

2017 LXXXI 1

MISSION MAGAZINE

EMPOWERING MINDS + CREATING HOPE + BUILDING FAITH + SEEKING JUSTICE

A EUCHARISTIC FOCUSED MISSION



Pastoral care in a Felician Franciscan ministry site also means that one assists in planning some staff in-service sessions to promote the living out of the mission and core values of the sponsoring congregation and thereby of the Catholic Church.

IN THIS ISSUE:

A Glimpse Inside Pastoral Care Ministry with Sister Stephanie Henry, SBS | A Call for Social Justice - Taking A Stand | ASBS in Action | A 100th Birthday Celebration for our SBS Centenarian | What's Happening Now: Changes in Motherhouse Staff, New Face & Places, Paul's Run | In Loving Memory | Lighthearted Tales of Ministry | Our Sister Spotlight: Sr. Pat Marshall



Sharing the Bread in the Footsteps of a Saint

MISSION Magazine is an online publication produced biannually by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. It is available for download on their website at:

<http://www.katharinedrexel.org/sisters-of-the-blessed-sacrament/communications>

The Communications Office is located at 1663 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020-5796 in the Mission Center Building. Please direct all comments and correspondence to the address above in care of the editor or email Cheri at:

sbscm.wenger@gmail.com

For any printed copies of this publication the Non-Profit Postage (No. 2166) is paid at Philadelphia, PA.

Editorial Contributors

Design | Editing | Photography

Cheri Wenger, Communications Mgr.
215.244.9900, ext. 331

Proofreading

Sr. Marjorie Everett, SBS
Stephanie Morris, Ph.D., C.A.

Special Contributions

Sr. Franceline Malone, SBS
Editorial & Photography
Sr. Stephanie Henry, SBS
Editorial

The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, founded in 1891 by St. Katharine Drexel, is a congregation dedicated to the inter-racial apostolate in the USA, Jamaica and Haiti. Today SBS serve in elementary and secondary schools as well as at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans. They are also involved in a variety of other services including pastoral and spiritual ministries, social services, counseling, religious education and health care, primarily but not exclusively among Black and Native American peoples. The Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament is in Bensalem, Pa.

President's Message

March 2017

Dear Friends of the SBS,
Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament,

As the sisters reflect upon **126 years of service**, we do so with much gratitude for the circumstances, the people, opportunities and experiences that have allowed us to focus on the mission instituted by our foundress, **St. Katharine Drexel**, *to share the gospel message with the poor, especially among the Black and Native American peoples and to challenge all forms of racism as well as other deeply rooted injustices in the world today,*

2016 has been a year of reflection, on our past, our present, and much contemplation on our future. It is extremely important to the leadership team to honor St. Katharine's commitment to being good stewards of our resources and to make decisions for the betterment of our congregation, and the people that we serve presently...as well as to foster opportunities for growth and outreach through new ministries in the future.

Although change can be unsettling and unpleasant to any community, it also offers hope and promise for wonderful new experiences and potential for growth. As we move forward with the sale of our properties, we remain an active community grounded in a **Eucharistic Focused Mission of Empowering Minds, Creating Hope, Building Faith and Seeking Justice.**

"We can take this old world...and make it over again. I make all things new," says Jesus. He can do it. We can do it. We have his Gospel. We have Him." - St. Katharine Drexel

To accomplish great things in the years to follow, we feel it is important to always maintain an attitude of gratitude for what was, what is, and what will be.

In love and gratitude,



SBS President



On the Cover...

Sr. Stephanie Henry interacts with some of the residents at the St. Ignatius Nursing Home serving them tea and engaging in conversation — just a small part of her pastoral ministry work.

Photo by: Sr. Franceline Malone, SBS



A Glimpse Inside Pastoral Care Ministry with Sr. Stephanie Henry, SBS

by Sr. Stephanie Henry, SBS



Above & Right Column: As a Pastoral Care Minister, Sr. Stephanie Henry, SBS, observes, listens and responds to the needs of St. Ignatius Nursing Home residents while offering encouragement and reminders of God's love for each one of them.

Pastoral Care Ministry at St. Ignatius Nursing & Rehab Center is a precious cycle of companioning residents while offering encouragement and faith-filled reminders that each one is loved and special in God's eyes. This overall stance mirrors in many ways the attitude of an effective teacher or mentor for anyone at any age. For this reason, ministry transitions from being an educator (*in high school and university settings*) to parish work as a director of religious education (*working with children and their parents*) and now to engagement with elders as a pastoral care associate have not been difficult. The starting point in all these ministries is to observe, listen and respond in a manner that promotes the other person's progress. However, there are differences. As a teacher, I had a pre-planned course of studies to present. Now, as a pastoral care associate, I generally do not have pre-planned days with scheduled presentations and performance evaluations. Each day at St.

Ignatius Nursing & Rehab Center is unique. The residents probably range in age from late sixties to upper nineties. A few residents are over one hundred years old. They have worked hard, raised families, cared for others, and have overcome various hardships and challenges in their lives. Most of our residents have physical limitations that hinder their living the American

continued on pg. 4



Left: Sr. Stephanie Henry listens intently in a meeting with program directors. She also uses her laptop to make notes regarding the pastoral care of the residents.

16 So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. 17 For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, 18 because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)



Pastoral Care Ministry

continued from pg. 3

dream of a blissful retirement and nearly all of our residents are Medicaid eligible, which means that the amenities advertised in AARP magazine would not be available to them even if their health were good.

The heart of being a pastoral care associate is doing some aspect of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy each day. For residents to feel valued and cared for may mean serving in the dining room, helping with wheelchair transport to and from activities, listening to concerns, consoling through words or silent sitting with persons who are grieving, praying with and for residents, their families and staff, planning and leading para-liturgical prayer services and rituals. In addition, one of the most focused times of pastoral presence is with residents who are on hospice care and/or are transitioning (actively dying). The scope of service and the faith stance needed to sustain one, for me, is expressed in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. Even in the midst of bodily suffering and decline, there is hope. We have an eternal home awaiting us/ beaoning us. The dying process is not only part of our life cycle but also a sacred time of oneness with mystery.



St. Ignatius Nursing & Rehab Center Core Values

Dignity of All Persons

Excellence – through Compassion

Community – through transformation

Stewardship – through justice and peace

Concern for the Poor

*I serve
the poor,
invite all to
unity,
reconciliation,
and community
eucharist.*



Above: Sr. Stephanie enthusiastically explains her Pastoral Care Ministry to attendees of the SBS's 125th Anniversary Celebration of Gratitude event in July 2016.



Top: Sr. Stephanie meets with Sr. Veronica Lucero, CSSF, Kim Walker, Director of Mission Integration, and Sr. Maureen Lowry, RSM, Director of Pastoral Care (newly retired), to give and get updates.

Pastoral care in a Felician Franciscan ministry site also means that one assists in planning some staff in-service sessions to promote the living out of the mission and core values of the sponsoring congregation and thereby of the Catholic Church.

I see the core values of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as being very much in harmony with the ones above. I serve the poor. I invite all to unity, reconciliation, and community eucharist. I am learning to become more

continued on pg. 5

Bottom Right: Part of pastoral care involves working alongside of staff like nurses aide, Joyce Arthur, and weekend nursing supervisor, Alain Nana, to tend to the care and needs of residents.



“We are all just walking one another home.”

Ram Dass

inclusive in offering spiritual services to persons of all faith traditions, all cultures and races, though the majority of residents are African American and Christian. Greater diversity exists among the staff and volunteers of STINRC. One of the extraordinary aspects of ministry at STINRC is that most of the daily mass attendees are not Catholic. They are Christians longing to be fed on the word of God. To be more inclusive of their worship preferences, before Mass, cds are played that usually feature Christian gospel music from various sources.

I will summarize my ministry at STINRC with the words of the spiritual *“Walk together children, don’t you get weary... there’s a great camp meeting in the promised land.”* I walk not only with residents but am a co-laborer with all other staff members. Loving service and care for our residents takes a team. We help and support one another to be more effective. Pastoral Care is a team approach that means Sr. Veronica Marie Lucero, CSSF and I work together in planning and delivering pastoral care services.

Sr. Stephanie’s Other Pastoral Ministry Work



Above: Sr. Stephanie not only leads some professional development sessions for staff of STINRC (pictured above); but also remains actively engaged at St. Ignatius Church. She was the director for the parish Advent Retreat 2016. The theme was Stir into flame, God’s Gift.



Above: Sr. Stephanie performs dual roles as Narrator and “Town Gossip” in the St. Ignatius of Loyola Church Choir’s Christmas concert & play entitled, “Our Little Christmas Town” — another form of ministry that she participates in within the West Philadelphia community.



Sr. Veronica Lucero, CSSF



Sr. Stephanie Henry, SBS



A Call for Social Justice

A Battle Involving Political, Racial, Environmental and Ethical Issues

TAKING A STAND

The Native American Sioux Tribe At Standing Rock Will Not Take Recent News Regarding the North Dakota Pipeline (DAPL) Sitting Down

According to Energy Access Partners and US Energy Information, the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline which crosses areas of North Dakota, South Dakota, Illinois and Iowa, will measure 1,172 miles in length and 30 inches in width when completed. It is expected to move 470,000 barrels of crude oil a day (*which equals 374.3 million gallons of gas per day*). But at what price? Will the completion of this project violate the rights and jeopardize the lives of present and future generations of Native Americans?

Members of the Sioux tribe, environmentalists and many opponents to the pipeline argue it could have unknown negative environmental impacts as well as destroy sacred land, compromise the water sources

surrounding Lake Oahe, and also break land trusts established with the Native American tribe back in 1851 in the Treaty of Fort Laramie.

Despite the decision by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a full environmental-impact review in Dec. 2016 under the Obama administration, newly-elected President Donald Trump signed executive orders on January 24, 2017 to advance the previously stalled construction on the Dakota Access Pipeline (*commonly referred to as DAPL*) as well as the equally controversial Keystone XL Pipeline.

Attorney Jan Hasselman of Earthjustice, the legal team representing the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota, indicated that the tribe would not take this matter sitting down and would push back with a lawsuit defending the decision by the Army Corps of Engineers to look at alternative routes for the pipeline to address the concerns of its opponents.

Two of the biggest environmental concerns related to DAPL, are the possible contamination issues due to potential breaches involving the water sources, and eventual greenhouse gas emissions and their unstudied impact to the environment. Subsequently, it could also effect climate change. Ethically, there are several more arguments related to the breach of promises

Basic Facts about Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL)

Length: 1,172 miles
Width: 30 inches

Barrels of Crude Moved

Per Day: 470,000 barrels
(= 374.3 million gals. of gas)

Sources: Energy Access Partners, US Energy Information Administration

2016

MAR

Iowa becomes 4th state to grant permission for pipeline

APR

Opponents set up a camp for peaceful protests

JUL

US Army Corp of Engineers grants permit for pipeline at 200+ water crossings

JUL

Standing Rock Sioux & Cheyenne River Sioux file lawsuit

AUG

1st arrests made of protesters

SEP

Sacred burial site disturbed by bulldozers near Cannon Ball, ND

NOV

Police spray protesters with water cannons after officer struck in head with a rock

DEC

US Army Corp of Engineers denies current route - orders study

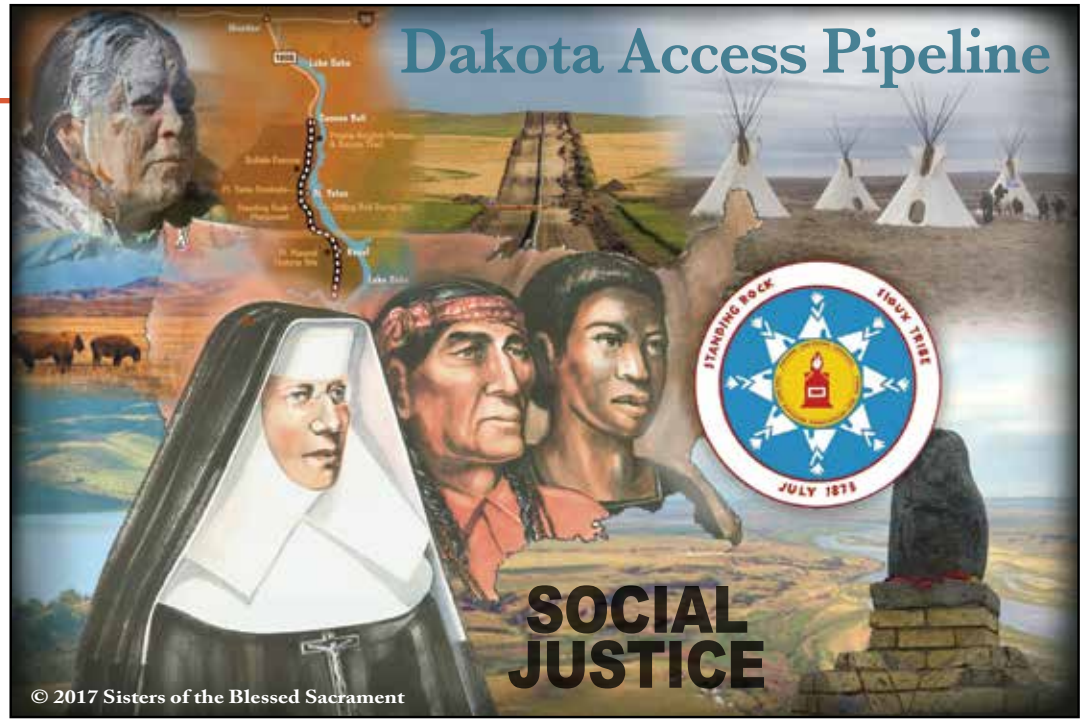
2017

JAN

US Army Corp of Engineers launches full environmental study

“Working for Social Justice can take many paths; Whichever path we take, we will walk with Jesus who was drawn to the outcasts, the wounded, and the needy.”

– St. Katharine Drexel



regarding the land, and the more recently expressed concern regarding the Sioux Tribes’ sacred ceremonies that involve clean water.

Jamil Dakar of the American Civil Liberties Union referred to president Trump’s decision to expedite construction as a *“slap in the face to Native Americans.”* Sadly, this is something that the Native Americans have grown accustomed to in their dealings with the federal government and large corporations over the years regarding land infringement and other issues. Those battles, too, have spawned protests and the banding together of tribes; however, in the case of the Dakota Access Pipeline, the tribes are not only wanting to preserve their legal rights to land ownership, they are hoping to protect the primary water source for the Standing Rock Reservation, the Missouri River, and just as sacred, the burial sites/historic land that lies in the path of the proposed pipeline which have great sentimental, cultural and religious significance to the Sioux tribe.

Through the help of social media, even more interest and outrage has grown from the public, environmentalists and other activist groups who have pledged their support since April 2016 when the citizens of Standing Rock Sioux Nation established the Sacred Stone Camp. These camps historically date back to colonial times when they were used by the tribes as forms of protest as well as resistance to any attempts to displace them.

Media Consultant and self proclaimed activist Allison Renville is a member of the Lakota Nation who has logged many hours at the opposition camp over the past two years. In an interview with NPR, she stated, “Not only do I have faith in God, but I have faith in my people.” Referring to the 10,000+ people who have come in to be educated on using tools and non-violent direct action as well as to learn camp set-up protocols, she added, “They’ll be able to get anything accomplished.”

continued on pg. 8

JAN	JAN	JAN	FEB	FEB	MAR
Fed. Judge Boasberg denies Energy Transfer Partner attempts to block Corp of Engineer’s study	Pres. Trump signs executive actions to advance construction of DAPL & Keystone pipeline	Military Vets announce their support of Sioux Tribe	Pope Francis speaks to Indigenous Peoples Forum in Rome hinting at his support of protestors	36 Holdout Protesters Arrested / North Dakota Camps Are Closed by Police	Judge declares he will decide fate of DAPL by Mar. 7

Lawyers for the Sioux Tribe state that they will continue to fight the battle legally in the courts.

Arguments from Energy Transfer Partners, the construction company responsible for the Dakota Access Pipeline, contend that the pipeline is not only safe, but that it doesn't pass through any land owned by the Standing Rock Sioux, an arguable statement if one studies various diagrams of DAPL's proposed route.

As protesting at the North Dakota camp site has dwindled since last August, police arrested the 36 holdouts and closed down the camp on Feb. 23. About a week later Judge Boasberg announced that he would make his decision by March 7 on the fate of their opposing arguments, which now cites religious based opposition to the pipeline.

In response, the attorneys for the Tribe insist they will continue the fight in the court system.

A New Call To Action: 5 New Ways That You Can Help

1. Prayer is always a powerful weapon against social and racial injustices. Continue to pray for those directly affected by this and other pipelines, and that the protesters/opponents of DAPL, Keystone and other pipelines will find peaceful means to demonstrate and fight for their beliefs. Pray that our government will uphold the law and heed any suggestions by the Army Corps of Engineers to do further environmental/impact studies, and that they will consider alternate routes that will not compromise lives or lifestyles of the Native American people.

2. You can do your part to express opposition to this pipeline by signing the petition online at <https://act.credoaction.com/sign/NoDAPL> which declares, "The Dakota Access pipeline would fuel climate change, cause untold damage to the environment, and significantly disturb sacred lands and the way of life for Native Americans in the upper Midwest."



Above: Painted by two Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (SBS, Sr. M. Julius and Sr. M. Lurana, the scene depicts the desire of St. Katharine and the SBS to educate and share their faith in the love of Jesus Christ with the Black and Native American Peoples. St. Katharine was a pioneer for social & racial justice for all people.

Or sign one of these other petitions related to other pipelines nearby Native American Lands:

Diamond Pipeline:

<https://www.change.org/p/tom-cotton-stop-plains-all-american-pipeline-from-building-the-diamond-pipeline>

Keystone XL Pipeline:

<https://350.org/campaigns/stop-keystone-xl/>

No More Tar Sands Pipelines:

<http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/campaigns/Energy/tarsands/>

3. Set a good example by participating in peaceful protests regarding other environmental & social justice related issues.

4. Call or write your local representatives and your governor, congressman/woman and senator to ask them to act justly and in the best interest of the Native American tribes and our environment when considering legislation and actions to address the Dakota Access Pipeline and other similar issues.

5. Information is knowledge. Take the lessons that were learned from this story, research information about issues that you would like to become actively involved in, and use that knowledge to become proactive and TAKE A STAND against all racial and social injustices.

New Faces & Places

continued from pg. 11

beginning at the church and ending at the house hosting each night's posada. Crowds of 50 plus walked singing carols from home to home with some chanting conversation at each house along the way. The walking ended at the house hosting the posada with a prayer, a reading and reflection. The final posada occurred at the church shortly before Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

Below: Sr. Amelia Breton, SBS, poses with two Spanish Dancers during the posada festivities during Advent season in Quincy, Florida.



Below: The caravan of 50 plus participants traveled from house to house until they reached the home hosting that night's posada.



Associates in Action

The Associates of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (ASBS) met in July 2016 prior to the Celebration of Gratitude at the Motherhouse for their 2016 ASBS Pilgrimage. Presently there are over 485 Associates in 24 locations in the U.S. and one ASBS Faith Community in Ferrier, Haiti.



The pilgrimage included liturgies, time for sharing and socializing and a fun bus tour of the Black Catholic Churches within the Philadelphia area, a lunch at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, a visit to the Holy Doors at the Cathedral Basilica Sts. Peter and Paul followed by a drive past the former Drexel summer home in Torresdale.

To view event photos visit:

<https://asbspilgrimage2016.shutterfly.com>



Some of the SBS in attendance warmly congratulated some of the new Associates for their commitment during a mass at St. Charles Borromeo parish in Bensalem, PA during the 2016 Pilgrimage.

SBS Poses with the New ASBS Leadership During Celebration of Gratitude in July 2016



Pictured L to R: Carole Blanks, ASBS Director; Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS Vice President; Sr. Sandra Schmidt, SBS Councilor; Sr. Jean Olmstead, SBS Councilor; Sr. Donna Breslin, SB President and ASBS Assistant Directors: Joyce Hadley & Margie Groot.



COMMUNICATIONS

Changes in Motherhouse Staff

Cheri Wenger believes that it is no coincidence that she randomly found the job posting for the **Communications Manager** position on a job board that she had not visited previously. In fact, she even referenced feeling that it was *“not only a job, but a calling”* on her cover letter when applying for the position with the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

Since moving back “home” (*Cheri is a native of NE Philly*), visiting St. Katharine Drexel’s shrine was often suggested by family members, and she felt a strong desire to visit the campus. So when this job opportunity arose, calling upon her talents in design, writing and photography — *the very unique blend of skills that the job required* — it seemed definite in her mind that this was all part of God’s masterplan. It was also clear that this was where He was leading her on a new and challenging career path. The only coincidence was how the interview process brought her to the very site she kept trying to find the time to see.

Cheri credits her 12 years upbringing within the Catholic school system in developing her skills of self discipline and organization. As the Bambi, her school mascot at St. Hubert’s Catholic High School, she learned that it can be fun and energizing to stand out as a leader. She also acknowledges the invaluable training she received as a Print Shop *“Girl Friday”* for learning a valuable career lesson — **that you should never limit yourself to your set job duties. When you are asked to do new tasks, you only learn and grow from them, both personally and professionally.** That position, as well as early days in retail management and art directing, well prepared her for the position as Communications Manager.



Cheri is inspired by this quote from St. Katharine... *“We are God’s hands, God’s instruments.”*

DEVELOPMENT



Denise Kirk has assumed the new part-time position as **Development Assistant** to assist in the Finance department with donations, donor acknowledgement, as well as maintaining and updating the mailing lists. She brings with her 31 years experience in administration and finance previously working for the *Philadelphia Inquirer/Daily News* — a wonderful asset for the SBS.

The transition into her new position was a comfortable and easy one due to the warm reception she received. Denise added *“Everyone has been so welcoming. There is just something so special that happens as soon as you drive onto the campus. It is a feeling of peace and serenity. I have never experienced that before at a job.”* She also credits staff members Lee Buxby, Denise Sarber and Andrea Delia with helping her to acclimate to her new position.

As a mother of two children, Denise has previously had the opportunity to visit the Motherhouse Campus and National Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel when she chaperoned her son’s school trip over ten years ago. She also notes that both of her children, coincidentally, attend Drexel University.

Coincidence or not, many employees find that there is a bit of fate involved in why they end up here in their present position. For Denise, it was no different. She was waiting to hear back on another position as a teacher’s aide when she received the call with the job offer from our HR department. The following Monday she was offered the other job, but told them she had already accepted this position, a decision she doesn’t regret. Denise references that *“the spirit of St. Katharine inspires her every day to try to be a better person...someone who helps those who are not treated fairly and someone who loves Jesus unconditionally even through periods of doubt and questioning.”*

New Faces & Places

Advent in Quincy, FL

Sr. Amelia Breton's bi-lingual skills in Spanish and English will be a great asset in her new SBS ministry near Tallahassee serving the Hispanic community at St. Thomas the Apostle in Quincy, FL, a church made up of Mexican, African American, Salvadorian, and Anglo parishioners.



"I am deeply impressed and inspired by the devotion of the people here at St. Thomas," Sr. Amelia shared shortly after their celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe during Advent. She continued, *"There is a real love for the Blessed Mother and a deep faith that, although it might not have all the theological knowledge, one can't help but to be touched and inspired by it. The rosaries and the posadas are prayed with reverence — without rush even in rain and cold weather. I must say Quincy is blessed."*



This year, in honor of Our Lady's feast day, there were ten different groups within the parish community who started the celebration on Dec. 3 by praying the rosary in different houses each night for nine consecutive days. On Dec. 11th the celebration continued with the singing of *mañanitas* to the "**Morenita**" meaning *small dark skinned woman*, as they refer to Our Lady. This was followed by a festival of food and traditional Mexican dances. Parishioners brought flowers along with pictures and statues of Our Lady to be blessed. A prayer and song-filled procession around Quincy concluded at the church, ending the night with a Mass. Even though it is primarily a Mexican custom, the Salvadorian parishioners participated as well.

Dec. 16 marked the start of the posadas, a novena in preparation for the birth of Christ which included a nightly caravan

continued on pg. 9

"Follow each day of the call when the fullness of time will come just as the will of God appoints."

- St. Katharine Drexel

Paul's Run Selected as New Home for Some of the SBS



After much planning and discussion, we are pleased to announce that a new residence has been selected for some of the retired Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (SBS) requiring skilled care and assisted living. Paul's Run is a highly-rated, Continuing Care Retirement Community located in the Northeast Philadelphia area, not far from the Bensalem motherhouse campus.

Some of the semi-retired Sisters will also reside in the independent living section of this Liberty Lutheran, not-for-profit community, established in 1981.

The moving process began on February 6, 2017 with Sr. Maureen Patricia Ryan and Sr. Helene Slavin being the pioneers for the SBS, followed by Sr. Kathryn Gates and Sr. Michaelleen Lavin the following day. Approximately, twice a week, a pair of sisters will make the transition to the new facility following a traditional missioning ceremony and a waving send-off. The last moves are projected to occur in early May.



Save the Date:
Sept. 10, 2017, 3-8 p.m.
Pen Ryn Mansion



The Annual GALA Event Will Return to It's New Venue

On October 29, 2016, supporters of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament gathered together for a lovely evening at the beautiful Pen Ryn Mansion in Bucks County, PA for a cocktail hour, hors d'oeuvres, followed by a delicious dinner, prize raffles, great conversations and a fun night of dancing.

Mark your calendar for Sept. 10, 2017 to lend your support to the Sisters. Check our website and the Shrine for more ticket and table information starting in late April.



Above: GALA attendees put on their fine attire and big smiles for a wonderful night of unity and "fun"draising.



A 100th Birthday Celebration for our SBS Centenarian, Sr. Maureen Patricia Ryan



Sr. Maureen Patricia Ryan, SBS, is surrounded by her three nephews, Noel, Kevin and Ted Roberts from Ireland, who flew in especially for the 100th birthday celebration.

On January 29, 2017 in the festively decorated Addition Parlor of the Motherhouse, surrounded by news reporters, a few family members, friends, and fellow Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Sr. Maureen Patricia Ryan beamed in the spotlight of attention celebrating a very special milestone — her 100th Birthday.

The biggest surprise for Sr. Maureen Patricia was being reunited with her three nephews from Ireland who brought loving wishes from her family along with old photos to share with their aunt.

Right: Sr. Maureen Patricia with her nephew Kevin, looks at one of the proclamations she received.



Time to blow out the candles on her 100th birthday cake.



The centenarian, Sr. Maureen Patricia Ryan, SBS, is interviewed by Peggy Quann of the Bucks County Courier Times while NBC news reporter, Dave Palmer sets up to film his interview with Sister.



Above: Sister Maureen Patricia couldn't contain her smiles with all the lovely cards, well wishes, gifts, and attention she received on her 100th birthday.



State Representative Gene DiGirolamo and Senator Tommy Tomlinson were in attendance to present her with special proclamations, which also included one from Bensalem Township Mayor, Joe DiGirolamo who wasn't able to attend the event.



Sr. June Fisher, SBS
 Aug. 14, 1934 ~ Oct. 11, 2016

Christ Jesus be Incarnate in Me

Born on August 14, 1934, Catherine June Fisher was fourth of five daughters for Herbert & Esther Fisher, natives of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She was baptized two weeks later at St. Mary's Northside and

attended elementary school at St. Peter's Northside. June's father died when she was very young, but her mother managed to keep the family together. June spent her first two years of high school at St. Mary's on Webster Avenue, the site of St. Katharine Drexel's novitiate with the Sisters of Mercy, however due to problems with the school building, June finished out high school at Annunciation. June later graduated from St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing with her R.N. in 1955 and worked briefly as a pediatric nurse at Divine Providence Hospital, where she met Fr. Joseph Rengers, a Holy Ghost priest who had worked with the SBS, and encouraged June to write to the SBS. Subsequently, June entered the congregation on September 8, 1956, and the following summer, she became a novice and received her religious name of Sr. Marie Monique. On August 5, 1959, Sister professed her first vows, and on August 5, 1964, Sister pronounced her perpetual vows. She later returned to her baptismal name.

Sr. June so beautifully lived out her motto: *Christ Jesus be Incarnate in Me* through her gentle and caring spirit and love & concern for the poor and those on the margins of societies which included nursing & health care, student services, campus ministry, pastoral ministry, and mission work in Haiti and Guatemala. During her time in Santa Fe, New Mexico, she was actively involved in the peace and justice movements, and worked alongside national and local organizers to scale back nuclear weapons in the 80s. Sr. June also served a five-year term as vice president of the Congregation from 1985-1990.

After suffering a massive stroke the morning of Tuesday, October 4th, Sr. June was sent to the hospital, returned to the motherhouse two days later, and peacefully passed on to eternal life on Oct. 11, 2016.



Sr. Madonna Walsh, SBS
 Nov. 1, 1928 ~ Oct. 18, 2016

For me to live is Christ

The marriage of Margaret Lyons and Thomas Walsh, both of Buffalo, NY, was blessed with twelve children. When the eleventh child was born, she was baptized with the name of Madonna at St. Gerard Church. St. Teresa School was the site

of her elementary education and during those years she made her First Communion and was confirmed. Mercy Academy provided her high school education.

The example of two aunts who were Mercy Sisters, combined with the influence from her high school teachers, did not draw her to that order because, as she wrote in her own words, "*I wanted to be a missionary.*" Madonna consulted her confessor who liked the work of the SBS and suggested that she visit our Motherhouse. She did, and in August 1947 following her high school graduation, she entered the SBS congregation. At her reception in 1948, she took the name of Sr. Mary John Dominic. After two more years of preparation, Sister put on the black veil for her profession in 1950. Inscribed in the silver ring given to her for her final profession in 1955, was her motto: "*For me to live is Christ.*"

Sister's early years of ministry included teaching, in-home visitations, and serving in the Motherhouse in charge of hospitality, as well as a volunteer at the Mission Center. Eventually, she served as the sacristan at St. Michael Hall Chapel until 2013. Gradually, Sister slowed down and needed more assistance with daily activities. In July of 2016, she was placed on Hospice. In October, she was noticeably weaker and unable to speak. On the 17th of the month, Sister's breathing became more and more shallow. The next evening she slept quietly until she woke up to the magnificence of God's face.

Sr. Madonna once wrote about her lengthy ministry as an educator, "I taught 22 years in the first grade. . . My heart remained with the little ones." For Sister, Christ was truly the center of both her life and her ministry. She gave great witness to her motto throughout her life and work as a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament.



Sr. Marguerite Lewis, SBS

Aug. 3, 1933 ~ Nov. 28, 2016

My Soul Shall Be Joyful in My God

The happy marriage of Marguerite Murphy to Arthur Lewis, natives of Albany, New York lead to the birth of four daughters. The second child, born on August 3, 1933, was baptized Marguerite Theresa in the chapel of the Maternity Hospital and Infant Home in Albany. She attended elementary school at St. James Institute where she also received

her First Holy Communion and Confirmation. The Academy of the Holy Names provided her high school instruction. During this time she consulted a priest at a Jesuit Retreat House for advice because she wanted to become “a religious in the missionary field” and “wished to enter an order which taught Negroes.” He recommended the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, however it was until two years after her graduation that she entered the congregation in 1953. She chose the religious name: Sr. Mariella. Following two more years of instruction Sister pronounced her vows in March 1956. Sr. Mariella’s first assignment of education was at St. Peter Claver School in Philadelphia. Concurrently, she earned her Bachelor’s Degree. She professed her final vows in 1961, receiving a silver ring engraved with her motto: *My soul shall be joyful in my God*. She shared her joy of teaching at St. Mark School in New York as well as Holy Providence, Holy Ghost, and St. Monica’s in Gary, Indiana. By this time she had earned her Master’s Degree from Villanova University.

Now using her baptismal name, Sr. Marguerite, selflessly and lovingly dedicated herself to the various ministries she served and the people she ministered to. In the 70s she was a school principal, and served as Vocations Director for the SBS. Pala, California was the scene of her ministry for most of the 1980’s. During the 90s, her work included pastoral and individual counseling. Sr. Marguerite spoke out when necessary about the drug dealers in her area at a community board meeting, urging them to take action, which was later revealed in an article in the *New York Observer*. Throughout her life she expressed an intense concern for the safety and well-being of her students.

Following a fall in May 2016 which lead to a broken wrist, Sr. Marguerite’s health deteriorated. In the fall, she spent time in the hospital, and on the recommendation of the doctors, she was placed on Hospice. On November 27, Sister’s condition became critical. At various times Sisters went to her room and prayed silently with her. At 10:35 a.m. the next day, November 28, 2016, Sister Marguerite peacefully met her eternal God.

Lighterhearted Tales of Ministry

A Memory Shared on our SBS Facebook Page about Sr. Marguerite Lewis

I best remember Sister Marguerite at her sisters home at Thanksgiving time in Delmar. She always took time to talk to each of us. I will remember having a deep and somber conversation about Gods love with her. I was a serious young teen, basking in her joy in serving Jesus. Just as the conversation got too serious, she jumped up from the couch, did tricks with her veil and talked about how God’s love is fun and wonderful. My best lesson from her was the happiness that His love provides. She was a wonderful example and teacher to everyone she met.

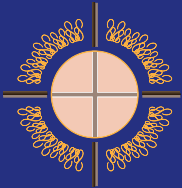
— Peggy Cook



“Love is proved by deeds... We are God’s hands, God’s instruments.”

– St. Katharine Drexel

**St. Katharine Drexel
Feastday: March 3, 2017**



Our Sister *Spotlight* on
Sr. Pat Marshall, SBS

Sr. Pat Marshall has been a lifelong advocate for human rights, and starting in 1981 became the first Director of the Social Justice Office for the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She caught the eye of CBS News reporter, Leslie Stahl, and producer Jay Kernis back in 1998 with her work related to social justice and the corporate world, however it was her lengthy work with ICCR that landed her their 2012 Legacy Award.

ICCR, *established 45 years ago*, is an interfaith alliance that bands together faith based communities to promote corporate responsibility through shareholder activism — encouraging companies to act justly not only to their employees, but the workers who produce/create their products. It also challenges companies to be socially conscious in regards to product branding — to not offend groups of people or negatively depict their heritage, and to combat racial and gender discrimination within corporations.

Sr. Pat's work with ICCR since the early 80s has always strived for win-win solutions for both corporations and the people negatively affected by corporate policies.

Left: Sr. Pat Marshall accepting her 2012 Legacy Award in New York City from ICCR, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, for her faithful commitment to human rights & social justice. To learn more about this organization, visit www.iccr.org.



Right: Sr. Pat Marshall, SBS, photographed in January 2016 at the Motherhouse. At 96 years of age, she still finds ways to make her mark...following in the steps of the foundress of her congregation, St. Katharine Drexel.

You can download our Novenas and other prayers on our website at:

www.KatharineDrexel.org/prayers

Visit our Facebook & Web Pages



www.Facebook.com/SistersoftheBlessedSacrament

Use your cell phone to scan & view our website with a QR code reader.



Did You Know?

Sr. Pat Marshall has been a long time contributor to the Bucks County Courier Times newspaper, the largest news organization in the Philly suburbs, and at 96, she still continues to submit relevant articles to them.

EMPOWERING MINDS + CREATING HOPE + BUILDING FAITH + SEEKING JUSTICE



Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament

FOUNDED BY SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL

1663 Bristol Pike | Bensalem, PA 19020 | (215) 244-9900