

Serving the Dear Neighbor



NEWS FROM MOUNT ST. JOSEPH

137 MOUNT ST. JOSEPH ROAD, WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

Love of Neighbor Brings Many Together for Days of Service



Hundreds of sisters, associates, friends, and supporters of the Congregation of St. Joseph gathered on October 15 and April 29 in churches, ministries, and other organizations (some founded by our sisters), as well as in other locations across the United States for our congregational service days.

Here are just a few photos of faces and places where we served in West Virginia. A big **THANK YOU** to all who joined us these days in service to the *dear neighbor!* ●



^ Central Catholic High School students help Sister Mary Alice McMaster, CSJ, sort clothing at Gabriel Project.



^ Sister Mary Palmer, CSJ, and others cleaning and planting at House of Hagar.



^ Students from Wheeling Jesuit University helping Grow Ohio Valley.



^ From left, congregation employee Amy Anderson, Sister Mary Clark, CSJ, congregation employee Cindy Albert and Associate Mary Lou Kent at Marshall County Animal Shelter.



< Associate Georgia Rudol leads the opening prayer at Liza's Place.

The Mount to Get New Labyrinth Ground Breaking Ceremony Held

A ground breaking ceremony for a new prayer labyrinth was held on Tuesday, May 30, 2017, at Mount St. Joseph in Wheeling. A brief program was held at the site which included a welcome by Sister Carol Hannig, CSJ, Coordinator of Community Life and Services at Mount St. Joseph; remarks by Anna Marie Troiani, Executive Director of St. Joseph Retreat Center; and a prayer written by Sister Carol which was recited by all in attendance.

The new labyrinth will be handicap-accessible and will be located closer to the Mount St. Joseph building, replacing the current labyrinth that is located much further away on the hundred-acre property. The new location will enable sisters to have easier access. It will also be used by guests participating in programming or staying at St. Joseph Retreat Center, also located on the property. Funding for the labyrinth came from very generous donations by Mike and Linda Ferns in memory of Mike's mom, Margaret Grace Ferns, and the West Virginia Auxiliary of the Congregation of St. Joseph.

"We are more than happy to help the sisters who do so much but get so little thanks for the work they do. We are making this gift in my mother's memory because the sisters remind me so much of her," explained Mike Ferns.

Auxiliary President, Tiffany Hoffman, added, "Each year the Auxiliary works hard to raise funds for the sisters. We have been able to support many wonderful projects at Mount St. Joseph. We are happy to partner with the Ferns family this year to build the new labyrinth." ●

"A labyrinth is an ancient symbol that relates to wholeness. It combines the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a meandering but purposeful path. The labyrinth represents a journey to our own center and back again out into the world. Labyrinths have long been used as meditation and prayer tools."

*From The Labyrinth: Walking Your
Spiritual Journey*



^ Participating in the ground breaking ceremony from left: Cindy Albert, Center Director at Mount St. Joseph; Sister Mary DiDomenico, CSJ, Sister Liaison to the Auxiliary; Anna Marie Troiani, Executive Director, St. Joseph Retreat Center; Sister Carol Hannig, CSJ, Coordinator of Community Life and Services at Mount St. Joseph; Linda Ferns, donor; Mike Ferns, donor; Nancy Ferns, Mike's sister; Tiffany Hoffman, Auxiliary President; and Tammy Poppe, Auxiliary Secretary.

Jennifer Berridge Continues Sisters' Legacy at St. John's Home for Children

In January 2016, the sisters and staff at Mount St. Joseph in Wheeling welcomed Candidate Jennifer Berridge. In January 2017, Jennifer began her second year of Candidacy in formation with the Congregation of St. Joseph. The Cleveland, Oh., native has been very busy participating in many activities at Mount St. Joseph and around the community. "The blessings have been many," exclaimed Jennifer. "One of the greatest blessings has been starting a new ministry at St. John's Home for Children last November."

St. John's Home/St. Vincent's Home for Children was opened as an orphanage 161 years ago by Bishop Richard Whelan, the first Catholic Bishop of West Virginia, and the Sisters of St. Joseph. Today it is a home for abused and troubled young boys. Jennifer works as a youth care worker. "It is a privilege to carry on the legacy of the sisters. It is a wonderful



^ CSJ Candidate Jennifer Berridge at St. John's Home along with case manager Cassie Queen.



^ St. John's Home Founders Day Mass in February, 2017. Front row from left: Monsignor Paul Hudock, Pastor St. Vincent Parish in Wheeling; Sisters Mary Alice McMaster, Janice Landwehr, and Kathleen Durkin; and Terry McCormick, Executive Director. Back row from left: Jennifer Berridge, youth care worker; and Roberta Welling, Licensed Psychologist at St. John's Home. Roberta is also Sister Theresa Metz's sibling.

experience," she said. "The boys we work with are in need of great love and kindness. The advice that I received from the sisters remains the same; just love them with your whole heart, and I do."

Reflecting on her time spent in Wheeling, Jennifer said, "I am humbled by all the love and support I've received from the Wheeling sisters, the Congregation of St. Joseph as a whole, and the Wheeling community. Every day, I am being invited to new life in the Lord as I strive to live out our charism of inclusive love of God and neighbor without distinction. St. John's offers me the opportunity to practice this as I continue on my formation journey." ●

If you are interested in learning more about how to become a Candidate with the Congregation of St. Joseph, please visit us online at,

www.csjoseph.org and click on "How To Join Us"

Sister Gretchen Shaffer Ministers to Those in Need at Big Laurel Learning Center



Sister Gretchen Shaffer, CSJ, of Big Laurel Learning Center in Kermit, W.Va., has ministered at the center since 1976, when it first opened as a school. Named after the Big Laurel coal community in Mingo County, the center sits on a 465-acre reserve. The area was designated as a land conservatory in the 1940s by Edwina Pepper to preserve the Appalachian way of life for future generations.

Big Laurel Learning Center hosts visiting college groups in both the fall and spring who immerse themselves in the local community learning about the Appalachian culture, history, and current social challenges. On weekends, the center hosts retreats. “We also are proud of our ecology center, summer camps for kids, tutoring and literacy classes, gardens, and a much needed food pantry,” Sister Gretchen said.

“We have two Notre Dame AmeriCorps members who volunteer their time at the local public school working directly with the students, especially the children most in need. They also assist at the ABL Families’ after school program. Family dysfunction as a result of addiction to drugs is particularly acute in this county, and children suffer the fallout. The two AmeriCorps, Jacob Zondag and Grace Williams, also work with the campers during the summer,” continued Sister Gretchen.

The four residential camps for local children are the highlight of the summer. “These camps are made possible by grants since we serve the neediest children,” explained Sister Gretchen. “We received grants from the congregation in the past for the camps and are grateful for one this year. We also host a Catholic parish who raise funds for supplies and field skilled workers who come for five days of housing repair and rehabilitation. Throughout the summer, we have a steady stream of visitors and volunteers who give service. Big Laurel could not accomplish what we do without the support and generosity of these friends.”

Sister Gretchen and the staff are passionate about gardening at the center. “We started the gardens that we plant, maintain, harvest, and preserve each year. We support the local farm to table movement, although there is really a long tradition in rural West Virginia for growing and preserving food. Still, we have found that among children the gardening skills are sometimes lacking. This spring Big Laurel, under our director Ian Noyes’ leadership, built and planted raised beds at the Kermit K-8 School. This is in collaboration with the school and the summer nutrition/activity program, Energy Express.

Sister Gretchen beautifully sums up her ministry: “In my forty years of working with the very poor, I have learned to take to heart Father Thomas Merton’s advice to a young activist, ‘Do not look for results. Do the work because it is the right thing to do.’ So we cast out bread on the water, so to speak, and try to carry out the challenges of the Gospel and the pastoral letter, *This Land is Home to Me*.” ●

Visit Sister Gretchen on Facebook at Big Laurel Learning Center.



^ Student and mentor during the Ecology Scavenger Hunt.

Associates Support Congregation by Sharing Time, Talent, and Treasure

Associates from our founding community of Wheeling are spread out over most of West Virginia. There are active conversation circles located in Wheeling, Parkersburg, Charleston, Clarksburg, and one that meets electronically by teleconferencing. This one has participants from Virginia, West Virginia, and South Carolina. “We are as varied as our locations, but all remain associates through our commitment to the Generous Promises, prayer, reflection, and community with other associates and sisters,” explained Ann Griffith, Wheeling Associate Director.

There are 42 associates who are connected primarily to our Wheeling Center. All associates, however, share in the spirit and values of the Congregation of St. Joseph, and support our mission and ministries by offering gifts of prayer, volunteer work, ministry occupations, and financial assistance to name a few.

Although most meet regularly through conversation circles or mission circles, it is sometimes difficult for all associates to be together to share the combined commitment. “This past year, two events made it possible for us to be sharing at the same place and same time,” Ann said. The first was the Annual Associate Day in Wheeling in September 2016. This event brings us together every year to celebrate as one. It is an important event that refreshes us and provides support for ongoing mission. The theme was “Woman Spirit Rising,” and was appreciated by all who attended. It was a timely theme and one near and dear to the hearts of associates and sisters. We were grateful to the speaker, Sister Chris Schenk, CSJ, for inspiring us – the women in today’s church,” continued Ann.



^ Associates meet monthly in conversation circles like the one shown above, to share conversation, pray, reflect and discuss congregation news and business. From left: Ann Griffith, Georgia Rudol, Pat Cancilla, Mary Ann Auth, Linda Burris, and Shelly Hill.

The second events were the two congregational service days, one last fall and the other in April of this year. Groups from Wheeling, Parkersburg, and Charleston all participated in their local areas. “These efforts brought a real sense of purpose and oneness for all of us scattered around the state,” said Ann. “Those who could not be there physically participated through prayer or financial support. Prayer is an important contribution and one that is greatly valued and appreciated.” ●

If you are interested in learning more about how to become an Associate of the Congregation of St. Joseph, please visit us online at,

www.csjoseph.org and click on “How To Join Us”



Life at The Mount

Life at Mount St. Joseph is always busy for our sisters. With a wellness clinic, meals out to local restaurants, summer picnics and outings, and holiday activities, just to name a few, there is always something to do!

Spaghetti Dinner Meatball Rolling >
Sisters, employees, and volunteers helped to roll nearly 4,000 meatballs for the annual Spaghetti Dinner and Craft Sale. Record sales were recorded last year for the event, which is held the first Sunday in November each year at Mount St. Joseph.



Milk Shake Social ^

In March, the employees treated the sisters to a milkshake social on the second floor porch. What a wonderful way to spend a wintery afternoon – with good friends, lively conversation, and delicious milk shakes.



Annual Christmas Party ^

Each year, employees host an annual Christmas party for the sisters. This past year, each sister received an ornament and a certificate from our special guest for being good all year. Above, Sister Anne Hoye, CSJ, was happy to receive hers.



Summer Picnic ^

On Wednesday, June 29, 2016, sisters and employees enjoyed competitive games of cornhole while others enjoyed a golf cart ride on the grounds during one of our summer picnics.



Food Day 2017 ^

Master Gardener Martin Wach discusses his bee house design with participants at the third annual Food Day held in March at Mount St. Joseph.



Auxiliary Summer Event ^

Posing for a photo at the Auxiliary's summer social are, from right to left, Sister Carol Hannig, CSJ; Pam Conway, auxiliary board vice-president; Sister Ruthann Scherer, CSJ; and Tiffany Hoffmann, auxiliary board president.



Donated Piano ^

Sister Alicia Weiskircher, CSJ, enjoys playing a baby grand piano that was recently donated for the chapel at Mount St. Joseph.

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of ABLE Families Comes Full Circle



In the early 1990s, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wheeling, West Virginia, resolved to pilot a three-year program in rural West Virginia which provides people in need, particularly women and children, the skills and support to become contributing members of their community and to develop stronger families. The result was ABLE Families, Inc., which was incorporated in 1994 in Kermit, West Virginia, and is currently a sponsored ministry of the Congregation of St. Joseph.

After former executive director Sister Pat Murray, CSJ, left last year for Charleston, W.Va., to pursue her new ministry as a West Virginia Home Visitation Consultant, Marlene Spaulding (above, left) took over as executive director. For Marlene, the new job title has brought her full circle. “I have been with ABLE Families for so many years, it’s a part of who I am,” she proclaimed.

“I started 18 years ago working with the MIHOW (Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker) Program. It is a strength-based, home visitation program that helps mothers gain parenting skills to ensure their children have a brighter future. I eventually trained and became an outreach worker and then went on to become the supervisor of the MIHOW program,” Marlene explained.

“I came to ABLE at 19 years of age with a three-year-old daughter and another baby on the way. Most days I felt like I had no hope of a promising future. The sisters gave me support and encouragement when I needed it most. I have been married 19 years now and have three children ages 21, 18, and 10. Sister Pat encouraged me to go to college, where I learned to balance studying with work,” Marlene continued. “The combination of work, children, and college has been the most challenging thing I have ever done. I completed my associate’s degree. It is an accomplishment that I hold close to my heart. I am now working towards a bachelor’s degree in social work. I have been taking a few classes at a time and am determined to hang in there until I reach this goal,” she said.

Marlene explained her proudest moment since becoming the executive director of ABLE Families: “I invited women from the local Islamic Center to come and spend time in our afterschool program. I prayed about it and felt like it would be an opportunity to put the sisters’ love for all humankind into action. Their love for everyone is so humbling to me. Several Muslim women came and brought Christmas presents for all the children and spent some time simply showing everyone that love crosses all boundaries and differences.”●

HOLY FAMILY RECEIVES GRANT

To Open Much Needed Preschool Classroom

Holy Family Child Care & Development Center opened in 1984 in Wheeling under the sponsorship of the Catholic Diocese and was the brainchild of Sister Barbara Campbell, CSJ. Holy Family became a sponsored ministry of the sisters in 1996. By ministering to children from six weeks of age to five years old, Holy Family provides high-quality early care and education in a nurturing environment that enables each child to grow in body, mind, and spirit. The center also collaborates with Ohio County Schools and has two on-site Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. An important focus is to provide high-quality early education to all children, especially children in lower socio-economic conditions. Through West Virginia's Title XX reimbursement program (WV DHHR), Holy Family provides financial assistance to families who otherwise would not be able to afford childcare.

Holy Family is currently limited by physical space from operating at full capacity of 100 children. To make room for the high enrollment and children on the wait list, Holy Family removed a wall in an area on the second floor to add an additional preschool classroom. "Children age 3½ can be moved into the preschool classroom and remain until they can enroll in the collaborative WV Pre-Kindergarten classroom," explained executive director Michele Forsythe. "The opening of the classroom was



^ Children who attend Holy Family say THANK YOU!

critical to meeting the needs of the current families. Twelve families have begun to deliver new babies and will continue to do so until the fall of 2017. Necessary changes have been made to move nine-month-old babies from the nursery to the Wobbler area to make room for the incoming infants," continued Michele.



The generosity of the sisters and their Generous Promises Grant Fund award has enabled Holy Family to open this second preschool classroom in late spring of 2017. Holy Family is poised to remain a much needed, premier child care center in the Ohio Valley for years to come. ●

JUBILEE 2017



Sister Mary Brown, CSJ
(Sister Emmanuel)

75 Years

"It's wonderful to have what we need and not worry about where our next meal is coming from because we are cared for well."



Sister Ellen Teresa Coughlin, CSJ

70 Years

"I met the sisters in the summer. Their laughter and fun made me want to enter the congregation and share with them."



Sister Berenice Burkle, CSJ
(Sister Damian)

75 Years

"I have traveled many places throughout the hills of West Virginia. God gave me many opportunities to serve His people. This quote comes to mind: 'What I am is God's gift to me. What I become is my gift to God.'"



Sister Mary Palmer, CSJ
(Sister Mary Robert)

60 Years

"My life has been one of gratitude. At every phase there were sisters, family, and friends who supported and encouraged me through good times and bad times."



Sister Rosalie Bucci, CSJ
(Sister Delphine)

70 Years

"I truly believe that one finds God in laughter, joy, and happiness. I love my religious family, and I felt their love for me."



Sister Judith Ann Teufel, CSJ

60 Years

"My life has been filled with wonderful, meaningful relationships and experiences all along the way that have gifted me, amazed me, challenged me, and guided me. The great love affair with life has been to live life as variously as possible."

In Memoriam

Sister Ann Hoye, CSJ
(Sr. Macrina)

Entered into eternal life on March 11, 2017, after 67 years of religious life.



We **celebrate** the lives of all our sisters who passed away this year.

Congratulations

to all 41 sisters celebrating Jubilees around the congregation this year! To view full biographies, visit us online at www.csjoseph.org, and click on "Connect With Us" then "Jubilarians."

Message from Leadership

Dear friends,

As part of our Congregation of St. Joseph family, you are an integral part of our efforts to bring the message of God's love to the world in ways that inspire action on behalf of others. Since August 2007, when seven founding communities of St. Joseph came together to be one as the Congregation of St. Joseph, we have experienced the abundance of God's great love through our relationships with each of you.

As we celebrate our 10th year, we celebrate the generosity by which you and others in our communities across the country have embraced us and have continued to support our mission, our ministries, our lives and needs. Your support has enabled us to take risks to broaden our lives, to expand our ministries, and to live our promises in an active and inclusive way. This includes our commitment to care for our sisters and, at the same time, to more fully respond to the emerging needs of our neighbors and our world. New initiatives, ministries, and partnerships, new uses for some of our buildings and land along with new ways and places for our sisters to live in community in some of our locations are all a part of our efforts today. They reflect our vibrancy and compassion and our commitment to stay attentive to the needs of a world in desperate need of our care.

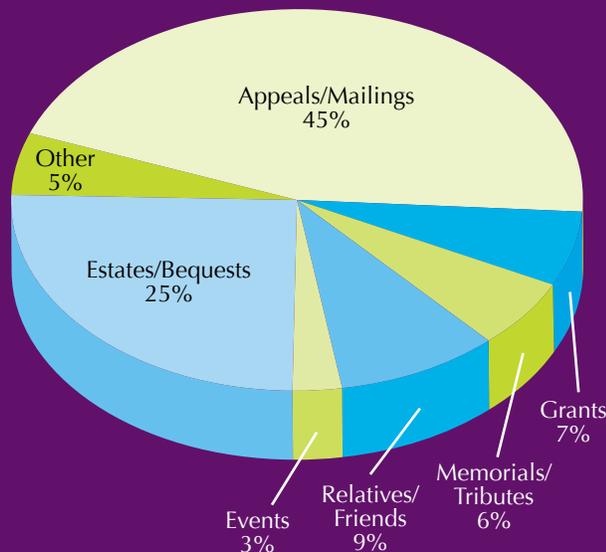
Thank you for helping bring God's message of unifying love to our communities. With your support and prayers, we are moving forward filled with gratitude and hope!

With profound gratitude,

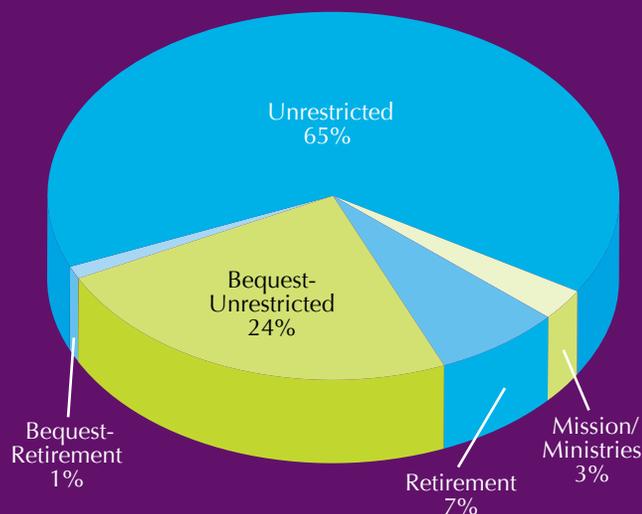
The Congregation of St. Joseph Leadership Team

Annual Giving Report

Revenue Sources



Donor Designated Uses



*This reporting documents the sources and designated uses of the charitable donations received by the congregation in 2016. This includes the gifts received by the congregation that are designated to some of our sponsored ministries while gifts sent directly to our ministries are not included here. We rely on the generous support of our benefactors and openly share how gifts received on behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph are used.

The legacy of caring and mission of our congregation begun by our first six sisters in LePuy, France, more than 360 years ago continues today because of the support provided by donors and friends. There are many ways you can help including through your prayers, direct annual gifts, membership in our Circle of Friends monthly sustaining donor circle, and through your will and estate plans.

To learn more, please contact Gary Mulhern at 304.232.8160, ext. 148, or visit www.csjoseph.org.



137 Mount St. Joseph Road
Wheeling, WV 26003-1762

 This newsletter is printed on recycled paper

Spotlight Photo



Kate Marshall, Facilitator at House of Hager in Wheeling and Sister Christine Riley, CSJ, take a moment to reflect during the October 15, 2016 service day.

Stay Connected...

There are many ways to stay connected to the sisters, associates, and ministries of the Congregation of St. Joseph:



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Sign up to receive our bimonthly eNewsletter. Visit our homepage at www.csjoseph.org



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Sign up to receive our sister-written blog, Beyond the Habit



Sign up to receive our biannual magazine *imagineONE*. Go to www.csjoseph.org, click on "Connect With Us"

Upcoming Events...

Closing Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Congregation

Sunday, August 6, 2017
Mount St. Joseph

Annual Associates and Sisters Meeting

September 8-10, 2017
Mount St. Joseph

Auxiliary Gala

Thursday, October 5, 2017
Location TBD

29th Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Craft Sale

Sunday, November 5, 2017
Mount St. Joseph

Advent Evening by the Fire

Thursday, December 7, 2017
St. Joseph Retreat Center

Advent Day of Reflection

Saturday, December 9, 2017
Mount St. Joseph Chapel

Auxiliary Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, December 10, 2017
Wilson Lodge, Oglebay Park

For more information, please call [304.232.8160](tel:304.232.8160)
Reservations required for events.