



Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill

# Celebration



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**Editor:** Bob Fetter  
**Graphics Editor:** Sister Mary Kay Neff

**Editorial Board:**  
Sister Jean Augustine  
Sister Carole Marie Blazina  
Sister Barbara Einloth  
Sister Brigid Marie Grandey  
Sister Louise Grundish  
Sister Susan Jenny  
Sister Mary Noël Kernan  
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SISTERS OF CHARITY

SETON HILL



# Mission Statement

The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill is an 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.

*Mission Statement*



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## A Letter from Sister Vivien Linkhauer

Dear Friends,

"A thousand ages in thy sight are like an evening gone.." begins one of the verses of O God Our Help in Ages Past. Despite the fact that our inability to capture and hold on to time frustrates us, we do mark certain periods as being important to us, be they days, decades or centuries.

The year 2009 was such an occasion for the Sisters of Charity. It marked the Bicentennial of our founding by Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton as a religious congregation and also the end of our first decade at Caritas Christi, our new motherhouse. This issue of Celebration emphasizes our gratitude and thanksgiving for the gifts received that are God's pure bounty to us, the many partners who grace our everyday lives – staff members, volunteers, medical professionals and all of you who visit and support us.

In the years that Caritas Christi has been open, so many of our visitors remark, "What a peaceful place this is!" and "There is certainly a lot of life here. You can feel it as soon as you enter the door!" Our senior members are such an example to us! They help each other in a myriad of ways: reading to those who can no longer read; praying with those who are bound to their rooms; playing a lively game of cards; putting jigsaw puzzles together or just stopping in to say hello to a sister who is not feeling well or who has lost a loved one. We are pleased to share "the stuff of our lives" with you so that you recognize how very much you mean to us. We continue to pray daily for "all those who have done us good." You are certainly among that number!

In Christ's love,

Sister Vivien Linkhauer

## Exploring the Archives

Entering Caritas Christi, one can view - from the Atrium - the Heritage Room of the Archives. When the Community gathered on October 16, 1999 for homecoming and with benefactors and friends on October 17, 1999 tour guides remarked that this room contained some of the most treasured items, artifacts and furnishings of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill. Those on tour remarked on the beauty of the writing desk of Mother Aloysia Lowe, first superior of the Congregation, and stood in awe of the statue of the Blessed Mother which miraculously survived the Johnstown Flood, along with the sisters assigned to St. John Gualbert Convent in May, 1889.

Items large and small tell stories of women who laid the foundation and moved in their day with deliberation and courage.

On Sunday, October 17, 1999 this brief blessing was prayed at the Electa Boyle Archives, the culmination of dreams of the Archivists, past and present. Sister Sara Louise Reilly stood proudly and humbly as the sisters and gathered guests prayed.

*"God our Creator,  
the heavens declare your glory  
and earth proclaims your handiwork.  
Bless this Archives  
which maintain and preserve the history  
of the Sisters of Charity.  
May the treasures housed here  
be available to all who seek to honor You  
by celebrating your Provident care  
of the Congregation.*

Ten years have passed since those excitement filled days. The quiet room lends itself to reading and reflection, but also pulses with the memories of past days. Over the years it has witnessed the displays of Sisters of Charity history as women leaders of radio and television, founders of day cares, writers of books and researchers of doctoral dissertations. There are simple items to be viewed such as Mother Aloysia Lowe's paint box and Mother Rose Genevieve Rodgers' embroidery scissors.

The Archives area is named for Sister M. Electa Boyle, the first archivist and author of the first history of the Congregation. She preserved valuable history in small and cramped space from 1954 until 1967. The archivist who followed, Sister Theresa Clare Kernan, along with her friend Sister Regina Clare Breig, worked in a small room in the ground floor of St. Joseph Hall at Seton Hill from 1968 until 1981. Sister Sara Louise Reilly began her work as archivist in 1981 and had the daunting task of moving the archives on four occasions. Additionally, it is to Sister Sara Louise that the Congregation owes a great debt of gratitude for organizing the records for easy access. It is difficult to imagine the work involved in moving from Seton Hill to DePaul Center, from one area of DePaul Center to an archival annex, and finally to the state of the art archives in Caritas Christi. In 1995, Sister Sara Louise turned the Archivist duties over to Sister Mary Catherine Seli, who had served as her assistant for a few years. In 2006, a new Archivist, Sister Louise Grundish, was named.

The Heritage Room introduces one to the past. Further quests lead sisters and others to research and meet the persons, the stories and the records which document the governance, the mission and the significant events of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity from founding days to the present. Packed safely in archival boxes and file cabinets in the climate controlled Record Room and organized with finders guides, sisters and others are encouraged to visit and research history to keep alive the story and to help to understand the Congregational, regional and church history which impacts life to the present.

What might one find among the archival treasures? There are records of business activities, minutes of Sisters of Charity Board of Directors and Council meetings, documentation of Chapters, meetings where Sisters set forth the direction for coming days and records of election.

There are also files of sisters who have died and pictures of buildings, people and events through the years.

One preserved treasure which is guarded with extreme care is St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's FOLLOWING OF CHRIST. This book which contains notations in the margins by Elizabeth herself was used to prove that she was baptized since the records of her baptism had been destroyed in a fire.

In September 2009 when Regina House was part of the Westmoreland Historical Society House Tour, the organizers of the tour were ecstatic when



Sister Mary Catherine Seli (left) and Sister Miriam Rita Kelsey (right) work diligently in the Electa Boyle Archives at Caritas Christi.

they found in the Archives architectural blue prints and actual drawings of the iron work used on the keyholes and door frames of Regina House.

The Archives staff welcome visitors and are happy to tell the stories, find the proper boxes and share the pictures and artifacts which bring history alive. Efforts are in progress to digitalize some of the records so that they may be found in a virtual museum and be accessible to more people.

It is good to pause and give thanks for those whose vision recognized the need to preserve the history and records which celebrate the past but direct future generations on the journey. The Archives celebrate life.



## Opens New Doors For Staff, Clients

**A** new facility gave hope for bigger and better things for the Senior Day Care Center Program. However, it was the combination of new space and familiar faces that has helped the Monahan Center and its staff to flourish over the last decade.

Coming from a tiny area at Assumption Hall, the small staff hoped that upgraded resources would open new doors for the participants in their program. The program was moved to Doran Hall for two years after the demolition of Assumption Hall.

"The main thing we knew we had coming to Monahan (Center) was space," said Peggy Cook, Coordinator of the Westmoreland Ombudsman Program. "Obviously we had a lot of things change, but the space was right at the top of the list. When we initially found out, we jumped for joy about the space we were going to be getting."

"We also have a beautiful view now that we have windows," Peggy added. "Our world has just opened up in a lot of different ways. It's great to just have so much more access to the public."

Peggy mentioned that one of the major advantages brought about by the facility is the ability to have more people come in and to be able to recruit more actively.

"We used to meet recruits at Eat N' Park or somewhere else outside of the office," Peggy said. "Now not only can we have recruits come in, we are also able to have volunteers visit with us."

"We also are able to host training sessions," Peggy added. "Because of the space, we have been able to add things like TVs and VCRs for training sessions."

As the state of Pennsylvania has added more components to the program, Monahan Center has

been able to keep pace with the programs in all of the surrounding counties.

There are currently two full-time employees working in the program which oversees 20 clients, the maximum number of clients for which the center is licensed at one time. However, 36 clients are registered to come in three times each week.

Renee Venturella, Coordinator of Adult Day Services, has also seen the benefits of moving to the Monahan Center over the last 10 years.

Renee started at Seton Center in 1998.

Renee experienced the transition from Doran Hall to the Monahan Center after Assumption Hall was demolished. The activity room at Assumption Hall was the original site of the program.

"The wing we are in was built and structured specifically for the day care center," Renee said.

"The room at Doran (Hall) was a meeting room."

"One of the founding ideas of it (the program), is that the more you keep these people active, challenged and socialized, the more you retard the rate of dementia and Alzheimer's,"

Monahan Center is the home of the Elizabeth Seton Adult Day Care Center, which provides care for lay people with cognitive or physical impairments.

Renee said. "Man is a social being. When people sit alone everyday in their homes, they are going to deteriorate at a faster rate."

The Sisters moved to the Monahan Center in October 1999 and the program moved over November 15, 1999.

"The job has become much easier because of adaptation," Renee said. "With staying current with state standards, we are able to offer a lot of different things to people with a lot of different interests."

"Part of the adaptation is the embellishments and refinements that make it more conducive to be a day care," Renee added. "There are five square feet for every client, which may not sound like a lot, but makes things much more comfortable."



Monahan Center is the home of the Elizabeth Seton Adult Day Care Center, which provides care for lay people with cognitive or physical impairments.

The directors are also now able to focus better on the administrative part of their jobs in private offices rather than having their work space in an open area on the floor of the center.

"I don't spend a lot of time in my office because I really like being out with all of the action," Renee said. "I enjoy all of the interaction we get to have with our clients."

"There is a time for work, though, and it helps a lot to have a quiet place to go to take care of paper work."

## Family Affair:

# Robin Lucchetti

**I**n today's workplace and in these trying economic times, longevity among employees is a rare commodity. Commitment to a job - to a ministry - does still exist among people who are part of the Caritas Christi community and have been part of the larger Charity community for many years. These people are not just employees. They are a blessing and gift to all the sisters who recognize and celebrate them as part of the family.

Robin Lucchetti is one of those people. Daily, she cares for the sisters at Caritas Christi just as she did for the sisters at Assumption Hall. Over her 42 years working in the dietary department, she has progressed from a food service aide to the head of the department, from a tray carrier to a certified dietician. Robin has a long family history with the sisters. Her grandparents worked in the kitchen at Assumption Hall. Her mother, Mary Lou Bell, began working there in 1966, while her brother spent time there as did two of her uncles. It was a family effort. There was a special bond formed over those many years with the senior sisters which still persists in Robin's life and service.

The kitchen and the food service staff received a special blessing when Caritas Christi was opened 10 years ago.

"God of nourishment and provider of all that we need, bless this kitchen and those who will work here. Nourish and feed all who serve in this noble work with your own blessing and presence."

This blessing has borne a hundredfold for all concerned, for the staff who give of themselves lovingly to the sisters, and for the sisters who accept their caring joyfully and with gratitude.

The "...blessing and presence" of Robin Lucchetti can be seen in her relationship with the entire food service staff. She models a way of being that shows her love of the sisters and exudes respect for them and for each person with whom she works. She and her staff have been our partners in the work of Charity, but more they are "family."

If length of service is any indication of commitment, Robin has been an asset in many ways. She sees her life among us as a "noble work" and expresses faithfulness by her gentle presence among all of us, staff and sisters alike. She is a gift and a blessing for which we are grateful.



Robin Lucchetti socializes with Sister Joan McGinley in the Ice Cream Parlor at Caritas Christi.

*"God of nourishment and provider of all that we need, bless this kitchen and those who will work here. Nourish and feed all who serve in this noble work with your own blessing and presence."*



Robin Lucchetti talks with Audrey Schulteis in the kitchen at Caritas Christi.

One of the many beautiful panes of stained glass that allow sunlight to brighten the Chapel of the Assumption at Caritas Christi.

# The Spirit of Caritas Christi

Six sisters  
playing cards on  
Sunday afternoon  
looked up when I

asked, "I'd like to write an

article about what the spirit is at Caritas

Christi. Can anyone tell me what you

like or dislike about it." Then came the

chorus: "I love it here!" "They've thought

of everything!" "I feel like I'm living with

about 80 close friends because everyone

is so nice to me!" "Yes, even the workers.

The men in maintenance, the girls in

housekeeping, the aides, the nurses,

everyone." And the latest resident smiled.

"And I'll never, ever have the trouble of

packing and moving to a new place!"

Like most people, the residents of Caritas Christi bear both the grace and the burden of growing old. After lives of service, they now enjoy being together at their beautiful home which celebrated its tenth anniversary this past year. "But," as one sister put it, "the graces of companionship, love, entertainment, and daily living make the burdens of illness small in comparison. We all truly love this place. It is our motherhouse. It is our home. Here we have the leisure to volunteer wherever we see a need!"

The peaceful rhythm of the days at Caritas Christi speaks much about the Motherhouse name, "Caritas Christi," the love of Christ. The congregation's motto has always been "Caritas Christi Urget Nos" (The love of Christ urges us). Hence the name of our motherhouse.

The fact is, "we feel that love every day, throughout the house," says Sister Mary Catherine Couchenour. "I'm grateful for so many things. Daily help from our wonderful aides in getting ready to meet the day. And I have this well-equipped wheelchair which enables me to go almost anywhere through the building, and sometimes even downtown for shopping. All I have to do is call "Access."

One of the most recent residents is Sister Kathleen Dorman, who came to Caritas Christi September 1, 2009. Soon she fell in love with Caritas Christi's beauty and peace. But she found the pace of living here surprising. "There's just so much to do here, I can't even get to everything." Among the things Sister Kathleen does get to are taking Holy Communion to those who can't attend Mass, helping less able sisters at games of Bingo, and taking charge of their walkers when they go to the parlor called Heavenly Delights for "bagels and brew."

"All the sisters seem to look out for one another" according to many who were asked for what was the first thought they had in describing Caritas Christi. "God has greatly blessed us" nearly every resident responds. Called "the most welcoming place in the world," by many visitors, the residents find it so as well. Best of all, says Sister Beatrice McQuade, is everyone's attitude. "Every sister and every single employee seems genuinely happy to be part of Caritas Christi. Their kindness and thoughtfulness are incredible—but are so real!"

When I asked Alice Haine why she so generously gives her time each week to volunteer, she exclaimed, "I truly love it here. This is like home to me! And I love everyone who comes here!"

"I do like to keep busy," declared Sister Marie Patrick Sullivan as she sat down to a game of Scrabble with Sister Antonine Forbeck and Seton Family member Bernie Brazill. From selling incidentals every Tuesday evening from her "Hospitality Cart" to daily assisting Sacristan Sister Rosaire Wilker, lecturing, visiting the sick sisters, occasionally going as a companion with a sister to her doctor's appointment, to learning to use a computer, Sister Marie Patrick is always on the go.

Since arriving at Caritas Christi, Sister Antonine has been giving most of her free time to the flowers in the chapel. She picks and plants, grows and buys, cultivates and arranges the lovely arrangements that add much to the beauty of daily liturgies in the chapel. "The only trouble is it takes just as much time to take arrangements apart as to put them together," she murmurs. Like Sister Anna Marie Miller, who helped to create and maintain

the ambiance of the newly established motherhouse, she finds that flowers fill her life.

"What I notice is how everyone seems to look out for everyone else," says Sister Miriam Ellen Chalmers. Sister Frances Louise Honeychuck is one example. She arranges to read the weekend's prayers with some sisters who are nearly blind. Each Saturday and Sunday finds her going at Vespers time to Room 206 to read with Sisters Mary Giles Brandt, Marie Sullivan, and Teresina Bridges. "We really love this time of praying together where we can hear every word," says Sister Marie.

Another place everyone loves, the very center of Caritas Christi, is the chapel whose windows by Sister Mary Francis Irvin make the beauty of God's creation blend with devotional symbols. "It is the heart of our home," say many sisters.

"That looks like so much work," I whispered as I leaned over the card table where Sisters Therese Burns and Miriam Rita Kelsey were working on another jig-saw puzzle... "No way! This is fun!" exclaimed both puzzle masters as they assiduously sorted the pieces by color before beginning the edges. Almost daily, both sisters spend at least a few minutes at the puzzle table to enjoy creating beautiful pictures from the tiny pieces of cardboard.

Every Sunday and Wednesday finds a group of sisters in the Third floor community room waiting to play their card game. As they say, "It's not just the game—it's fun to get together this way. We look forward to it." Another favorite activity is Sister Deborah Kelly's use of the computer, along with many e-mail devotees. Favorite computer games for the sisters include FreeCell, Solitaire, Spider solitaire, Bejeweled, and MahJong.



Veronica's Garden creates a peaceful environment outside Monahan Center.

Sister Clementine O'Friel tells of coming to Caritas Christi nearly ten years ago, on July 20, 2000. "I came with my sister, Sister Cornelia, just after we both retired from Sacred Heart parish in Altoona. I was given this room, 305, where I still live, and Sister Cornelia was in 308. We both had such beautiful views to enjoy." Sister Cornelia had severe osteoporosis

before her death three years ago. "Before that, she was my whole life. I spent every possible minute with her, going to her therapy, staying in her room. I was lost when she died. But through the kindness of the sisters here, I was helped through my mourning. They taught me genuine friendship." Like so many other sisters, Clementine "truly loves it here."

Veronica's Garden is a popular place for sisters to relax in the springtime.



# Housekeeping Works Hard To Preserve “New Building” Feel

“The building is 10 years old? It looks like new!” is an exclamation often heard from visitors to Caritas Christi.

Much of the credit for the continuous “new” look at Caritas Christi, and most of the credit for the complete lack of any kind of dirt, goes to the Housekeeping Staff.

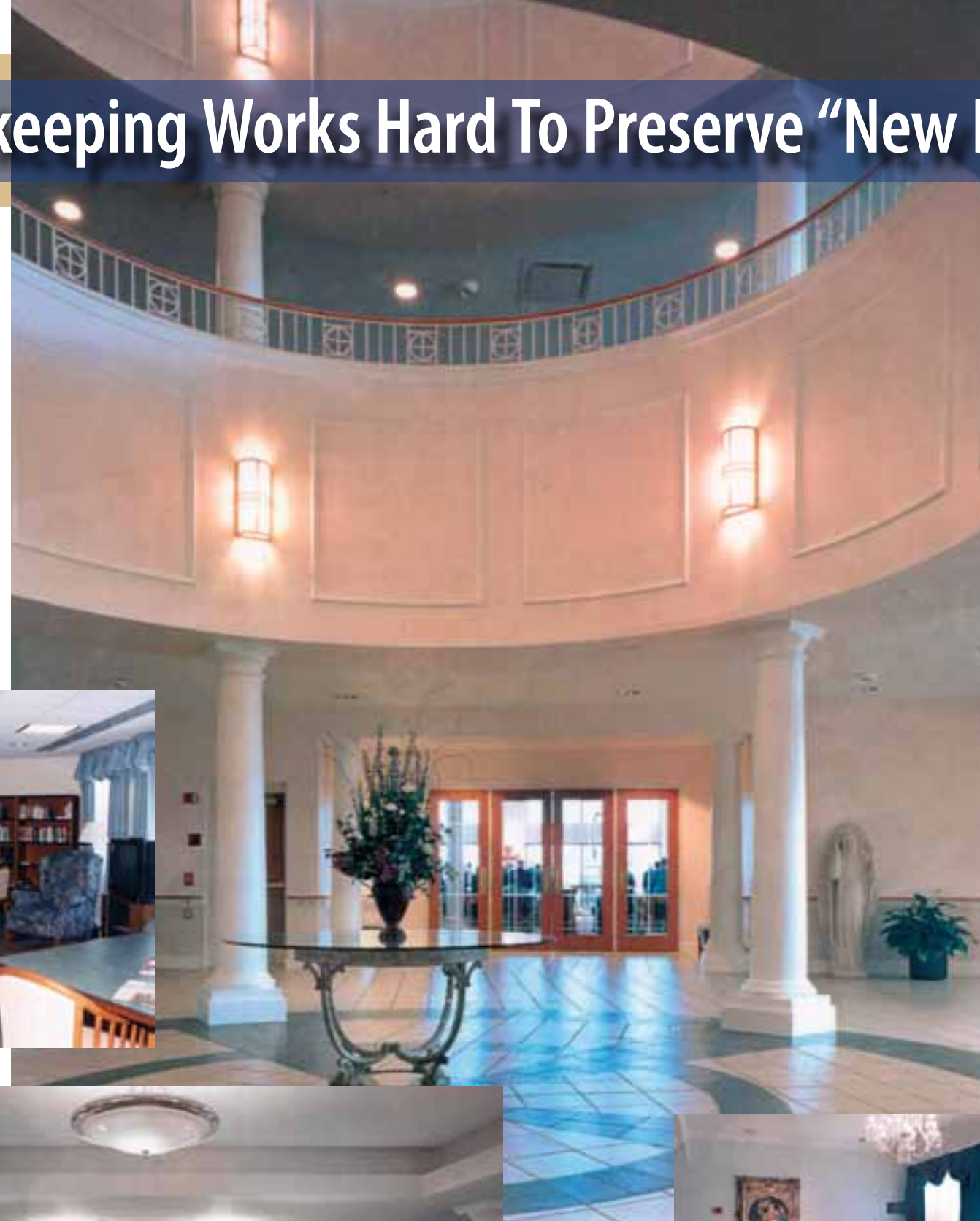
These 11 women clean five buildings, including Caritas Christi with its three floors, bedrooms and large areas; DePaul Center office building; the public areas of Doran Hall and Ennis Hall and the McGowan Maintenance Building. The Housekeeping Department is also responsible for the laundry done for about half the Caritas Christi residents, as well as for other departments. The Housekeeping Manager is responsible for getting all carpets cleaned yearly and for arranging the cleaning of all windows on the Sisters of Charity complex.

When the housekeeping staff attacks an area, it is a regular “blitz.” They arrive with carts, move with amazing speed and efficiency and leave a perfectly clean area — even the pillars in the atrium are cleaned.

And how do members of the Housekeeping Staff feel about their work at Caritas Christi?

“Working for the Sisters of Charity at Caritas Christi is very rewarding,” Lead Housekeeper Susan Seman says. The appreciation and respect that is shown by the sisters makes the job we do much easier. Caritas Christi is a beautiful place, and we in the housekeeping department work hard to keep it that way. Also, the relationships that we build here go beyond just a ‘job,’ Susan added. “It is like having a family outside of your immediate family.”

The first Housekeeping Manager at Caritas Christi was Mary McFadden, who had served at Assumption Hall since 1974 and then worked at Caritas Christi until her



retirement in 2002. Mary McFadden’s standards and methods are legendary. Jean Yorio, Mary’s assistant, who had worked for the Sisters of Charity for 22 years, took over as manager and served in that capacity for six years until her retirement in 2008. Jean kept up the standards with thoroughness and enthusiasm.

Since December 23, 2008, Amber Ross has been the Housekeeping Manager. Although Amber had not worked at Caritas Christi a long time when she became manager, she had previous managerial experience and not a cobweb nor a spot was missed in the transition!

Amber feels that in the time she has worked at Caritas Christi, she has been shown great compassion and that there is a sense of belonging that she did not find in other jobs she has had. “Everyone is kind,” Amber said. “And other employees do what they can to help each other out, as well as helping the sisters who live here.”

Amber sees the Housekeeping Staff as a group of 11 hard-working women who take pride in keeping Caritas Christi looking the way it did when it opened.

Not only do members of the Housekeeping Department do an outstanding job, but all the women are pleasant and devoted to the sisters. Needless to say, the sisters are grateful to “Housekeeping” and appreciate their caring ways.

Barbara Stewart, Lead Laundry Person, has worked at Caritas Christi since February, 2000, nearly 10 years. “In the last 10 years I have made many friends,” Barbara says. “The sisters are easy to love and befriend. They make Caritas Christi a nice place to work and you know they care about you and your family. When you need to talk there is always someone. Always prayers, caring and love.”

The atrium at Caritas Christi looks the same today as it did when the doors opened 10 years ago.



Common Area



Resident Lounge



Theodosia Parlor

**“Live Well  
Laugh Often  
Love Much”**

As new Sisters enter Caritas Christi to live they are welcomed home by a staff of nurses, aides, and specialized care givers who expresses concern that each day be one of life, energy and individual care. Sometimes Sisters arrive after a stay in the hospital. Others come at the end of a long teaching or nursing career. As with all people, the Sisters experience this change as challenging and a bit frightening.

“Many times when Sisters come to Caritas Christi they think their ministry is over. I tell them it is not over but changed,” said Carol Sacks, head of the nursing staff. “They minister to the staff and to one another everyday.”

Carol continues to say that care in Caritas Christi is a partnership. The staff strives to assist each Sister in any area of need in the activities of daily living, while the Sisters help the staff members mentally, physically and spiritually.

The day before Thanksgiving, Carol and Debbie Stevenson, supervisor of Personal Care, shared a lunch with Liane Lamont, Supervisor of the Wellness Center, and Deanna Broccoli, a member of the Wellness Center Staff. They concurred with Carol that the relationships at Caritas are like family. Debbie, who returned to work after a serious bout with cancer, shared how the cards and calls of the Sisters lifted her spirits as she underwent her cancer treatments. Debbie continued to say that since the staff turnover is low, Sisters know the care givers as persons. Carol said that as the nursing staff provides physical, mental or spiritual care to a Sister, the Sister may provide the needed ear to hear

the trials of the care giver, the promise of prayer, the interest in family or just the assurance that help is available. This partnership is strong.

Each of the women present at the lunch shared stories of Sisters who made a difference



Sister M. Canice Smialek works on the balance bars during her rezhabilitation at Caritas Christi.

in their lives. “I just loved Sister Diana Taufer (deceased Dec.21,2004 ),” Liane said. “I so admired her drive and interest in justice. She was an inspiration to me.”

Sister Helen Louise Connelly ( March 4,2005) had a special relationship with Carol.

“I would say, ‘I love you Sister.’ She would reply, ‘Do you love God?’” Carol said. “She prayed for me and for the staff when some of us didn’t know how to pray, didn’t even care to pray or didn’t know to want a prayer.”

Deanna added, “I went into Sister Patricia Maries Stack’s room the other day and said, ‘Hi, Sister, What are you doing?’ She said, ‘praying for you.’”

Carol, Liane, Debbie and Deanna commented that every staff member had her special person and it worked fine because somehow each Sister was particularly special to some member of the staff.

A conversation with Peggy Daniels, a nurse aide who began to work for the Sisters of Charity at Assumption Hall 23 years ago, confirmed the relationship with the sisters.

“This is like caring for my family,” Peggy said. “I tell Sister Mary Francis Irvin that she is my adopted grandmother.”

Frequently, one might observe Peggy during the down times in the early afternoon pushing Sister Mary Francis through the hall into the Heritage Room and pointing out new displays.

Members of the Wellness Center arrive at 5:45 a.m. on cold and blustery winter days, don their bathing suits and are in the exercise pool for a session with the Sisters at 6 a.m. Dr. George Hunter comes every other Friday to provide medical care to the Sisters. This allows them to remain at home in surroundings they find comfortable. Dr. Jon Ewer, Chiropractor, gives treatments to those needing assistance every Thursday. The nursing staff in the second floor wings move from room to room with a cheery greeting, needed medicine, trays, and water pitchers. The nurses and the aides observe the subtle changes in a Sister. They recognize when conversation is more important than medicine. They see that the Sister gets to chapel in time and remind the Sister’s friends of a needed visit.

When a Sister prepares to make the journey to her heavenly home, the staff members are with her. Her physical needs are met gently and efficiently, but the evidence is always there that the care giver is respectful of this special person who has unique gifts and a particular personality.

Sister friends and family members are made comfortable as they pray with the Sister. Often a member of the nursing staff is the last person with a Sister as she breathes her final breath in this life to enter the life to come.

The Sisters of Charity have the custom of welcoming a Sister back home when her body is brought from the undertaker. As the community gathers in the chapel, nurses, aides, and members of the wellness center gather in the atrium to serve as pallbearers who accompany the Sister into chapel and then into the parlor for the wake. Staff members consider this an honor and there is often competition about who will accompany certain Sisters.

Thus Wellness comes full circle. Caritas Christi is a place of life. As Sisters enter they come to the motherhouse much as they did on their first entrance day to the community. As one enters the community one brings hopes, dreams, the gift of oneself, along with some trepidation and concern. On returning home for this new ministry of life one brings a life of service and a myriad of experiences and wisdom. Life continues as staff members and Sisters join in a partnership of caring, compassion and love until God calls each to their new life.

The staff of Caritas Christi has witnessed over the ten years the healing and return to



Liane helps to get a sister prepared for her rehabilitation in the Wellness Center at Caritas Christi.

mission of many Sisters who came following accidents or surgery or serious illness. They have accompanied most of the original resident Sisters on their final journeys. They stand ready every day to welcome new Sisters home and to join with them in the day to day, the celebrations of Community days, and the quiet peace of their home.

Excerpts of the blessings from the Homecoming days of October 16 and 17, 1999 continue:

*“As you healed the paralytic at the pool and granted health to the woman bent over, so bless all those who work here and those who come for healing and health.....”*

*Bless the hands which touch, the voices which comfort, and the ears that listen, not only to the physical needs but to the needs of the heart....”*

*As your son Jesus touched the sick and dying and brought them healing and new life, so too may they create an atmosphere of wellness and vitality with those with whom they work. Protect with your compassionate presence all who will serve here.”*



The health and wellness staff is always willing and able to help sisters.



Sisters attend their daily exercise with Liane Lamont in Elizabeth Ann Hall at Caritas Christi.

Ask them if they remember the day of baptismal ribbons when sisters danced with light. Ask them if they remember jousting with God over the words of Scripture. Or ask if they can hear the bells ringing in jubilation for their sisters celebrating special anniversaries. Most Sisters of Charity will nod, and with a smile, respond, “I surely do!”

When Caritas Christi was envisioned, it fulfilled a dream of Mother Aloysia Lowe who, in searching for property on which to build a

fields” find the welcome mat out whenever they come back to the motherhouse. And they do come back.

Major provincial meetings take place there. For example, a 2002 Chapter reviewed the life of the sisters and the works they do. (A Chapter is a legislative gathering of sisters to “protect the patrimony – the spirit, mission and tradition – of the Institute and to promote suitable renewal.”) Representatives made decisions that impacted how the province was structured; how sisters would pursue a common program of study and prayer; how ministries would incorporate not only direct service but also advocacy for the marginalized; how the province would steward its resources into the future.

renewed not only their religious consecration, but their communion in faith and discipleship. Using water, light, gesture and song sisters celebrated the love of Christ and the power of the Spirit poured out in abundance. A banner of ribbons, each of them noting the name and baptismal date of a sister, still stands in the Atrium. Copies of baptismal certificates accompanied each member as she left that powerful assembly.

“I can’t forget the blessings of that day,” commented one sister, “I was truly overwhelmed!”

Other communal gatherings are a regular part of life at Caritas Christi. Sisters living in the Greensburg area come together three times a

Smaller voluntary interest networks utilize Caritas Christi as well. With the capacity for conference calls, sisters at a distance are able to join their groups through technology. Topics are varied, from finance to ecology and social justice, from apostolic spirituality to initial formation and lifelong learning. Some sister residents are part of the networks, and many more are prayer supporters. Annually, members of all these groups meet in a general session to interface with one another. Grassroots dialog comes home to Caritas Christi.

Two or three times a year, most sisters within driving distance of Greensburg attend Study Days. These sessions provide opportunity for common learning and reflection. Over

local communities who might like to share Thanksgiving or Easter dinner.

The staff at Caritas Christi is demonstrably attached to “their sisters” — those who live there. But often sisters spend recuperation time after a hospitalization, utilizing the excellent care provided by nursing, physical therapy and dietary departments. After each stay, the sister becomes part of the family, and when she returns to visit, finds herself welcomed as a home-coming daughter.

“How does the staff remember all our names?” wondered one sister.

She was the third sister from her local community to experience the care and concern of all at Caritas Christi following her own surgery.

**Caritas Christi is a site to behold even while snow covers the ground during the heart of winter.**

# Caritas Christi as the Motherhouse

motherhouse, said she wished to find a home for the sisters. Caritas Christi has become that and more. While the vibrant life of the sisters in residence continues, sisters active “in the

In 2007, Caritas Christi was again the site of deliberations that reaffirmed and renewed various institutional, communal and personal dimensions of the life of the sisters. Chapter delegates found their meetings surrounded by the well-known powerhouse of prayer sustained by the sisters in residence.

One Chapter called for a day of renewal and rededication to shared values. Caritas Christi was transformed by ritual and prayer. Focused on baptism, sisters

year to pray and study, to do corporate reflection on topics presented through the general or provincial leadership teams and to catch up with local issues and one another’s lives. The entire staff at Caritas provides flawless hospitality for these Conferences, from accommodations to meals and technology. Sisters in Pittsburgh and in Arizona gather for similar meetings, held closer to where they live. And residents of Caritas participate in their own Conference right at home.

Leadership groups in various configurations often meet at Caritas Christi. Whether they are boards or task forces, provincial or general councils, or Sisters of Charity Federation committees, all find a welcome space and spirit when they gather.

“Anywhere in the building, there’s enough room and natural light for a group to generate fresh ideas and to hammer out difficult decisions,” said one committee member.

the years, Caritas Christi has hosted close to 150 sisters on each of the 15 days. Sometimes taught by the sisters themselves, other times by noted experts, the Study Days have provided homecoming events that fed mind and spirit. Sisters will recall learning again from Vatican II and other church documents: sessions on mission, consecrated life and relations with other religious traditions.

“I loved the day we spent with the Rabbi; she had such a refreshing approach to Biblical stories.”

They had opportunities to deepen their understanding of Scripture, and of Catholic Social Teaching.

“When we looked at spirituality and environmental issues, I sensed an integration that went beyond mere activism.”

They re-framed worldviews and re-imaged models for thinking about change. Prayer and reflection, questions and discussion, input and



After many visits and her own healing time, no one was a stranger.

Sisters come and go. Some come to look up records in the archives. Some stop for a “brew and bagel” at the ice cream parlor. Others visit the gift shop looking for that special card or book. Special events attract others, things like the annual flea market. Trash in, treasure out!

“I bring things to support the cause and end up taking home more than I left behind,” one sister admitted with smiling reference to her two shopping bags of treasure.

This home, this motherhouse, is the real treasure. It is, in fact, what its name proclaims: a place where the Love of Christ (Caritas Christi) is the source of hospitality, energy and all the work and prayer that happen within its walls. When the doors open, all are welcome. When the doors open in the other direction, the very Love of Christ bursts out to the world.

homework provided a stimulating mix for all participants.

Events and meetings are always an invitation to come home. But formal gatherings are only a small part of the daily comings and goings at Caritas Christi. Sisters join friends who live there for a card game, a birthday celebration, lunch or simply a visit. They come to the always-open door of hospitality for liturgy, for retreat, for prayer days and for special presentations. Visits at the Advent and Lenten open houses and evening prayer are especially inviting, not only to Sisters of Charity but to their many friends and guests. Holidays always bring invitations to sisters from small



# Employees' Affection Shines Through For Sisters

## Apryl McKinzie

Beautiful, energizing and rewarding are words used by Apryl McKinzie to describe her experience of working at Caritas Christi. Since Nov. 1 1999, Apryl, Program Supervisor, has been creating and doing activities with the retired Sisters of Charity for all 10 of the years they've resided at the "new motherhouse." She shares the story with a smile of one early resident who greeted her with the announcement "...and don't expect me to play bingo or square dance!"

Of course Apryl didn't. However, over the years there have been bingo games and dances, book discussions, food and clothing drives, trivia contests, picnics, festival games, arts and crafts, gardening, sporting events, visits from grade and high school students, college students and various animal friends as well as excursions to parks, museums, movies, and theater, symphony and shopping trips. Every activity welcomes each Sister to participate and is not based on her desire and capacity.

Apryl is quick to clarify that she views the Sisters living at Caritas Christi not as residents of a nursing home (though she describes the nursing care as the best), but as members of a retirement community. She names her work-related challenge as the physical capacity of the sisters. "Their challenges are my challenges," Apryl said. "I'm always looking for and trying



**Apryl McKinzie looks for just the right beverage to prepare for a waiting sister during Bagels and Brew in the Ice Cream Parlor at Caritas Christi.**

creative ways to engage them and help them to feel accomplished."

Programs are designed to promote well being and quality of life through mental stimulation and physical activity while maintaining normal life pursuits and community involvement.

What is the best part of her job? "Touching lives and seeing a difference," Apryl said. "No two days are alike. Every day is a new opportunity and each encounter bears a gift that I take with me and share."

She enjoys working with the other staff, the sisters and the volunteers. Apryl is especially grateful for her three reliable helpers: Sisters Marie Clare, Pauline Grentz and Augusta Alexia who help her by publicizing, organizing and leading activities.

**Apryl McKinzie pours a cup of coffee for Sister Mary Halloran.**



## Gene Forish

Gene Forish joined the staff at Caritas Christi as Director of Liturgy and Music in time to celebrate the 2004 Holy Week liturgies with the sisters. When asked what he does in his role the simple response is "ministry." "Music is my craft, it is my joy, my passion...and that is my ministry."

As a recent graduate of the Seton Hill University Pastoral Ministry Program, Gene is well prepared to bring music to the service of the motherhouse community. "My ministry is with the Sisters of Charity, not 'to' or 'for', but 'with' because I receive as much as I give," Gene said.

On any given day he is planning, coordinating, creating and presenting elements to be used at liturgy. Whether a daily mass, a jubilee, a funeral or a vow day, life is being celebrated and the passing of days marked by prayer in word and music.

The most public of his ministries is the preparation for and participation in liturgical celebrations and directing various choirs and

musicians to enhance common prayer and Eucharistic liturgy. He names Liturgy, the source and summit of Christian life, as one of the best parts of his role at Caritas Christi.

"By assisting everyone to full and active participation I meet, with the sisters and our guests in prayer, our Savior and together we form our identity as God's own," Gene said.

The other part of his role is music therapy. Particularly with the Sisters on the nursing units, with these who are most vulnerable, Gene sees how music is essential to life, to healing and to participation with the outside world. This is more than simply singing a few old songs. Calling forth the physical energy to make music, to use vocabulary, to reminisce and to socialize is all integral to a shared, beautiful experience.

Life, liturgy, music at Caritas Christi — organic, changing and dynamic — with Gene Forish in the midst of all bringing rhythm and melody.

**Gene Forish directs the Sisters of Charity Community Choir**



## Clint Kovar's

tenure in the Maintenance Department pre-dates Caritas Christi, so he remembers well the days when site preparation began.

"They moved all that earth to build up the site for the new building, and laid the roads. It was interesting to watch," Clint recalls.

With other Sisters of Charity Center staff, Clint kept things moving smoothly when the Sisters from Assumption Hall were "in diaspora," living at three sites in the Greensburg area. Clint has shared a lot of history with the Sisters.

"We did a lot of traveling in those days, with laundry and other deliveries, and some repairs," Clint said.

At 17, Clint applied for a maintenance job advertised through the Private Industry Council and worked alongside Louie Gaitaniella in early days. Through the years, Clint has honed his skills. Building on his natural talent for all things mechanical and aided by mentoring from Steve Svetkovich and co-workers, Clint continues to meet

the challenges presented by new situations. He finds the Sisters "really nice" and his fellow employees easy to get along with.

"I enjoy working around the Sisters, and in the different buildings, as well as outside," Clint said.

One such outdoor project several years ago involved helping Sister James Louise Krug with the large garden she created.

"I helped her to organize things, spread leaves for fertilizer and move the vegetables up to the kitchen," Clint recalled. "And if Sr. James Louise was late for dinner, they'd send me down to the garden to let her know it was time to eat."

A graduate of Hempfield High School, Clint enjoys weekend stops at the Norwin Shopping Center's Car Cruise.

"It's a great place to get ideas and share my hobby," Clint said.

Clint is very proud of the 1951 Mercury he restored to original condition over the course of 15 years with some pointers from his dad and help from his brother.



**Clint Kovar stands next to one of the tractors inside the garage at the McGowan Building.**

"It was a labor of love," he said.

Clint's quiet and affable presence adds to both the smooth running and the family spirit at Sisters of Charity Center. As he looks forward to a 25th anniversary in a few years, the Sisters are happy to have him as part of the Charity family.

**Clint Kovar works to disconnect the battery charger from a truck outside the McGowan Building**



# For the Love of the Sisters



Volunteer Ray Valentine takes a break from his gardening outside Caritas Christi.

There are many dimensions of caregiving which impact the Sisters at Caritas Christi. Certainly nursing, food service, housekeeping and maintenance are all caregiving functions. The wonderful presence of many volunteers who come often to Caritas Christi are a real gift which reveals another face to “caregiving.”

“Our Volunteers are people who make a difference because of the role they play,” said Apryl McKinzie, director of programs. They meet the Sisters’ needs and provide essential services to the Retired Sisters community.”

And they do this out of the kindness of their hearts. They set a fine example. They work for the satisfaction of helping others, for nothing else.

Volunteers contribute to the Caritas Christi goal of providing comprehensive health care to all the Sisters living there. They are given the opportunity to match their skills and interests with meaningful assignments. Their skills may involve sharing a cup of coffee and a bagel with Sisters who come regularly to this Wednesday event. For others it is helping to take the Sisters on a shopping trip or sharing in a picnic in the park. They plan programs and implement them.



Volunteers socialize with sisters at Caritas Christi.

They initiate outreach activities for the Sisters such as the mitten tree at Christmas, or the food collection for the local food bank. Especially, they spend quality time with the Sisters.

Some volunteers have been with the Sisters of Charity for many years. At a recent celebration of the 10 years at Caritas Christi, five volunteers were honored for their many years of volunteering: Rosemary Cook, Bernie Brazill, Josie Petrillo, Mary Kay and Ray Valentine, not only at Caritas Christi, but some even at Assumption Hall.

But these are just a few. Parishioners from several local parishes, including Our Lady of Grace, St. James, Apollo and Mother of Sorrows, are regular volunteers. Often local schools will send students to visit the Sisters or perform for them. Even the men’s basketball team from Seton Hill University spent a Saturday with the Sisters. A special relationship is formed when our retired Sisters join with the many people who volunteer.

Often volunteer work is described as work “without pay” which a person freely gives to another. The volunteers at Caritas Christi, on the other hand, describe theirs as being richly paid by their interaction with women of faith who gave so much during their lives and with whom they have established a true bond.

## Caritas Christi Blessings

### KITCHEN

God of nourishment and provider of all that we need, bless this kitchen and those who will work here. Bless the dishes and utensils, the pots and pans, and the equipment that cools and cooks. Most of all, loving God, bless those whose hands will put these things to work in service of all who dine in this house. May cooks and bakers, meal planners and service workers, pot scrubbers and coffee makers know your protective and creative presence guiding their work.

### LAUNDRY and HOUSEKEEPING

God of order and beauty, bless this laundry and housekeeping area and those who will work here. Bless the washers and dryers, the soap and the softeners, the scrubbers, mops and brooms and all the equipment that cleans this household. Most of all, loving God, bless those whose hands will put these things to work in service of all who live in this house. May laundry workers and the housekeeping staff know your protective and creative presence guiding their work.

### MECHANICAL ROOMS

God who orders the entire universe, we ask that you bless this most important part of our house. Hidden from sight, and functional in appearance, it does not share in the high honors acclaimed for other more public and pristine areas. But you have placed here the mechanical heart that keeps air and water and heat and light flowing through the veins of this building. Bless the pumps and pipes, the engines and motors, the wires and cables. Keep them working efficiently and smoothly.

### WELLNESS CENTER

Life-giving Spirit of God, bless this wellness center and all who will work here. Bless the pool and the equipment which relaxes and strengthens weary or weakened bodies. Most of all, loving God, bless those whose hands will put these things to work in service of the fullness of life which you desire for all of us. May the therapists and all who maintain this space know your healing and protective presence guiding their work.

### ELEVATOR

God who provides all that we need, bless this and all the elevators in this house. Bless the doors and bless the cables; bless the controls and bless the wires. Bless those who will ride on them and those who will carry food and supplies on them. Let each brief encounter we experience with one another on these elevators be marked with respect, kindness and love.

### ENTRANCE AREA

God of hospitality and welcome, bless this reception area and those who will work here. Bless the doors and the desk, the switchboard and the mail room. Most of all, loving God, bless those who will make this area a center of communication and hospitality. May receptionists, switchboard operators, and those who sort and pick up

mail all know their importance in reflecting your joy to those they meet and carrying joy to those who receive messages through them.

### DINING ROOM AND COFFEE SHOP

God of nourishment and provider of all that we need, bless this dining room and our coffee shop as well as those who will work here. Bless the tables and chairs, the lights and the windows, the dishes and utensils. Most of all, loving God, bless those whose hands will set our meals before us and maintain this space between meals. May all who bring food to our tables know your grace and presence in their work.

Finally, bless all who serve and prepare the food that we will enjoy in these spaces. May they dine at the banquet of God’s rich and generous love.

### McCULLOUGH MEETING ROOM

God who gathers all people together in one great communion, bless this meeting space and all the gatherings which will occur here. Bless the walls and windows, the tables and chairs, the lighting and the technology buried in the walls. Most of all, loving God, bless those who will assemble here for meetings, conferences, chapters and community days. May the beauty and flexibility of this room bring true light and creativity to the tasks and decisions that will flow from this space. Fill all the leaders, facilitators, conveners and presiders who will exercise their roles in this environment with the spiritual gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel and knowledge.

### OUTREACH OFFICES

God whose concern for your people never ceases, bless these outreach offices and those who will work here. Bless the desks and phones, the computers and files. Most of all, loving God, bless those whose efforts will put these things to work in service of all whose need is made known. May they know your compassionate and all-encompassing presence guiding their work.

### ADULT DAY CARE

God of all people, send forth your blessing on this bright and welcoming adult day care center. May it be a warm and inviting place where those who have special needs in the later years of life may come. Grant them a stimulating and secure experience here. Bless all the activities planned for them and all the individual attention they will receive. Bless their families with your holy respite, and grant them patience and understanding.

### EAS HALL AND GARDEN

Infinite God of mystery and love, we ask your blessing upon this space that will house and care for our sisters who have given so generously of their lives in building your kingdom. May they find here a home that is filled with patience, love, and kindness.

We ask your blessing also upon the garden area which will reflect your presence and care for us found in the beauty and wonder of creation. As in the garden we will experience and celebrate your presence in all seasons of the year, so we may recognize your loving concern for us in all the seasons of life.

### FORMAL PARLOR

God of all beauty and order, bless this room set aside for special occasions in this community’s life. May its furnishings all be blessed: its fireplace and draperies, its chairs and lighting. At times when our sisters are brought home again, may this room provide a peaceful and joyous space where prayer and memories mingle.

### ARCHIVES AND ADMINISTRATION

God of the past, present and future, we ask your blessing upon these archival and administrative areas and all who will work and visit here. The documents and materials stored in the archives reflect your love and care for the human family, especially in the life of this congregation. As we come here to remember and celebrate our roots and the work of the past, we are inspired in the present moment, and offered great hope for the future. May those who preserve and share the wealth of those who have gone before us be blessed in their ministry.

The endless current tasks of administering this facility need your blessing as well. Bless the desks, the computers, the files and the folders, the phones and all the tools of these offices. Most of all, bless those whose day by day management will guarantee the fruitfulness of all the activity that takes place at Caritas Christi.

### SISTERS’ BEDROOMS

God of refreshment and provider of rest, bless this bedroom area and all who will rest, visit, and work in this space. Bless the bed and chairs, the drapes, lamps and linens and all that creates a sense of comfort and warmth in our home. We ask, loving God, that you especially watch over those who in care and healing become your hands and voice in gentle and loving service to us.

### GATHERING SPACES (Third Floor)

Three-personed God, in the Trinity you provide us with the perfect model of community. You show us how to be united in love, yet distinct in personhood. You show us mutuality in relationship and uniqueness in presence. Bless us in this space where we gather in community with one another and with our guests, sharing the warmth of the fireplace and of conversation.

### NURSES STATION

God of healing and comfort, bless this nurses’ station and those who will work here. Bless the space and all the materials of healing that are connected to it: medicines and ointments, stethoscopes and blood pressure cuffs, equipment which tests and devices which support. Bless the nurses and aides who will use these healing supplies. But most of all, bless the hands which touch, the voices which comfort, and the ears that listen, not only to the physical needs but to the needs of the heart. May they know your protective and caring presence guiding their work.

# We Remember

by Sister Grace Hartzog

Visit the "In Memoriam" section at [www.scsch.org](http://www.scsch.org) to see an expanded obituary for each sister.

## Sister Mary Elizabeth Boyle,

(formerly Sister Raymond Marie) age 77, died at Lakeland Regional Medical Center, Lakeland, Florida, January 12, 2009.



A Pittsburgh native, Sister Mary Elizabeth entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1950, from Saint Kieran Parish in Lawrenceville. Sister

Mary Elizabeth earned a bachelor's degree in education from Seton Hill University and a master's degree in reading and language arts from the University of Pittsburgh. A teacher of children of the primary grades, she taught students in schools of the Greensburg, Pittsburgh, Phoenix, and Columbus dioceses and the Archdiocese of Washington. She was principal at Holy Cross School in Youngwood. Sister Mary Elizabeth received an Outstanding Elementary Teachers of America Award in 1975 that included an article in Who's Who in America. She initiated a "Readiness Program" for children entering first grade at Mother of Sorrows School in Murrysville and demonstrated the effectiveness of the program at the 1975 Tri-State Teachers' convention in Pittsburgh. In 1991, Sister Mary Elizabeth began an affiliation with hospice care, ministering to the frail and elderly population, in Lakeland, Florida.

## Sister Anita Marie Hensel,

age 81, died at Caritas Christi, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Greensburg, on Tuesday, June 16, 2009. Born in Springdale, PA, Sister Anita Marie entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1946, from Saint Augustine Parish in Lawrenceville, PA. She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Seton Hill University

and taught students of the primary level in Dioceses of Greensburg, Lafayette, LA, Phoenix, Pittsburgh and the



Archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington. From 1959 until 1964, Sister Anita Marie taught children in Kaplan, Louisiana where in 1961, she experienced, and survived without injury, a devastating tornado that completely destroyed the convent where she resided with three other sisters. In 1990, Sister Anita Marie was assigned as a co-manager of Saint Therese Plaza, a resident apartment (HUD) for senior citizens where she ministered until her retirement in 2005.

## Sister M. Christina Stoecklein,

age 84, died at Caritas Christi, the mother-



house of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Greensburg, on Thursday, July 9, 2009. A Pittsburgh native, Sister M. Christina entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1943, from

Saint Walburga Parish, Pittsburgh, PA. She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Seton Hill University and taught children of the primary grades in schools of the Greensburg and Pittsburgh dioceses. A member of a well known Pittsburgh bakery family, and a born entrepreneur, Sister M. Christina, managed, for more than 30 years, the baked goods booth of the Sisters of Charity annual summer festival. After her retirement from the classroom, Sister M. Christina became a craftswoman par excellence as she turned her efforts to creating items for every holiday and community event, while teaching others to develop their artistic selves.

She, along with helpers, designed and made patriotic pins after the September 11, 2001, tragedy. Any donations received for the symbols were channeled to the American Red Cross Disaster Fund. She earned first and second place awards at both Westmoreland and Allegheny County Fairs. But the greatest satisfaction Sister M. Christina experienced was preparing children to receive the sacraments.

## Sister M. Francina Skergan,

age 89, died at Caritas Christi, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Greensburg, on Thursday, August 6, 2009. A native of Scottdale,



PA, Sister M. Francina entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1937, from Saint Charles Borromeo Parish in Sutersville, PA. She earned a bachelor's degree in

education from Duquesne University and a master's degree in history and theology from Duquesne University. Sister M. Francina taught students of the elementary and secondary levels in the Greensburg and Pittsburgh dioceses. From 1957 until 1959, Sister M. Francina taught history during the summer sessions at Seton Hill University. She participated in a Sister of Charity of Seton Hill ministry to teach the Sisters of the Holy Family of New Orleans during the summers of the 1950s. From 1968 until 1971, Sister M. Francina ministered in a flexible new apostolate of adult education known as the Adult Institute in the Diocese of Greensburg under the direction of the late Bishop William G. Connare. The goal of this program was, primarily, to update adults to the movement of the Church after Vatican Council II and involved neither elementary nor secondary school classes. From

1971 until 1980, Sister M. Francina served as director of religious education for the Diocese of Greensburg and from 1980 until 1989, she was the religious education coordinator at Saint John the Baptist De La Salle parish in Delmont. In 1989, Sister M. Francina was appointed to the leadership position at Sacred Heart Convent, Shadyside and, while there, worked part time as the parish director for religious education, positions she held until 1996, when she was assigned as coordinator for the Sisters of Charity temporary residence at Saint Paul Manor, Pittsburgh. Sister M. Francina retired to Caritas Christi in 1999. Dedicated and hardworking, she believed, along with Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, "Every step we take all day long is a step of nature or a step of grace."

## Sister Kevin Mary Mannion,

age 77, died at Caritas Christi, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Greensburg, on August 25, 2009. A Pittsburgh native, Sister Kevin Mary entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1951, from



Saint Mary Magdalene Parish, Homestead, PA. She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Seton Hill University and a master's degree in educational administration from Duquesne University. Sister Kevin Mary was a teacher in schools of the Altoona-Johnstown, Greensburg and Pittsburgh dioceses. She was principal at Saint Stephen School, Hazelwood from 1974 until 1990, and was then named a co-director of Saint Theresa Plaza, Munhall, a senior citizen high rise, (HUD) a position she kept until her retirement in 2005.

**Sister William Ann Dailey,** age 93, died at Caritas Christi, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Greensburg, on



August 26, 2009. Born in Hastings, PA Sister William Ann entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill September 8, 1933, from Saint James Parish, Wilkensburg. She

earned a bachelor's degree in Education from Duquesne University and taught students of the junior high school level in schools of the Altoona-Johnstown, Greensburg, Phoenix and Pittsburgh dioceses. She ministered as vice-principal at Saint Philip School, Crafton and as a library assistant and remedial reading instructor at Sacred Heart School in Shadyside. After retiring from the classroom, Sister William Ann assisted in the nursing program at Assumption Hall, the former infirmary of the Sisters of Charity and continued this ministry on a volunteer basis until 1998.

## Sister Mary Florence Scott,

age 92, died at Caritas Christi, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill in Greensburg, on September 30, 2009. A native of Johnstown, PA, Sister Mary Florence entered



the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1939, from Saint John Gualbert Parish, Johnstown. Sister Mary Florence earned a bachelor's degree in education from Duquesne University and was a teacher and administrator in schools of the Altoona-Johnstown, Greensburg, and Pittsburgh dioceses.

She was principal, 1962-1968, at the former Saint Thomas Aquinas School in California, PA and principal, 1974-1982, at McNelis Catholic, Altoona. In 1982, Sister Mary Florence was presented an award in recognition of her outstanding service at McNelis Catholic School. After she retired from the classroom, Sister Mary Florence joined the staff at Assumption Hall, the former infirmary, retirement home for the sisters. There she was appointed the director of Elizabeth Ann Hall as a caretaker for sisters with memory impairment. In 1996, Sister Mary Florence was named director of the Elizabeth Seton Guild, the ministry by which the congregation responds to requests for prayers.

## Sister Mary Noreen Lacey,

age 82, died at Seton Provincial House, Gwangju, South Korea, on November 12, 2009. A Munhall native, Sister Mary Noreen entered the congregation of the Sisters of Charity September 8, 1944, from Saint Mary Magdalene Parish. Sister Mary Noreen earned a bachelor's degree in education from Seton Hill University and a diploma, 1966, in the



Korean language at Yansai University, South Korea. She taught in schools of the Phoenix, Greensburg and Pittsburgh dioceses prior to her ministry in South Korea. In 1960, she was one of four Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill who volunteered to begin a mission in the Archdiocese of Gwangju, South Korea. Until her retirement from the classroom in 2002, Sister Mary Noreen taught English and religion to Korean students. Dedicated, patient and serene, Sister Mary Noreen's personality and presence reflected the words of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, "Our dear Savior was never in extremes."

# Transitions & Honors



**Sister Mary Lou Palas**, Spiritual Care Coordinator at Humility House in Austintown, Ohio, was awarded the Spirit of the Mission/Employee of the month award. Sister was nominated by a co-worker, approved by the executive director, and selected by the Spirit of the Mission committee. Sister's nominator said, "Sister Mary Lou is an inspiring and unique person. She is here to minister and is a blessing to both residents and staff alike. She is very encouraging and concerned for the needs of others. She readily gets involved when called upon. You can sense her joy and love she has for her job. . ."



Sister Anita Schulte and WTAE-TV anchor Kelly Frey

**Sister Mary Jo Mutschler** was presented with the Award for Exceptional Service by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. In this "Year of Saint Paul the Apostle," the Diocese of Pittsburgh chose to honor a number of people, lay and religious, who minister in the myriad tasks of Manifesting the Kingdom to



others by demonstrating the presence of Jesus in their lives. This year, the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, Sister received the award from Bishop David A. Zubik, Bishop of Pittsburgh. **Sister Anita Schulte**, founder of the Elizabeth Seton Montessori School in Greensburg and Carlow College Montessori Teacher Training Program, was awarded United Way's

School Readiness Children's Champion Award. Over 240 community investors, company partners and leaders gathered at United Way of Westmoreland County's (UWWC) Annual Campaign Celebration at Ferrante's Lakeview Restaurant, Greensburg. David Gallatin, CEO of Excelsa Health and this year's Campaign Chair opened the event thanking everyone for helping United Way reach a projected \$3.75 million and showing how this support in volunteerism and funding will make a significant impact in our community.

**Sister Rosemary Donley** was honored by the Seton University Alumni Corporation as the 16th recipient of the Seton Hill University Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Medal as part of the University's Honors Convocation. Seton Hill University President, JoAnne Boyle, presented the Medallion to Sister Rosemary Donley. The Seton Hill University Alumni Corporation created the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Medal in 1959 to commemorate the life of Elizabeth Ann Seton, founder of the Sisters of Charity. The designation of a nationally recognized, contemporary woman whose accomplishments parallel, in some way, Elizabeth Seton's life emphasizes the relevance of Elizabeth Seton's life in today's ever-changing world.

Sister Rosemary Donley was also appointed to the Jacques Laval Endowed Chair in Justice for Vulnerable Populations by the Duquesne University School of Nursing.



**Sisters Vivien Linkhauer and Gertrude Foley**

received *The Seton Legacy of Charity Medal* at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Emmitsburg. Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Harrisburg, presided at the prayer service.



**Sister Marlene Mondalek** accepted the Medal for Mrs. Sang Hyup Kim, Seoul, South Korea. Mrs. Kim is the wife of the former Prime Minister of South Korea and she supports the Sisters

of Charity who work with disabled children in South Korea and China.

Fifty-one persons from diverse backgrounds were honored for their charitable works in the spirit of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. The awardees, who come from all walks of life, have promoted the awareness of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton "in the spirit of the Seton Legacy of Charity."

The legacy awards were sponsored in recognition of the Bicentennial year by the Daughters of Charity of the Emmitsburg Province. In recognizing the recipients, The Daughters of Charity stated, "We are proud to honor those who, through their ministries or their way of life, have mirrored the example of Elizabeth Ann Seton's pioneering spirit. We acknowledge their willingness to be risk takers like Mother Seton, who showed courage in the face of overwhelming personal odds; and we honor their dedication to works of charity after the example of Mother Seton."

**Sister Ann Infanger** was awarded the certificate in Pastoral Ministry by Seton Hill University in collaboration with the Diocese of Greensburg at an Evening of Prayer and Cel-

ebration June 3, at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Greensburg.

**Gene Forish**, director of worship at Caritas Christi, completed the Pastoral Ministry Program as well and was awarded the certificate by Bishop Lawrence E. Brandt.

The goal of the certificate program is the integration of the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation of adults who are



committed to the mission of Christ within the Roman Catholic Church. Students have as their main focus service to the People of God in a variety of ecclesial contexts.

**Sister Melanie DiPietro** received a Distinguished Alumni Leadership Award at Seton Hill University during Alumni Weekend. Sister Melanie was one of four recipients of the award given by her alma mater for "outstanding achievement and leadership."

Sister Melanie is presently the distinguished practitioner in residence at Seton Hill University in New Jersey and serves



as director of the Seton Hall Law Center for Religiously Affiliated Corporations.

**Sister Geraldine Frances Marr**

was presented the 2009 Golden Apple Award, symbolic of excellent performance in the classroom, church and community. Bishop David Zubik congratulated and praised the ten awardees for "help-

ing their students have a vision, a goal far beyond the world we know." He added, "You not only stir up the mind, but you excite the heart and soul." Father Kris Stubna, secretary for education, stated "The educators live and breathe the Gospel and they are witnesses of the life of Jesus. Through their dedication and selfless service, they help students reach their full potential as children of God."

**Sister Grace Hartzog** was honored as a Leading Lady by Oakland Catholic High School. President Katherine D. Freyvogel, welcomed the leading ladies at the annual gala benefitting Oakland Catholic High School at the Westin Convention Center Pittsburgh. Sister Grace was named to the ranks of Leading Ladies Taking the Lead. Honored as a faculty member at Seton Hill University, elementary school principal, team member for the United States Bishops Early Childhood

Task Force, coordinator for early childhood and elementary curriculum guides for the Diocese of Greensburg and adjunct faculty for Pennsylvania State University, Sister Grace expressed gratitude for the recognition but readily acknowledged, those "who sacrificed and played significant roles in her life to provide optimum spiritual, academic and social learning opportunities critical for ministry in education and administration."



# Reprise Of The Bicentennial Celebration

By The Sisters Of Charity Of Seton Hill

Sunday, January 3, 2010 the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill gathered for the event which brought to a close the Bicentennial year of Celebration for the Seton Hill Community just as on January 4, 2009 the Feast of the Epiphany marked the day for the sisters to gather at Caritas Christi for liturgy and a festive meal. The Daughters of Charity who staff Rendu Services were welcomed guests.



**Foreground: Sister Marie Patrick Sullivan prays during a Bicentennial Mass in Cecilian Hall at Seton Hill University. Pictured in the background praying (from left:) Sister Ann Patrick Adams, Sister Virginia Marie Waudby, Sister Rosemary Donley and Sister Loretta Topper.**

The year of celebration closed as it began with bells and singing and hymns and prayers of thanksgiving for the gift of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to the Sisters of Charity and to the world. The year 2009 provided a marvelous opportunity for the story of Elizabeth Ann Seton and the Congregations she founded to tell the story of courage, foresight, innovation and stamina that have been a center-point in the history of the Sisters of Charity. Along with the story telling, the sisters had many opportunities to celebrate,

meet and greet old friends, students, and clients and reflect on the role they play in community.

Soon after January 4th, 2009 the Bicentennial planning committee prepared to join several of the Community members on a bus trip to march with the Sisters of Charity in New York in the Saint Patrick's Day parade which was dedicated to them. The bus trip was filled with stories, singing, and fun and the days were picture perfect. New York was sunny and cool but pleasant and there was a large contingent marching with the sisters along a parade route where men, women, and children cried, "Thank you Sisters. Thanks for teaching me." The two mile journey down Fifth Avenue was a happy adventure and the Sisters of Charity of New York welcomed and expressed their thanks for the presence of the Seton Hill Sisters along with the Daughters of Charity and several sisters from Convent Station, New Jersey and Halifax.

Many of the schools and other places where Sisters of Charity ministered sponsored talks on St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, prayers services, and other events.

Sisters Brycelyn Eyler and Louise Grundish gave talks during the Annual "Lunch with Liz" at Seton Hill University. The University also held a "Birthday Party" for Elizabeth and had cake and booths with information. At Homecoming Sisters Mary Clark and Judy Laffey staffed a booth and welcomed the somewhat diminished crowd due to the cool and rainy weather.

The sisters at St. Peter and Paul's in Tucson joined with the Daughters of Charity in the area and participated in a liturgy of Thanksgiving for the Bicentennial and opened their house for a celebration following the liturgy. In Scottsdale the Sisters at Our Lady of Perpetual Help rolled out the red carpet for the Daughters of Charity from St. Vincent de Paul Parish. The afternoon

celebration included introductions, dinner, tours of the convent and school and evening prayer.

Throughout the year, Sisters Mary Clark, Patrice Hughes, Edith Strong, and Lindena Brace had opportunities to portray St. Elizabeth Seton before church and community groups. The sisters at Seton Center dedicated a week to displays and events which provided opportunity for the Seton Center community of parents, toddlers, senior citizens, and day care participants and their care givers to hear the story and celebrate with the sisters. One of the highlights of that event was the Women of Seton scholarship tea which honored the Sisters of Charity who taught at Elizabeth Seton High School and the many women who entered from the school.

Bishop David Zubik joined several of the priests of the Pittsburgh Diocese at a special liturgy of Thanksgiving on July 19, 2009 in St. Paul's Cathedral in Oakland. A reception followed in the Cathedral Church Hall. In the Eire Diocese, Bishop Donald Trautman celebrated a special liturgy of Thanksgiving at St. Michael Church in Greenville, the parish in which Sisters Mary Joseph and Mary Gertrude McElhinny minister. The Church was decorated with the portrait of St. Elizabeth Seton by Sr. Laura Bench in a prominent place. Following the liturgy the parish hosted a lovely luncheon reception and there was opportunity for the sisters to visit with the parishioners who joined in the celebration.

Sister Nancy Gerken spent the month of August giving classes each week about St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and then Sister Louise Grundish joined her as she hosted a birthday party for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton for the residents of St John the XXIII Home for Senior Citizens.

The highlight of the year was the August 2 celebration at Seton Hill when the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill joined in celebration with our sisters throughout the United States. The joyful ringing of the tower bell at 2 minutes

before 12 noon welcomed all to the Liturgy of Thanksgiving offered by Bishop Lawrence Brandt with Bishop Joseph Adamec of Altoona-Johnstown and Archabbot Douglas Nowicki as concelebrants. The weather cooperated wonderfully and the music and spirit were palpable throughout the day. Following the liturgy all joined for a reception in the parlors. The afternoon ended with the sisters choir accompanied by many of our friends and partners in singing the "Cantata" by Sisters Cecilia Ward and Mary Schmidt.

In September the City Council of Pittsburgh declared September 19th as Sister of Charity Day in the city of Pittsburgh. Several members of the Bicentennial Committee joined Sisters Patrice in the Council chambers as the declaration was made by Doug Sheilds, President of City Council and a former student of the Sisters of Charity. The Sisters Chorus joined by many of their friends were honored on Saturday, September 19th to sing the Star Spangled Banner at PNC Park. Gene Forish arranged the music and conducted the group.

A special liturgy of celebration was held on Sunday, November 15 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Greensburg, PA. Monsignor William Rathgeb, Chaplain of the Sisters of Charity at Caritas Christi, was the Celebrant in the absence of Bishop Lawrence Brandt who was unable to be present. Archabbot Douglas Nowicki, Monsignor Roger Statnick, and Father William Berkey concelebrated the liturgy. Most appropriately Monsignor Rathgeb, Monsignor Statnick, and Archabbot Nowicki were all former students of the Sisters of Charity in Greensburg, Youngwood, and Johnstown, PA. The Sisters Choir and the Bell Choir under the direction of Gene Forish, led the music for the celebration. Monsignor Statnick read a proclamation from the Mayor of Greensburg declaring November 15th as Sisters of Charity Day in Greensburg.

The Bicentennial year closed with thanks to all. Sister Vivien presented Monsignor Rathgeb with a statue of Elizabeth and Gene Forish was thanked for all of the work done to enhance the liturgies and make our celebrations memorable.

Each sister in the Congregation received a book by Sister Francis de Sales Joyce on the Life of Mother Aloysia Lowe and a collection of cards with favorite sayings by Saints Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac, and Elizabeth Ann Seton which had been prepared by Sister Lorilee Ufolla and her committee for the Bicentennial year. The Bicentennial Committee hoped that the year of celebration brought to each sister a spirit of renewal and rededication. As Sister Vivien, Provincial of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, reflected during the closing liturgy she urged the Sisters, "let us stand at this crossroads in Hope and Faith. Our call is to be present to the God who called us, faithful to prayer, aware of the sisters who walk with us on this journey and God in his providence will be our support and our guide."



**Sister Lindena Brace and Sister Inez Mary Beckel begin the offertory procession, while Sister Mary Jo Mutschler carries the alms during the closing Mass for the bicentennial year in the Chapel of the Assumption at Caritas Christi.**



**Sister Vivien Linkhauer gives a reflection to the congregation at the closing Mass for the bicentennial year in the Chapel of the Assumption at Caritas Christi.**

**Below: Gene Forish directs the Sisters of Charity Bell Choir at the Chapel of the Assumption in Caritas Christi.**





# Upcoming Events

**February 1, 2010**

## **Spring Into Cash Ticket available for purchase.**

The 2010 Spring Into Cash raffle ticket is available for purchase during February and March. For a donation of \$10, the ticket provides 26 chances to win from \$100 to \$1500 during the month of April. Only 1,000 tickets are available, and winning numbers are taken from the 7 p.m. Pennsylvania 3-digit Lottery. All cash winnings are determined by the amount of money indicated on each day of the ticket's calendar. No prizes will be awarded on Sundays. Proceeds benefit the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill. Call 724-836-0406, ext. 644, for more information or visit the Press Release section at [www.scsch.org](http://www.scsch.org).

**March 14, 2010**

## **Lenten Visit with the Sisters of Charity**

The Sisters of Charity will host their annual Lenten Visit on Sunday, March 14, 2010, at Caritas Christi, the motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill. The visit will begin at 2:30 p.m. followed by Lenten Prayer at 4 p.m. in the Chapel of the Assumption. Hot cross buns will be available for sale. To facilitate planning for the event, please RSVP by March 1, 2010, by calling 724-836-0406, ext. 644.

**April 17, 2010**

## **Sounds of Charity**

The 2010 "Sounds of Charity" will be held on Saturday, April 17, 2010, at the Seton Hill University Performing Arts Center in Greensburg. The event will feature Julie Lee, an established composer and recording artist from Nashville, Tennessee and Michael Gallagher, an Irish vocalist from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and other talent to be announced. Prior to the concert a hors d'oeuvres reception will be available. Guests will have time to peruse the raffle baskets and bid on the featured silent auction items. To make reservations to attend, to sponsor a sister to attend, or to donate to the Far East Missions, please contact the Office for Institutional Advancement at 724.836.0406, ext. 644 or email Sister Lindena Brace at [lbrace@scsch.org](mailto:lbrace@scsch.org). Watch our web site at [www.scsch.org](http://www.scsch.org) for more information.

## **Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill**

DePaul Center  
144 DePaul Center Road  
Greensburg, PA 15601-1293  
724-836-0406  
412-243-4651 (Pgh.)  
724-836-8280 (FAX)  
*Address Service Requested*

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