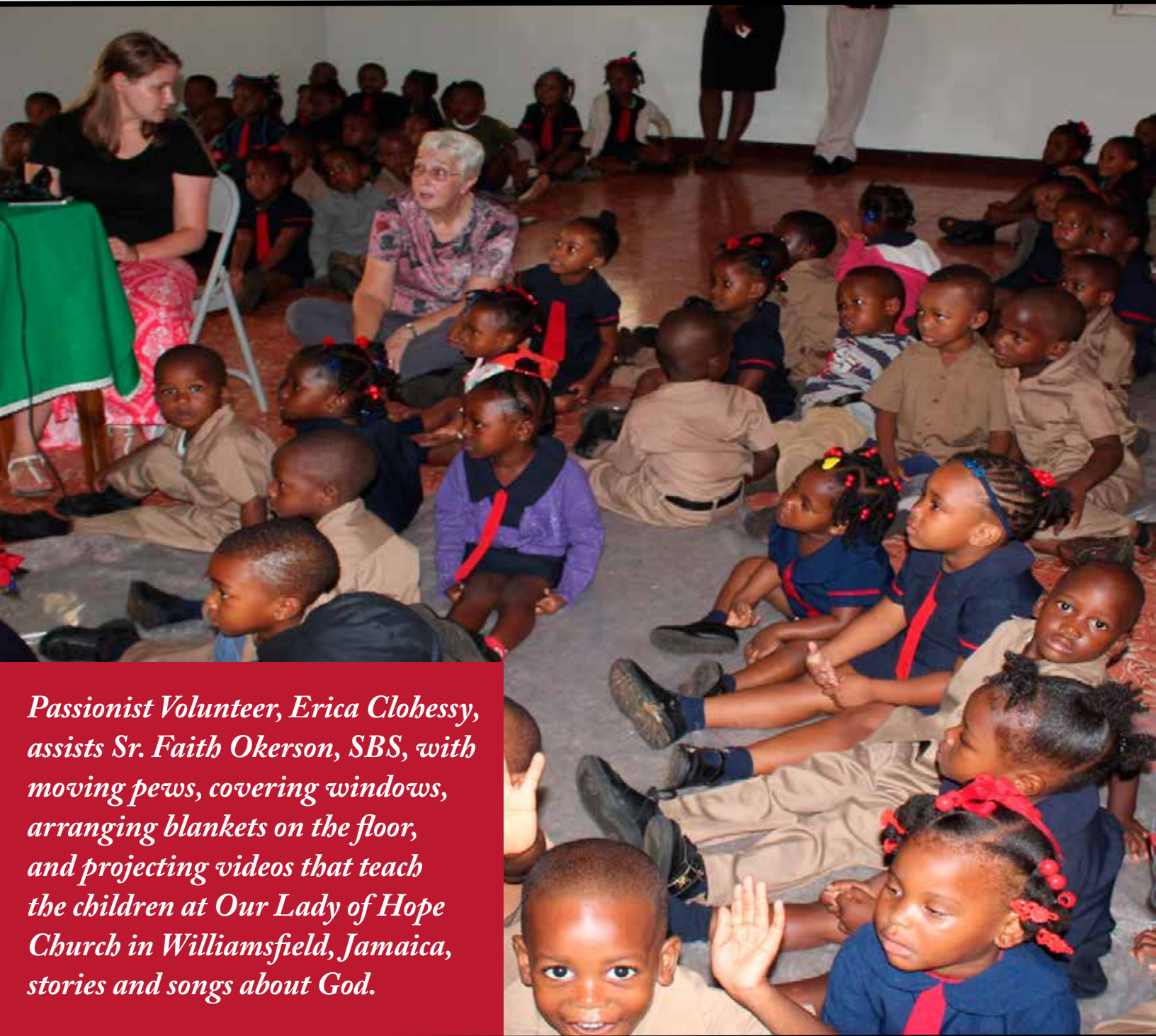


2018 LXXXII 1

# MISSION MAGAZINE

EMPOWERING MINDS + CREATING HOPE + BUILDING FAITH + SEEKING JUSTICE

A EUCHARISTIC FOCUSED MISSION



*Passionist Volunteer, Erica Clohessy, assists Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS, with moving pews, covering windows, arranging blankets on the floor, and projecting videos that teach the children at Our Lady of Hope Church in Williamsfield, Jamaica, stories and songs about God.*

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS: Listening to God in Jamaica | The Issue of Immigration | ASBS in Action | ASBS Emily Milner Celebrates 100th Birthday | What's Happening Now — Ministry Updates | News & Events | XULA Homecoming | In Loving Memory | Our Sister Spotlight: Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS



*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 St. Catherine Building. Please direct all comments and correspondence to the address above in care of the editor or email Cheri at:

[sbscm.wenger@gmail.com](mailto:sbscm.wenger@gmail.com)

**Editorial** *Contributors*

**Design | Editing | Photography**

Cheri Wenger, Communications Mgr.

**Proofreading**

Sr. Marjorie Everett, SBS

**Special Contributions**

Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS  
*Editorial & Photography*

Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS  
*Editorial*

Renee Tsinnie (SMIS)  
*Editorial & Photography*

**New!** Phone: 215-244-8174  
Fax: 215-244-7790

**The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament**, founded in 1891 by St. Katharine Drexel, is a congregation dedicated to the interracial 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 Administrative offices of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament continue to be located in Bensalem, Pa.

**President's** *Message*

March 2018

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

As we journey through the Lenten season towards Easter Sunday, we are offered an opportunity for reflection. I am reminded of a quote from St. Katharine Drexel that speaks to the Core Values of the SBS to promote justice and peace.



*"Be diligent at your work, and peaceful."*

- St. Katharine Drexel

As Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, we are called to embrace these words of St.

Katharine by becoming living examples of the Eucharistic Christ, and approaching our commitment to uphold social justice by peaceful means, as Jesus Himself did.

We live in turbulent times where social injustices and prejudice still exist. Today, however, many people are taking a stand for what they believe is right and just. Some are calling attention to gross injustices and are conscientiously bearing witness to the gospel message of Jesus. As Christians, we seek to promote unity and community throughout the world by peaceful means.

This edition of **MISSION** shares living examples of our Sisters diligently ministering among God's people enthusiastically fulfilling their spiritual and material needs in a just and peaceful manner.

We wish you and your family peace and joy in the risen Lord this Easter. Many blessings on your endeavors as you, too, work peacefully and diligently in God's name.

Sincerely in the Blessed Sacrament,

*Sr. Donna Breslin*

SBS President



**On the Cover...**

Children gather each Friday morning in the back of Our Lady of Hope Church where they meet with Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS, for devotion followed by some educational time learning songs and stories about God.

Photo courtesy of: Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS

**Sr. Faith Okerson:  
Listening to God  
in Jamaica**

*Collaborative article by Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS  
and Cheri Wenger, SBS Communications Manager*



**Sr. Faith Okerson, SBS**  
*Campus Minister,  
Catholic College of Mandeville (CCM)  
Mandeville, Jamaica, West Indies*

In March 2014, Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS phoned me from Jamaica, West Indies, where she was interviewing for a ministry position in the **Diocese of Mandeville**. Sister Jane explained that Bishop Neil Tiedemann, CP had offered her a position as part-time campus minister in both a high school and a small Catholic college. Sister Jane responded she would be happy to be the full-time campus minister at the high school, and she believed she knew another SBS who might agree to take a full-time position at the college.

I was particularly pleased that Bishop Neil declined my request for a role description. He asked me instead to look for and implement ways to evangelize according to the needs of the college and my own giftedness. The role description, he suggested, would be written later from the programs that were successful. This discerning approach to ministry has proven to be central to my experience in the Diocese of Mandeville.

At CCM, I initially led weekly devotion for the student body, taught basic overview courses in Scripture and ethics, and held one-day retreats for faculty/staff and for students. However, the Catholic College was in financial difficulty that led to the decision to teach two undergraduate programs beginning summer 2016. The students who remained at CCM were then all part-time, attending classes from 4 – 7 p. m. The ability to serve them as campus minister was severely limited. I began, then, to serve the college as a member of the Transition Team which managed and restructured the college. The Team hired a new President in January 2017 to lead the college in a fresh direction. The Transition Team was dissolved, and I have continued to serve both the undergraduate and graduate CCM programs as **part-time campus minister**. I also continue to lead weekly devotions for the three to five-year-olds at **Our Lady of Hope Early Education Institution** adjacent to the college.



*Above: Students shown on the campus of the Catholic College of Mandeville (CCM).*

*Left/Below: On Sat., January 13 at Bishop Burke Hall, Mandeville, Sr. Faith taught Catholic Social Justice to Catholics.*



*"...the secret of life is to live in the present with God, and to fulfill the duty of the present, in the presence of God."*

- St. Katharine Drexel



*continued on pg. 4*

## Listening to God in Jamaica

*continued from pg. 3*

In the beginning, Sr. Jane and I shared the use of a car and lived in Christiana outside of Mandeville when ministering at our respective sites. When Sr. Jane was elected Vice-President of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament July 2015, I returned to live alone in the two-story, five-bedroom convent at Sacred Heart Parish where we had resided together. In August 2016, I moved at the request of the diocese, to an apartment in **Our Lady of Dunsinane Shrine** just outside Mandeville.



Occasionally at Our Lady of Hope EEI, we are assisted by teachers and volunteers from Catholic parishes in the U.S. This group was from Holy Angels Parish in Kentucky.

### Love for Praying the Rosary Continues with Group Initially Founded by Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS, in Mandeville in 2014

During the period when Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS, served full-time as the **High School Campus Minister** at Mt. St. Joseph in Mandeville, Jamaica in 2014, she began a prayer group that met weekly to pray the rosary together.

Upon her return visit in 2016, Sr. Jane was delighted to learn that the group continued to meet. Even though few of the students were Catholic, they remained united in their love of praying the rosary, and extended the invitation for new members to join them.

A mother of one of the group members shared that when they first began meeting, she didn't understand the prayer, but was just happy to see her daughter praying. Her child even continued to pray the rosary privately in her room at home.



Sr. Jane leads group in praying the Rosary, a group formed in 2014, that today, still continues to meet and grow.

Above: Students hold up signs at Holiday Harvest event held last fall at Our Lady of Hope EEI, located in Williamsfield, Jamaica.

I assumed responsibility to greet North American mission groups who arrived to reside at the Shrine during their short mission experiences. These groups donate financial assistance and invaluable services to diocesan parishes, schools and medical clinics.

Given these new circumstances, I continued to apply Bishop Neil's suggestion to discern, but broadened my focus from the college to the diocese... *What was God seeking to do for the people here that He had given me the ability to support?* I periodically meet with Archbishop Dufour, the current Diocesan Administrator, to keep him abreast of my activities.

### I sometimes meet one-time specific needs such as:

- Facilitating the Focus Group input into the Diocesan Education Policy Manual;
- Clarifying the meaning of the term Catholic Identity for new members at the Diocesan School Boards Meeting;

*continued on page 5*



After their prayer together, Our Lady of Hope EEI principal, Mrs. Kizzy Barrett-Royal, asked Sr. Faith to bless the produce the parents were purchasing to support the school.

- Facilitating the surfacing of core values from various groups at Mt. St. Joseph High School.

### Continual Assistance Given to:

- Help the Director of Catechists in the education and training of catechists in the diocese. This has included teaching one-day training sessions for Mandeville catechists, presenting at National Catechists Day, and giving retreats to the Catechetical Institute of Jamaica. I am scheduled to give a day's retreat to this year's catechumens, and am an active resource person for the catechists in my own parish;
- Organize or assist in giving one-day retreats to various groups;
- Hold monthly 20 - 30 minute adult education presentations after Sunday Mass in three different parishes;
- Collaborate with the Director of Catholic Schools to strengthen the religious education programs in the schools;
- Assist with the orientation of the new Passionist Volunteers each July as they prepare to live together in community and to spend a year of service in the Mandeville Diocese.

How meaningful, then, are these words of **Saint Katharine Drexel...**

*"The active life, to be productive, must have contemplation. When it gets to a certain height, it overflows to active life and gets help and strength from the love of God."*

## Chapel Dedication



Above: Archbishop Charles Dufour, Administrator of Mandeville Diocese outside the front door of the Chapel. A mission group there for their tenth year in a row, members from St. John the Evangelist Church of Severna Park, MD, participated in the Chapel Dedication.

Below: Sr. Faith Okerson dresses the newly constructed wooden altar for its blessing during the dedication ceremony. Father Michael Rowe, C.P., Rector of St. Paul Cathedral, and Archbishop Charles Dufour look on.



Right: A new St. Joseph statue that complements the size and style of the BVM statue was blessed at the ceremony and purchased through individual contributions of many of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.



*Blessed to implement ways to evangelize according to the needs of those I serve and through my own giftedness.*



# The Issue of Immigration

Challenging All Forms of Racism and Other Deeply Rooted Injustices in Our Society

*“We cannot show animosity or acrimony to anyone who is different from us. Skin color or national origin doesn’t matter to God and it should not matter to us either. What does matter is that we love others as we love ourselves and that we show hospitality to immigrants, regardless of where they’re from. Jesus articulates how we are to ‘love’ others when he states: ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’” (Mark 12:31)*

**Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and Associates of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Social Justice Committee**

Thousands of years ago God addressed the issue of immigration when he told the children of Abraham:

*“You shall treat the immigrant who resides with you no differently than those born among you; you shall love the immigrant as yourself; for you too, were once immigrants in the land of Egypt.” (Leviticus 19:34)*

*“Cursed be anyone who deprives the resident immigrant, the orphan or the widow of justice!” (Deuteronomy 27:19)*

God places a curse on anyone who does not ensure justice for the widows, orphans and immigrant. They have just as much of a right to justice as do the citizens of this land. If any immigrant has entered the country and claimed the nation as his or her own, they are now part of this nation and as such, they have equal rights under the law.

*“And all the people shall answer, Amen.” (Deuteronomy 27:19)*

God has always been concerned about those who are on the fringes of society and are least able to defend themselves and their own rights.

St. Katharine Drexel, SBS embraced this concern of God’s when in 1891 she established a congregation of women religious to serve African Americans who had only been emancipated 28 years and to support Native Americans who lived under policies of extermination and assimilation that were embodied in legislation.



Today the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament continue to challenge all forms of racism and all other social injustices in our nation and our world.

Immigration reform and the treatment of immigrants at this moment in our nation is at odds not only with all this great nation of immigrants stands for, but with God’s admonitions to us on how we are to treat the immigrants among us.

**Immigration to the United States is based upon the following principles:**

1. the reunification of families,
2. admitting immigrants with skills that are valuable to the U.S. economy,
3. protecting refugees and,
4. promoting diversity.

**We, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Call on All to Encourage Congress to:**

1. Protect these four principles (*especially the reunification of families and protecting refugees*):
2. To reform our immigration system by:
  - a. Developing a strong worker program in conjunction with Mexico’s department of labor;
  - b. Prosecuting businesses that foster illegal immigration by hiring coyotes to bring workers here illegally;
  - c. Giving the “DACA” women and men legal status and a path to citizenship; and
  - d. Making the process of coming into the United States legally more efficient.

We, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament are calling upon all people of faith to heed and act upon the word of God.



*“Have a cordial respect for others in heart and mind; if there is any prejudice in the mind we must uproot it, or it will pull us down.”*

- St. Katharine Drexel

## A Call to Action:

Contact your senators and representatives in Congress, your state legislature, and local officials asking them to work for justice for the immigrants among us.

*“Thus says the Lord of hosts, Render true judgements, show kindness and mercy to one another, do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the immigrant, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.” (Zechariah 7:9-10)*

God is speaking through Zechariah the Prophet that we are to render true judgements and not based upon who or what a person looks like. God is not only the defender of the widows, orphans, the poor, but also the immigrant. Remember, we too, are immigrants or descendents of immigrants.

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

- St. Katharine Drexel

## St. Katharine Went to Great Lengths to Carry Out Her Mission



**Above:** Mother Katharine accompanied by other Sisters, riding with the Navajo people in a crowded, open wagon.

**Below:** Mother Katharine compassionately buttons the coat of a toddler at Xavier Prep School.



**Below:** Mother Katharine had to travel by many means to establish schools and work to fight the injustices faced by the black and Indian peoples of her time.



**Below:** Mother Katharine and priests work together in Lukachukai in 1927 towards social justice.





## Local Associates Bring Christmas Cheer to the Sisters at Paul's Run



**Above:** Marcella Rucando, ASBS, puts some finishing touches on the small Christmas tree centerpiece while others set out cookies, veggies and stack up the presents into a pretty display.

**Below, Left:** Associate Joan Morawski shares a note and some conversation with Sr. Dorothy Dowd, SBS.

**Below, Right:** ASBS Event Coordinator, Brenda Greene, works on setting up the tables while fellow Associate, Trudy Brown, discusses her fond family memories of the SBS with Sr. Ruth Catherine, SBS, as they wait for others to arrive.



**Above:** Associates mingle with the SBS at a delightful holiday gathering.

**Right:** Sr. Therese Miscencik, SBS, catches up with Patricia Chiaffa, one of the ASBS who came to celebrate a bit of holiday cheer with the Sisters at Paul's Run.

On Saturday, December 10, 2017, the local Associates of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, known as the ASBS livened up the conference room at Paul's Run Retirement Community with lovely Christmas decor, beautifully wrapped presents and some snacks to share with the Sisters who attended the party.



**Above:** Associate, Michele Koniki talks about the toiletry items packaged and distributed to each of the SBS from a grateful friend of the Sisters for their prayers.

**Top Left:** Sr. Marjorie Everett, SBS, chooses an item to decorate her room for Christmas from the beautiful display table shown left.

**Bottom Left:** Sisters got to choose from a table of some recycled Christmas decorations to make their rooms a bit more festive.



**Above:** Emily Milner, ASBS, featured at a Mass in her honor. Emily's love for the SBS and St. Katharine is on-going. Even at the age of 100, Emily knowledgeably shares stories and information with those she meets.

Commissioned to the ASBS at the age of 96, Emily Milner has never let a thing like age stand in the way of being an active Associate. She rides the bus weekly to the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception where she takes people on tours and shares the story of St. Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

## Atlanta Associate Emily Milner Celebrates 100th Birthday

*Still Joyfully Sharing the Message of St. Katharine Drexel & the SBS*



**Above:** Fellow members of the Atlanta ASBS chapter join Emily and Fr. Msgr. Henry Gracz at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Atlanta, GA for a Mass honoring her 100th birthday.

**Right:** Mother Katharine's love for children is evident in this photo, shown with toddlers at Xavier Prep in New Orleans, LA.

Emily Milner graduated from Holy Providence and loved seeing Mother Katharine in her modest wheelchair enjoying some fresh air on the school grounds. She shared that Mother Katharine always told the Sister escorting her around the property to let the girls come over and talk with her, insisting that, "Mother Katharine loved her girls."



### Shopping = Donations

We are now registered with Amazon as a charity so each time you shop through **smile.amazon.com\*** or use our special link, 0.5% of the proceeds will be donated to the **Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.**

### Amazon Smile Program

VISIT

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-1353383>

After you log in to your account, you will go to the AmazonSmile shopping site to shop as you normally do.

\*Note: If you go to smile.amazon.com for the first time, you will have to locate The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament on Bristol Pike in Bensalem in the directory to designate us as your charity of choice.



# What's *Happening* Now

## Belle Glade, FL

Sr. Anne Meehan, SBS, & Sr. Laura Cavanaugh, SBS



Sr. Anne Meehan, SBS

## Healing and Liberating the Poor with the Help of SKD Parishes in Weston and Cape Coral.

Sr. Anne Meehan, SBS and Sr. Laura Cavanaugh, SBS marvel in the spirit of two local communities inspired by the charism of Saint Katherine Drexel (*whom their parishes were named after*) to help the less fortunate during the Christmas season.

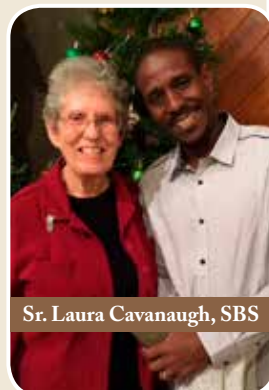
While this pair of Sisters seek to heal, liberate and release the poor and oppressed from their circumstances through providing nursing and education, they have found that...

**“The people are healing and liberating us in even MORE ways.” - Sisters Anne and Laura**

The people of God in each of these churches MORE than contribute to our ministries. This Christmas is filled with the highest quality of blankets, towels, toiletries, gifts for children and gift cards and more. These churches help pay rent, food, medical bills. *Where would we be without them?* Even more they give us witness as deeply committed disciples — healing and liberating the poor.

Top: Sr. Anne Meehan is with volunteers from SKD Parish in Cape Coral, FL who assist with stocking and/or delivering supplies for Diabetic Food Pantry.

Right: Sr. Laura Cavanaugh with Wilguens Chery, whom she tutored in English while he was on a work Visa, until he returned to family in Haiti.



Sr. Laura Cavanaugh, SBS

## Bay St. Louis, MS



Sr. Katherine Mary Chazotte, SBS

Sr. Katherine began her ministry first in Macon, Georgia and then moved to West Philadelphia in the state of Pennsylvania. For most of her teaching years, she taught in the primary grades. After many years in education, she changed to parish ministry, where Sr. Katherine worked up until 2012.

Her next mission included teaching for 5 years at Holy Trinity Catholic School in Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi as a resource teacher. After retiring from teaching Sr. Katherine became a volunteer at the school, and joined CASA, as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (*a program to aid children in foster care.*)

In the last year over 280,000 children had a CASA advocate speak up for their best interests, and a total of over 432,000 children are still awaiting an empowered volunteer to find them a safe, loving and permanent home. At present, the network is made up of close to just 87,000 volunteers, so the need is strong based upon the demand for these child services.

Sr. Katherine is presently working to assist two children in the system. She is hopeful that she will see them both return to their families soon.

For more information on CASA, click [here](#) to view their website.

## Lighthearted Tales of *Ministry*

### A Trio of Sisters Showcase Their Acting Talents by Joining the Actors Guild

The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament are a community accustomed to sharing their skills and talents within their ministry, but many are blessed with added talents from God that they enjoy sharing as well with others. Recently, Sr. Carole Eden, Sr. Marjorie Everett, and Sr. Kathleen Kajer joined the Actors Guild to showcase these talents in performances at Paul's Run events. Their commitment requires practice and dedication to learning new things. We applaud this trio of Sisters for stepping outside of their comfort zone and sharing their talents in a new and exciting form of ministry.



Sr. Marjorie Everett, SBS



Sr. Carole Eden, SBS



Sr. Kathleen Kajer, SBS

*We applaud you!*

## Paul's Run



### SBS Keep their Mission Alive by Putting Ministry Work into Motion

An update from Sr. Carole Eden, SBS

#### An Overview of SBS Ministries & Outreach

- Sisters join Eucharistic Ministers from Maternity BVM on Thursday for a Communion Service and distribution of Communion for Catholic residence. Sr. Mary Hottenroth, SBS is the coordinator of this ministry.
- Sr. Nicholas Cooke, SBS; Sr. Marjorie Everett, SBS; Sr. Carole Eden, SBS, and Sr. Christa McGill, SBS (*as a needed fill-in volunteer, when available*) at the General Store.
- Sisters participate with other residents when available:
  - Once a month meal preparation for Jane Adams home for abused women and their children
  - Making sandwiches for the homeless & for St. Francis Inn
- These Sisters drive fellow SBS to doctor's appointments, shopping and other activities: Sr. Joanne Bauer, Joan Burnes, Pat Downs, Marjorie Everett, Marilyn Foy, Anne Kelly, Geraldine Mikulec, and Jane Norton. Sr. Joanne sets up appointments and Sr. Anne Kelly assigns the cars.
- Sr. Margaret Sullivan, SBS, and Kathleen Kajer, SBS, help with the distribution of coffee at the morning social gathering on Thursday's; and on Thursdays and Saturdays, Sr. Carole Eden, SBS, helps run the movie in the auditorium.
- Sr. Mary Norbert Moline, SBS, serves as Eucharistic Minister and visits with those unable to attend Chapel at Paul's Run. She is extending the Ministry of Care and Outreach at St. Martin de Porres parish by facilitating a prayer group and reaching out to parishioners in prayer and through phone visitations.
- Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament visit shut-ins, serve as part of the Residence Council and participate on the Board of Friends of Paul's Run.
- Sr. Annette Marie O'Donnell, SBS, meets on Sundays with a faith sharing group, writes reflections on the readings for her blog, *Companions on a Faith Journey*, and helps in the care of the resident support dog, Homer. She and Sr. Joan Burnes, SBS, also ran a Sharing of the Psalms with residents in the Fall.



# What's *Happening* Now



## St. Martin de Porres Parish & Paul's Run

*"Every Day is a Day of Opportunity for Prayer and Service."*

- Sr. Mary Norbert Moline, SBS

Sr. Mary Norbert Moline, SBS believes that every day should begin with the Power of Prayer — *the electricity that flows through each day.*



Left/Below: Sr. Norbert facilitates the prayer group at St. Martin de Porres Parish in North Philadelphia.



## Opportunities for Prayer and Service

As a member of **St. Martin de Porres Parish**, Sr. Norbert joyfully welcomed the invitation to serve the Parish by extending its **Ministry of Care and Outreach**. The **formation of a prayer group** that meets regularly has been an awesome experience in bringing Sister and the parishioners together in praise and intercession. The group meets in the Parish Chapel. However, those who can't come to the Church are not left out — they get to experience outreach in prayer and by phone visitations.



Living at **Paul's Run Retirement Community**, Sister Norbert makes every day a day of opportunity to share a personal service and/or prayer with someone who can no longer come to Chapel. She assists weekly serving as a **minister of the Eucharist**, and also enjoys helping in the **monthly preparation of meals for the homeless, and for women and children living in a shelter.**

## St. Francis Inn & Paul's Run

*"St. Francis Inn offers a listening ear and a helping hand in a non-judgmental environment, assisting the guests (not called clients) to help themselves to use this opportunity for bettering their life in Kensington."*

- Sr. Margaret Sullivan, SBS

Women's Center. These services are provided with dignity and respect for those in which they serve.

A driver picks up Sr. Margaret so that she can volunteer her time once a week to assist at the Inn distributing meals to the guests, many of whom offer blessings back to her and other volunteers for their service and kindness. She noted that there is a sign that appears on the inside of the front door reminding all that **Jesus is at the door**...what a loving reminder of treating others as you would treat God.



When **Sr. Margaret Sullivan, SBS**, was preparing to move to Philadelphia from Birmingham, AL, she took to the internet in search of a place in which she could contribute hands-on ministry work. That is where she first discovered St. Francis Inn Ministries, an organization providing services to residents and homeless individuals in the Kensington area of Philadelphia. It was founded by two Franciscan Friars in December 1979 to respond to the current needs of the poor.

Today, they provide multiple services: daily meals through St. Francis Inn and its generous benefactors; and other basic essentials available at the Thrift Store; education and support to end the cycle of poverty provided through the St. Francis Urban Center, and a safe haven for women dealing with abuse, addiction and poverty is provided at the Thea Bowman

## St. Athanasius School & Paul's Run

After relocating to Paul's Run in northeast Philadelphia from working dual duties teaching Sophmores at St. Michael Indian School and serving as Pastoral Life Coordinator at St. Anthony Parish in Many Farms, Arizona, **Sr. Christa McGill, SBS** used her contacts within the Philadelphia Archdiocese to locate her new ministry — a process which only took a mere phone call or two to find.



After speaking on the phone and then visiting with **Pastor of St. Athanasius Parish, Fr. Joseph Okonski**, Sr. Christa agreed to assist their parish school with **Faith Enrichment** for students from Pre-K through 8th grade. In addition to this, she also assists with **RCIC (Rite of Christian Initiation of Children)** which includes preparation for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. She also facilitates Retreat Days for faculty, staff and Archdiocesan employees.

Often, the **Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament** must rely upon the charity of others to perform their ministry work. Sr. Christa is most grateful to **St. Athanasius School Principal, Ms. Andrea Tomaino**, who gives Sr. Christa a ride to and from the school on the two days a week that she is on campus.

**Faith Enrichment** is guided by materials based upon the **Sophia Institute for Teachers**. It consists of groups of 15-20 students who come to Sr. Christa for approximately 45 minutes twice weekly, somewhat shorter for the younger children. The student population is comprised of approximately 300 black students ranging from African Americans to Haitians, to immigrants from Senegal and Ghana whose parents have chosen to enroll them into Catholic School for their education. There is a wide mix of religious backgrounds which include the following faiths: Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehova Witness, and others, so the focus is a broader Christian based approach to faith — to remain inclusive to all.

*"The ministry work I do is God-centered...unifying the best in other people's faith backgrounds."*

- Sr. Christa McGill, SBS

Depending upon the age group, the students view videos, work on word searches, coloring sheets and other materials developed for learning about the Gospel and faith enrichment. All of the students take turns every other week in participating in Adoration in the Church. Sr. Christa is awestruck at how quiet and reverent even the little ones are during this time of reflection and prayer.

**"Do each thing as well as you can; Leave the rest to God."**

- St. Katharine Drexel

## Paul's Run



This Fall, **Sr. Agnes McDevitt, SBS** put her presentation skills to work to share with the residents at Paul's Run a Power Point Presentation on the life of **Saint Katharine Drexel**.

## SBS Charism

As Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, we believe God calls us to be a sign in the world of the power of the Eucharistic Christ to effect unity and community among all peoples.

By sharing the mission of St. Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Sr. Agnes is helping to enlighten the residents and inspire others to share the gospel message with the poor, to challenge all forms of racism and other deeply rooted injustices in the world today.

## Upcoming Event

Save-the-Date:

**ASBS Pilgrimage**

**June 27-30, 2019**

**Atlanta, GA**



**Sr. Rita Radloff, SBS**  
Reading Specialist

**St. Peter Claver Catholic School** just celebrated its **95th Anniversary**, however, like most Catholic Schools located within low income areas it struggles to keep its doors open, and remains in debt. That is just one of many reasons why **Sr. Rita Radloff's** presence at the school is greatly valued.

Normally, resources such as tutors and **Reading Specialists** would not be available to the students due to budget cuts. Sister Rita's ministry provides reading assistance with grades K-7, every day for approximately 4 hrs. each day. The groups she meets with are small to provide more individualized attention to the needs of each student within a group setting. In addition, she also works with the teachers to enhance the learning experience of the students in their classroom, and provides other areas of general support, as needed. One of those is helping to mend the Kinta vests worn by the students.



**Above:** Sr. Rita works with students to enhance their reading skills in small group settings.

**Above, Right:** Students gather with their reading books in front of artwork depicting St. Katharine Drexel.

**“People call on us ‘to do the little things.’”**

**- Sr. Rita Radloff, SBS**

Sr. Rita has an extensive background in education. She formerly taught in St. Louis, MO, and served as a Principal in Lake Charles, LA; Chicago, IL and Birmingham, AL. She joined the novitiate of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1956, after high school. She initially entered with the intention of being a social worker and to work on a reservation with Native Americans, however, she was guided towards education. In addition to her position at the school, Sr. Rita assists a blind woman on Saturdays, and is a driver for a Sister at the Holy Family Community.



**“There is nothing little in what is done for God.”**

**- St. Katharine Drexel**



When asked how her ministry could benefit from donations and greater financial support, Sr. Rita replied, *“The school could benefit from more technology, a computerized library system, and bringing in more students with tuition vouchers or scholarships.”*

To lend your support to St. Peter Claver Catholic School, [click here](#).



**Did You Know?**

**Fr. A. Gerard Jordan was a former student of Sr. Rita's, and she saw that vocation in him long before he received his calling to the priesthood. Father has a fondness for Sister Rita & the SBS for the formation that he received by them, as well as their encouragement in following his vocation as a priest.**



**Sr. Nathalee Bryant, SBS**  
School Librarian

A native of West Philadelphia, **Sr. Nathalee Bryant, SBS**, became interested in the **Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament** while working with the SBS at St. Ignatius Rectory.

Following her graduation from Chestnut Hill College in 1958, Sister entered the novitiate. As a postulant, she was assigned to library with Sr. Guadalupe, which later inspired her to study Library Science at Villanova University.



**Above** Sr. Nathalee assists students with their book selections and searches for availability on her computer.



**Below:** A student poses near a photo of St. Katharine Drexel in her school uniform.

She has served at **Xavier University Prep**, now known as **St. Katharine Drexel Prep**, non-consecutively for 23 years, teaching generations

of students. Sr. Nathalee has taught religion classes, worked as a substitute teacher and as a librarian. In addition to her responsibilities as a librarian — keeping track of the books, doing library orientations, presenting DVDs; she is also in charge of Channel 1, a nationwide news channel. Sister trains the students in using the equipment and reporting of the local news.

Sr. Nathalee also participates in the Archdiocese Mass Choir which entails practice once a month, concerts 2-3 times a month, and she supports the school's sports teams with her presence at the game/events.

**Top 3 Most Important Ministry Goals:**

- ❁ 90% students reading for enjoyment
- ❁ Increase their curiosity of the local and global world
- ❁ Instill empathy for others



**Niara Woods**  
Student, Advocate for SKD Prep

Niara is presently a student enrolled in the school that her two older sisters, talented sports athletes, also attended. Principal Jacob Owens attests to the strong legacy of Niara's family, as well as most who go to this Catholic School. That is why Niara and other alumni could not sit idle when the school was at risk of being closed. [Click here](#) to read her article.

Niara put together a very moving video/power point presentation that inspired alumni of the school to come together to save it from being closed. Her initiative shows how one person can truly make a difference, just as St. Katharine Drexel did throughout her lifetime.

The school continues to have a long list of needs and could benefit from extra financial support. To view Sr. Nathalee's Library wish list [click here](#). To assist with a donation to the school, [click here](#) to donate to a fund or campaign.

## Sister Spotlight

continued from back cover

### St. Michaels, AZ

#### Sr. Marilyn Ross

Sr. Marilyn's first assignment at St. Michael Indian School (SMIS) was in 1988, teaching 3rd and 4th grade students, and she returned to the school in 2008 to begin her second assignment there after furthering her studies.



SMIS is the last remaining school to be operated by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Opened in 1902 by Saint Katharine Drexel, the once K-8 boarding school grew to include a high school in 1947, and a pre-school in 2015. Evolving to meet the demands of the local community and the student body, the school incorporated in 1993 and currently entails a two-tier Board of Directors and members of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.



In addition to her classroom instruction, Sr. Marilyn also engages her students by having them do chores at the chapel as a way of keeping

their energy going, allowing them to earn Service Hours, and giving them a break from their studies. This also provides them with time for Spiritual Walking to the Mission, and promotes environmental awareness - picking up trash or cleaning the arroya/stream. Other Service Hours opportunities include sorting and distributing donations of clothing, toys and small appliances from California. Sr. Marilyn says, **"It teaches them the valuable lesson that in receiving, we should also consider the needs of others."**

**Above: Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS, distributes Holy Communion to the students at SMIS during Mass.**

Sr. Marilyn has had to call upon her lifetime of experiences of relying on our Lord Jesus Christ in helping raise siblings, becoming a Native religious, and combatting the statistics of diabetes, dialysis, suicide, and breast-cancer that impact so many families. Through it all, she has shared from the heart.

**"Education is a give and receive ministry: I may teach the students lessons, but they have taught me forgiveness, humor and humbleness."**

- Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS

Influenced by her Aunt Florence Parker who recently said, **"Do your ministry with love,"** Sister stresses the importance of having a loving relationship with Jesus. As the only SBS at St. Michaels, Sr. Marilyn finds that daily Mass and Prayers, and Meetings with the SBS at Desert House of Prayer spiritual community, helps her to keep in harmony and find balance in her life.

As she faces the challenges of teaching — keeping lesson plans up-to-date, grading assignments and completing paperwork, Sr. Marilyn finds that it all becomes lighter and gets accomplished when she offers it all up for Him...Jesus.

**"Do your ministry with love."**

- Sr. Marilyn Ross' Aunt Florence

St. Michael's Principal Sorci said, **"Sister Marilyn is an asset to St. Michael because of her longevity to the community, her native heritage, and her leadership and mentorship to our students and staff is very much appreciated."**

Culturally, Sr. Marilyn's life involves some Tribal obligations and family commitments: attending the January 1st Installation of the Pueblo Governor and Staff; Paraje and Casa Blanca village meetings (*Pueblo membership is knowing the protocol*); attending Pueblo Feast Days and participating in the *"Follow the Leader"* Dances. Summer is a time to participate in village activities - mud plastering of the Kiva (*prayer house*), corn grinding with the women, and village feedings (*pot-lucks*). She is a Grandmother to her sisters and brothers' grandchildren, Clan and Kiva relatives who are part of her extended family.

Sr. Caritas Allen once gave her the advice, **"Get old gracefully."** Sr. Marilyn tries to do this with joy, pride and love. Dance is also prayer to her and her culture. The Pueblo have the Eagle, Deer, Buffalo, and Butterfly

**"Mother Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament have had an educational and spiritual impact on the Navajo People."**

- Sr. Marilyn Ross

Dances that she participates in at the Pow-wow as a Jiggle Dress Dancer - *a dance of healing for physical, mental and spiritual needs*. Her first dress was from the Red Lake Ojibway elderly women of Minnesota.

Sr. Marilyn's other accomplishments include serving as Spiritual Director for the St. Michaels Kateri Circle with the National Tekakwitha Conference. She and her mother attended the first Conference open to the laity in Denver, Colorado, 1980. That was where she met with Native Religious-priests, brothers and sisters (*many of the women were graduates of SMIS and embraced the spirit of Mother Katharine of prayer and work.*)

**Below: Sister joins a group photo of flute and choir students who performed during Catholic Schools Week 2017.**



For almost ten years, Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS, has served as a member of the Sisters Council, Gallup Diocese. This provides her with an opportunity for fellowship with other Sisters and a platform to update other ministries on local community, state and national issues.

Sr. Marilyn also notes that Mother Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament have had an educational and spiritual impact on the Navajo People. Many of whom are Tribal and State leaders, run their own businesses, and are devoted family and church members. Many daughters are named after the Sisters! She feels that it is crucial that the SMIS alumni are invited to and participate in the Friday Liturgies, annual Bazaar, Christmas Lighting Ceremony/Play, Open Houses and other school functions since they are great sports supporters! Let us not forget them; they know us, the community, and can provide a connection between the two.



<http://www.stmichaelindianschool.org/>

- ✓ **Student academic achievements are consistently superior to those of area public schools, and local families are turning toward quality educational opportunities as a means to delivering their children out of poverty.**
- ✓ **More than 93% of SMIS high school graduates enter post-secondary education programs.**
- ✓ **Last year alone the Class of 2017 earned \$450,000 in college scholarship.**
- ✓ **Between 30 and 35% of each year's SMIS graduating seniors have attended SMIS since kindergarten with many others transferring in by their middle school years.**
- ✓ **SMIS attracts students from as far as a 50 mile radius and has a local bus run. As the only Catholic high school in the Diocese of Gallup, high school enrollment is at 115 with a total enrollment of 345.**

(2017 Statistics, Current enrollment is higher.)

**To donate to SMIS click here.**

*Historical Image of Students at St. Michael Indian School*



## Our GALA Event 2017



Supporters of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament gathered at the **Belle Voir Mansion** at the **Pen Ryn Estate** on **Sunday, Sept. 10, 2017** from 3 - 8 p.m. for the annual GALA Event. The evening began with socializing during the cocktail hour, followed by a buffet dinner, music, dancing, auctions and raffles. Thank you so much to all who supported this annual fundraising event.



[Click here to view a full album of images online.](#)

(Photos courtesy of Sr. Franceline Malone, SBS)



## Fall Craft Sale Sparks Early Christmas Shopping



**Talented Crafters Sell Their Creations to Those Who Came to Shop for Handmade Items**



**The Event is a Family-Friendly Shopping Experience — for all ages!**



The **Annual Craft Show** was held on **November 11, 2017** at St. Catherine's Auditorium on the Bensalem campus. Shoppers of all ages turned out to look through the variety of products for sale, many of which were handmade by talented crafters. It was the perfect opportunity for purchasing Christmas gifts in advance.




**Perfect for Personalized Gift Giving!**





*Save the Date!*

**ANNUAL GALA**  
and  
*SKD National Justice Award*

- Pastoral Care
- Spiritual Ministry
- Care & Support of SBS
- Social Services
- Wellness Programs
- Education



**Sunday, Sept. 23, 2018**  
from 3 to 8 pm  
Pen Ryn Estate

*"Building on the Foundation"*

**Ministries of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament**

Click [here](#) to view a pdf flyer with more details for the event.

# Drexel Legacy Mass followed by Blessing of the Graves



**Above:** Representatives from St. Francis - St. Vincent Home attend Mass celebrating the Drexel family legacy.

**Left, Lower Left:** Rev. Eugene Wilson celebrates Drexel Legacy Mass at St. Elizabeth Chapel.

**Left:** Sr. Pat Downs, SBS, speaks to attendees and invites them to join in the blessing of the graves following the mass.



## Blessing of Drexel Family Graves



**Above, Below:** Fr. Wilson sprinkles holy water on the graves as he offers blessings over the Drexel family graves in the cemetery while a crowd reverently observes.



**Left:** Executive Director, Jim Logan speaks on behalf of the Catholic Charities of Philadelphia to those gathered at the Drexel family gravesites.



A Mass celebrating the Legacy of St. Katharine and the Drexel family was celebrated in St. Elizabeth Chapel on **November 8, 2018**. Fr. Eugene Wilson of St. Charles Borromeo Parish was the celebrant, and following the Mass, offered blessings over the Drexel family graves.

In attendance were some of the administrators of **St. Francis - St. Vincent**, formerly known as St. Francis - St. Joseph orphanage for boys, established in 1888 by Elizabeth Drexel Smith, older sister of St. Katharine. It originally functioned as two separate entities until it was unified under a single administration of integrated programs and services.



**Left:** Sr. Bernardine, MSBT, and Jim Amato, were representatives from St. Francis-St. Vincent who attended the Legacy Mass in honor of the Drexel family and their contributions to the local community.

## A First-Time Event

## Paul's Run

# SBS and Leadership Enjoy Their First Christmas Party Together at Paul's Run

The SBS leadership teamed up with Sr. Geri Fitzpatrick, SSJ, who was so instrumental in guiding the Sisters through the transitioning process, to bring the Sisters together as a community to celebrate Christmas.

Each of the Sisters enjoyed some treats....yummy cookies from SBS employee **Linda Johnston**, hot chocolate, coffee and danish received from supporters. Sr. Donna and leadership distributed beautiful calendars to the Sisters. All were happy to be together in such a joyous day of celebration.



Through the generosity and thoughtfulness of Sister Geri Fitzpatrick, SSJ, and her sister, Barbara Covello, the Sisters were treated to some wonderful presents to open at the party.



## Side by Siders Bring Music and the Stories Behind those Tunes to Add Cheer to the Holiday Season



**Above & Left:** The Side by Siders brought real joy to the day for all concert attendees with their enthusiasm, wonderful musicality and beautiful voices.

On December 16, 2017, the **Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament** were joined by some residents at Paul's Run Retirement Community to enjoy a wonderful holiday concert performed by **Mary Dyer's group**, the *Side by Siders*. Attendees were treated to some old holiday favorite tunes as well as some unfamiliar surprises in the auditorium. **Sr. Jane Nesmith, SBS**, showed off her singing talents by performing with the group. **Sr. Lorraine Marie Stein, SBS**, was even inspired to get up and sing a German rendition of Silent Night at the event, which included both Christian as well as Jewish songs. This made the event enjoyable for people of various faiths...*bringing unity and community*...part of the charisma of St. Katharine and the SBS.



**Left:** Sr. Jane Nesmith sings her soprano solo to entertain the audience.

**Below:** The audience enthusiastically joins in with applause and singing during the performance.



**Above:** Sr. Lorraine Marie Stein is doing her impromptu solo in German.



**Above:** It was the men's turn to showcase their vocal skills.



**Above:** Susan Knauss adds some rhythm to the song.



## The Closing of the National Shrine is Marked with a Mass of Thanksgiving Celebrated with Supporters & Friends



A private "Mass of Thanksgiving" in St. Elizabeth Chapel at the **National Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel** was held at 2 p.m. on December 31, 2017. The **Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament** were joined by current and previous employees, volunteers, Associates and Clergy to offer praise and gratitude for the Eucharistic ministries and treasured relationships initiated there.

The multi-talented **musicians and Gospel Choir from St. Martin de Porres Parish** brought a joyful tone to the event. **Bishop Deliman of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia** concelebrated the Mass with almost a dozen various clergy members with close ties to the Sisters. The bishop noted in a wonderful homily St. Katharine's fearless attitude of service and her visionary spirit...perfect inspiration for all present to further the Mission of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.



St. Elizabeth Chapel was built by St. Katharine in 1892 as part of the original motherhouse. Nearing its centennial year, renovations began in 1988 in accordance with the Second Vatican Council. St. Elizabeth Chapel still stands today as a symbol of love and sacrifice that St. Katharine and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament made over the years.

To view more images from this event, please visit our [Shutterfly Share Site](#) or [SBS Facebook Page](#):

[Shutterfly Share Site Album](#)

[SBS Facebook Page Album](#)

### Check out this [new page](#) on our website to help in spreading the Good News.

Sr. Mary Roger Thibodeaux, SBS, is the director of the **SBS Center for Evangelization**. The goal of the Center is to inspire individuals, communities, faith-sharing groups and parishes to evangelize about their Catholic faith.



SBS Center for Evangelization



## Xavier University Homecoming Weekend Events

Nov. 17-19, 2017

XULA Students and Alumni celebrate Homecoming weekend with many events and activities on campus. A time to celebrate the legacy and many success stories.



*“Homecoming weekend was my first time visiting Xavier University, however one thing stands out—there is such a wonderful legacy that resounds—and the successes born from the education and experiences received here, are too numerous to count. The influence of St. Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament will never be forgotten—as witnessed by the many alumni who so openly show their love for their former SBS teachers.”*

*—Cheri Wenger, Communications Mgr. Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament*

Click here to view our [Share Site](#) of more images from my campus visit and the XULA Homecoming Events 2017.



Above: The Xavier archway leading onto campus.

Xavier University was all a buzz with activities in preparation for Homecoming weekend when I arrived mid week. Some of the festivities planned for the weekend included concerts, the Celebration on the Yard, Homecoming parade, tailgate party and basketball game, Alumni Banquet, concerts and an Alumni Mass.

Students could be found practicing songs for upcoming performances while staff worked on putting finishing touches on a wonderful collection loan from CCH Pounder, famed actress from the TV show NCIS: New Orleans.



Above: Sr. Pat Suchalski, SBS, looks at one of the privately owned pieces of artwork on loan from NCIS: New Orleans-fame, actress, CCH Pounder.

Below: Students rehearse in the lobby with their professor for an upcoming concert performance during Homecoming weekend.



## Coffee & Chat Session

The early morning Coffee & Chat Session on Friday, hosted inside the Administration Auditorium, provided time for alumni, staff and faculty to catch up on the exciting things going on in their life, both personally and professionally. It was a great start to a full weekend of activities on the campus.



Alumni gathered on the steps to take some group and some casual photos with their former classmates. Sr. Grace Mary Flickinger, SBS, recently retired and well loved Professor Emeritus of Xavier, poses alongside of her former students. She was delighted to be back on campus and attend the Homecoming festivities.

## Alumni Pose for Pics on the Stairs



## Celebration on the Yard

The casual gathering of alumni on Friday afternoon included cheerleaders, food trucks, Sororities, inside exhibits and live performances to enjoy "On the Yard."

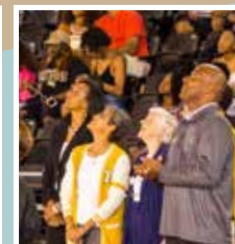
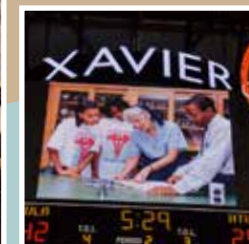


## The Celebration Continues with a Homecoming Parade

Nov. 18, 2017

Saturday Homecoming activities began with a parade. Many lined the streets to watch, including Sr. Grace Mary Flickinger, SBS. Neighboring school cheerleaders, dance teams, drill teams and bands walked the parade route and performed for the crowds.

## Tailgate & Basketball Game Honoring Sr. Grace Mary



Miss Xavier 2017-2018, Shalani Taylor is escorted into the gym during halftime of the Gold Rush basketball game. Shortly following, a special presentation of a varsity letter and banner was given to Sr. Grace Mary Flickinger, SBS, the former Faculty Athletic Representative. The banner will permanently hang next to Dr. Francis' banner in the Convocation Center.



Left: Sr. Grace Mary joyfully reacts to seeing her banner for the first time.



Nov. 18, 2017

While the morning and afternoon was full of casual fun and celebrations with friends, Saturday evening was all about recognizing the milestones and efforts of the alumni at a banquet hosted in the University Center ballroom.

This event was glitz and glamour as everyone wore their finest attire to come together and celebrate the accomplishments achieved during the year.

Some received medals for their special anniversaries. Others received applause.

Banquet & Silent Auction



Mrs. Maria Sly George '58, Alumna of the Year



Some of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament were in attendance at the Homecoming Banquet. Sr. Juliana Haynes, SBS, opened and closed the night with a prayer. Sr. Monica Loughlin, SBS, also spoke at the event, and Sr. Mary Ann Stachow, SBS received her 50th class reunion medal.



Nov. 19, 2017

The endings to celebrations are typically not so joyous, however the Alumni Mass held at the chapel on Sunday proved quite joyful, and the perfect finale to a wonderful homecoming weekend at Xavier University. The amazing choir and liturgical dancers brought the spirit of St. Katharine Drexel to the Mass.



Xavier University Alumni Mass Ends the Celebration



**Sr. Mary John Soulliard, SBS**

Apr. 1, 1922 ~ Sep. 1, 2017

*Jesus, God of my heart, my only Love*

Eleanor, who later would be known as Sr. Mary John, was the fourth child of ten girls and two boys born to Charles Soulliard and Dora Murphy of Pennsylvania.

As a child, Eleanor attended parochial schools and graduated from Catholic High in Harrisburg in 1940. The summer after graduation, she entered the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Following three years in the novitiate, she professed her first vows on Aug. 24, 1943, and five years later, pronounced her perpetual vows.

Sr. Mary John was blessed with a long and varied life of missionary service. She began by teaching in the SBS elementary schools in West Philadelphia, New Orleans, New Iberia, Biloxi, Cleveland, and St. Martinville. During these years of full-time teaching she took college courses and earned her Bachelor of Science degree in education from Villanova University in 1950.

Sister also taught high school in Mississippi, Louisiana; Texas and New Mexico. She later served as principal in Beaumont and Santa Fe. Concurrently, Sister studied and received her Master's Degree in Education Administration in 1976.

In 1979, Sr. Mary John became the superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. In 1985, Sister was assigned to the motherhouse to edit Mission Magazine and work in development. Prior to that, from 1966 -1973, she had worked in Public Relations and served as Vocation Director. In 1990, she assumed a new role in social services as the Director of the Haitian Catholic Center in Belle Glade, Florida.

It was in 2008 that Sr. Mary John's health began to decline, and she returned to the Motherhouse. In 2017, she made the move to Paul's Run retirement community. On August 31st, Sisters surrounded her in prayer as she peacefully slipped away to Jesus, the God of her heart, her only love, the following morning.



**Sr. Catherine Bardsley, SBS**

Dec. 30, 1930 ~ Oct. 3, 2017

*Rabboni*

On December 30, 1930, Catherine Cecilia became the first born child of Catherine McLoughlin of Philadelphia and John Bardsley of Springfield, MA. She experienced a lively youth with three sisters and

two brothers growing up in the Germantown section of Philadelphia.

Influenced by the Sisters at Little Flower Catholic Girls' High School where she attended who spoke about society's prejudice against African Americans, she became interested in the religious order in the area that did something about injustice. Following her graduation in 1948, Catherine entered the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and took the name of Sr. M. Regina Cecilia. Her first vows were professed in 1951.

Sister's mission work took her to New Orleans, New York and then Oklahoma, where she became a principal and teacher of the Osage Indians.

Having earned her Bachelor Degree from Villanova and her Master's from Fordham, she served the next thirty-five years as school principal or convent director in Cleveland, three schools in New York City and two schools in New Orleans. Frequently her artistic skills were also used in preparing bulletin boards and program covers. These skills were also utilized in teaching elementary school art classes at St. Michael Indian School on the Navajo Reservation. At this time she was now called Sr. Catherine.

After returning to St. Michael Hall in 2006 to work as the Director, Sister also lent her talents to help with designing greeting cards, comforting and encouraging visitors at the Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel and assisting as a cashier in the gift shop.

Sr. Catherine moved to Paul's Run in May 2017, and following leg surgery in July she was placed under hospice care. In the afternoon of October 3rd Sister's longing for *Rabboni* was quietly fulfilled as she went to meet Him face to face.



**Sr. Patricia Lynch, SBS**

Feb. 4, 1928 ~ Oct. 7, 2017

*Offer to God the Sacrifice of Praise*

Patricia Grace was born in New York City on February 4, 1928, the fourth child of Robert E. Lynch and Margaret Naughton Lynch. She and her two older brothers and one sister lost their mother prior to

her first birthday and were cared for by their paternal grandmother who "had great faith and imparted it to [her grandchildren]."

Patricia's father worked as a cargo supervisor which lead them to New Bedord, MA for several years, but the family returned to New York where she went on to graduate from Cathedral High School in 1946.

Her sister Jean entered the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament; however, Patricia worked in advertising and attended night classes at Fordham University. It wasn't until 1950 that she entered the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, without any encouragement other than prayers said by her sister. She became a novice in 1951 taking the name of Sr. Patrick Thomas, and she professed her first vows on Aug. 4, 1953.

From 1955-1968 Sister was missioned at Our Lady of Lourdes in Atlanta, GA. She earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Villanova University, and later earned her Ph.D. in American History from Xavier University in New Orleans.

Now known as Sr. Patricia, she took on one of her most notable assignments in 1984 spending ten years writing the history of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament from 1891-1991. Her greatest honor during that time was being given St. Katharine Drexel's room for her office and bedroom to use. In the later 80's she also wrote the history of Xavier University at the request of President Norman Francis.

Sr. Patricia retired to St. Michael Hall in 2011, then moved to Paul's Run in the spring of 2017, where her health continued to decline. She peacefully breathed her last breath on Saturday afternoon, October 7th, surrounded by Sisters praying at her bedside.

Lighthearted Tales of *Ministry*

Memories Shared on our SBS Facebook Page about the Sisters...

"I am so grateful for the gift of this amazing woman and her great, loving life! **Sr. Mary John Soulliard** accompanied me in my discernment in the early 70's and when I followed the Spirit to the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Philadelphia, she continued to accompany me with love, prayer and support..."

- Cecilia Cavanaugh

"**Sr. Catherine Bardsley** was a wonderful 7th grade teacher. She taught us to diagram sentences and take pride in our art. She let us have 2 pet hamsters! Thank you, Sister, for the footprints on my heart."

- Elizabeth Skeggs

**Sr. Patricia Lynch** — "Remembering all her work with the XU archives...honored that every time she did a pharmacy feature, she'd send it to me to proofread - to be sure it was accurate...as if I was the expert on COP history. lol. R.I.P. Sr. Pat."

- Randall V. Schexnayder

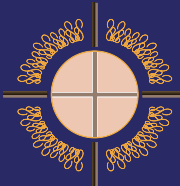
**Saint Katharine Drexel Novena**

Feast Day - March 3

"I wish to be before You as light as a feather, so that Your breath may carry me where You will."

- St. Katharine Drexel





A EUCHARISTIC FOCUSED MISSION

New Donate Button

**Our Sister** *Spotlight* on

**Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS**



*St. Michael Indian School (SMIS)  
St. Michaels, Arizona*

*St. Michael Indian School resides near the summit of Saint Michaels, Arizona. Located on the Navajo Reservation in Northern Arizona, the school is dedicated to providing superior educational opportunities for Native American children, primarily of the Navajo (Dine) tribe from pre-school through twelfth grade.*

Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS, is a registered Laguna Pueblo member of the Big Parrot Clan and Yankton Nakota Tribe. Her ministry is teaching Theology to Freshmen and Sophomores, and elective classes on Saints and Outreach to middle schoolers through Sophomores. Sister also takes great honor in being the sacristan for the Student Chapel, and wears many others hats on campus, such as making food dishes for events, helping with Bingo, cheering for students at games and serving as leader of campus pastoral counseling with an emphasis on retreat participation.

*“I have been blessed and inspired by the students and their parents, many dedicated co-workers and employees, and the surrounding land of our school—mesas, evergreen trees, sage brushes and wildlife, which seeks to be a haven of hope for those plagued by persistent poverty.”*

*—Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS*



*Top: Sr. Marilyn with a basket she won at an SMIS event.*

*Above, Left: Sr. Marilyn Ross, SBS, accompanies the flute players performing during Catholic Schools Week 2017 in Phoenix, AZ.*

*Above, Right: Sr. Marilyn poses with Miss SMIS Princess at a local parade in Gallup, NM.*

*continued inside on pgs. 16-17*

EMPOWERING MINDS + CREATING HOPE + BUILDING FAITH + SEEKING JUSTICE

**Donating to the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Just Got Easier with a Donate Button and Link Added to Our Facebook Page.**

*Visit our Facebook & Web Pages*



[www.Facebook.com/SistersoftheBlessedSacrament](http://www.Facebook.com/SistersoftheBlessedSacrament)

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



**Did You Know?**

During a Lesson on “Getting to Know One Another,” a Student asked Sr. Marilyn her birthdate. After some quick calculating and determining that she was 70 yrs. old, the student complimented her... “Sister, you can keep up with us!” Sister quickly noted... “Yes, but I still must remain one step ahead.”



**Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament**

FOUNDED BY SAINT KATHARINE DREXEL

1663 Bristol Pike | Bensalem, PA 19020 | (215) 244-8174