of Menlo and seeing students grow up and develop the beginning of their professional lives in a good way. Business is global and global business requires an understanding of diversity. Take languages. We require two semesters of a foreign language other than English or French. It's the practical reality of a global world. It's an evolution. I am a person who progressed in diversity. I came from an all-white, blue-collar background, as we all did at Saint Anselm. Eventually, I ended up in Hawaii that was at that time the most diverse state in the union. And then California. I'm grateful that the Sisters of Charity gave me the background to embrace and respect others. I think it's the key to our long term survival.

Q: Why do you think that?

A: Because diversity is related to inclusion, and my entire career, particularly the social work, has focused on inclusion. It's how we grow and prosper.

Q: I can see that Menlo has an extraordinarily diverse student body. Here in Western Pennsylvania, we simply do not have the population diversity of California, but some of our colleges are really starting to concentrate on it, particularly in Pittsburgh and here in Greensburg at Seton Hill.

A: To do it right, every school needs a niche. We had 17 sports teams when I was at Menlo. Title IX has had a big impact in terms of equity. Out of our entire campus population, about 15% were African American, 50% were nonwhite, and 12% were international students. Our football team alone had 125 students. Since we were such a small school for a football team, our players got to travel all over the country for games. Think of that exposure.

Q: My favorite question in these interviews is to ask if there is a particular person in your life who has meant a great deal to you spiritually. Who is that for you?

A: Oh I'd have to say my mother, Margaret Genevieve Hughes Kelly. She came from an Irish Catholic family. My grandmother came to Canada with nine children in tow and eventually made her way to Braddock, Pennsylvania. My mother was a teacher in the public school in Braddock. Her faith was the most important thing in her life. She lived her faith every day and always wanted to know "what are we doing for other people?" She was particularly interested in social welfare projects. We attended Saint Anselm Parish and had six children in our family. Sister Patrice Hughes' father delivered all of us. My mother's best friend was Sister Marie Louise Hummel. She was strong. I come from a family of strong women, and I was educated by strong women!

Q: Thank you Jim. I'm so glad you and Mary Ann came to visit us. It's been a pleasure!

Mary Ann Raymer and her brother, Dr. James Kelly, enjoyed a visit to Caritas Christi last summer. Both were students of the Sisters of Charity at Saint Anselm School.



Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill

DePaul Center

144 DePaul Center Road

Greensburg, PA 15601-1253

724-836-0406

412-243-4651 (Pgh.)

724-836-8280 (FAX)

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Greensburg, PA

Permit No. 434

Upcoming Events

January 1, 2018 – February 28, 2018

Lucky Spring Cash Ticket —

March

Available for purchase

DePaul Center, Greensburg

724-836-0406, x6646

Sunday, March 11, 2018

Lenten Visit and Vespers

Caritas Christi, Greensburg

2:00 p.m. – Visit and Refreshments

3:30 p.m. – Solemn Vespers

724-836-0406, x6643

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Sister Mary Schmidt Lecture

Craig Mousin, DePaul University

Seton Hill University, Greensburg

Saturday, March 24, 2018

Sounds of Charity Concert

In honor of the Seton Hill

*University Centennial Celebration,
guests will enjoy live performances
of music and dance by*

Seton Hill University students.

Benefits the Ministries of the

Sisters of Charity

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. – McKenna Center

Seton Hill University, Greensburg

724-836-0406, x6615

April 1, 2018 – May 31, 2018

Summer Fun Cash Ticket —

June

Available for purchase

DePaul Center, Greensburg

724-836-0406, x664

SAVE THE DATE

10TH Annual SOUNDS OF CHARITY

03.24.18

McKENNA CENTER | SETON HILL UNIVERSITY
6:30 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

Featured Entertainment
THE WALLY GINGERS ORCHESTRA

✦ Sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill

Celebrating with Seton Hill University a 100 year legacy of love in the service of higher education.

EARLY-BIRD TICKETS
\$45 until March 2

TICKETS
\$60 after March 2

www.scsh.org

Doors Open at 6:30 p.m.
Hors d'oeuvres, Raffle Baskets,
Silent Auction, Cash Bar

Music & Dancing Begin at 7:30 p.m.

Free shuttle service available from parking lot E.

Reservations for groups of 8 or 10 are available for early-bird patrons.
Call Terri Murphy at 724-836-0406, ext. 6615.

All proceeds benefit the mission and ministries of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill.