

Congregation looks forward with New Leadership; New Vision

In a spirit of great joy and community, sisters, associates, and staff of the Congregation of St. Joseph gathered together in Chicago for our Chapter meeting April 17 - 22, with others joining by live-streaming from our centers and homes.

Community members elected a new leadership team who will serve a five-year term beginning in August. The newly elected team is a group of multi-talented women who are deeply committed to furthering the mission of unity in today's world. They are (from left to right) Sisters Kathy Brazda, Marie Hogan, Sue Torgersen, Helen Skormisley, and Pat Warbritton. Please join us in welcoming our new team and in gratitude for the leadership of our current team. ●



Clockwise: Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago Robert Casey and Sister Joellen Sbrissa; Sisters Kumiko Therese Yamamoto and Sarah Simmons; Sisters Terry Middendorf and Jean Anne McGrath; members vote to affirm a new visionary direction; Sister Kathy Sherman who led the music during Chapter.

IN THE COMMUNITY



On a sunny but windy day in May, Sisters Jackie Schmitz (left), Associate Betty Chrastka (right), and Sister Chris March volunteered to help clean up the beach during Lake Michigan Clean Up Day.



Sisters showed their support for Wear Orange Weekend which takes place each year June 2-4 and begins Gun Violence Awareness Month. During June, and all year long, we remember victims of gun violence. From left are Sisters Joellen Sbrissa, Julie Cannon, Maria Hill, Tess Marczyk and Rosie La Flaur (seated).



The Congregation of St. Joseph co-sponsored a Juneteenth event which took place in the LaGrange Park Community Center and was attended by sisters, associates, and community members. Juneteenth is a national holiday celebrated each year on June 19 to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the U.S. The event included a prayer led by Sister Mary Jo Curtsinger, a reflection by Dr. Bessie Emerson Boyd who served as host and moderator, and recognition of community leader Minister Lynn Lacey who was presented with the Juneteenth Award by the CommUNITY Diversity Group. The event concluded with the singing of *Lift Every Voice*, led by Rev. Al Banks, Jr., Pastor of Davis Memorial AME Church. Above left are Dr. Bessie Emerson Boyd, Sister Mary Jo Curtsinger, and Ora Taylor. Above right are LaToya Lavender, Becky Lorentzen, and Sister Pat Bergen.

The newly established Sister Jean Anne McGrath Kindness Scholarship was awarded to four students at St. John Fisher School in Chicago on June 11, during the Celebration of Kindness luncheon. Sister Jean Anne served as principal at St. John Fisher for 32 years prior to her retirement in 2018. In order to be considered for the scholarship, each student was paired with a mentor from the parish who assisted them in creating a service project. The students presented their project to a panel of three judges, explaining what they did and what they learned from the experience. “I am both honored and humbled to have my name on this award,” said Sister Jean Anne, who is pictured at right with three of the scholarship recipients. “I am also extremely proud of the students for the quality of their work. I was honored to get to know these outstanding young women.” Pictured with Sister Jean Anne are scholarship recipients Caitlin Kinnane, Mary Clare O’Connor, and Rose Gilligan. Not pictured is Gabby Fahey who also won the award.



In June, sisters and associates prepared, packaged, and distributed over 250 meals to migrants and asylum seekers in Chicago. Sisters Kathy Sherman, Jackie Schmitz, Carol Crepeau, Chris March and Pat Bergen prepared the take out containers, while Sisters Julie Cannon, Pat Borchardt, Kathleen Lucas, and Joellen Sbrissa assembled take out bags. Associate Juanita Martinez and her husband Mitch prepared a quarter of the meals given away. Kascha Sanor, Director of Social and Environmental Justice for the congregation, and Associate Rosalba Hernandez also helped distribute the meals. “The joy of connection, even with a language barrier, could not hinder the amount of tenderness that was shared,” said Sister Kathy Sherman. “There is a language of the heart that we all understand that reaches across boundaries.”



Sisters gather at Joseph House to make blankets for patients at Loyola Hospital in Maywood. Each gifted blanket includes a note letting the recipient know that our sisters are praying for them. Left, Sisters Jeanne Oursler, Ann Terese Reznicek and Dorothy Randall. Right, Sisters Kathleen Lucas and Frankie Dutil.

Jubilee

2023

The following sisters are celebrating Jubilee this year in LaGrange Park. Jubilee is the anniversary of a sister's entrance into religious life.



Sister Michele Elfering, CSJ

75 Years



Sister Jean Anne McGrath, CSJ

60 Years



Sister Sue Torgersen, CSJ

60 Years

To view sister biographies, visit CSJoseph.org/jubilarians

In Memoriam



Sister Mary Peter McGinty, CSJ

Entered into eternal life on April 20, 2023, after 75 years of religious life.



Sister Rita Stalzer, CSJ

Entered into eternal life on October 4, 2022, after 80 years of religious life.



Sister Laurina Kahne, CSJ

Entered into eternal life on April 19, 2023, after 70 years of religious life.



Sister Sharon Jakicic, CSJ

Entered into eternal life on September 1, 2022, after 67 years of religious life.



Sister Pat Willems, CSJ

Entered into eternal life on March 31, 2023, after 70 years of religious life.



Sister Marlene Schemmel, CSJ

Entered into eternal life on May 29, 2022, after 67 years of religious life.

We Remember

We Celebrate

We Believe

THANK YOU!

Thanks to the generous support of a group of lead donors, we are working on two renovation projects at the LaGrange Park center.



Dining Room

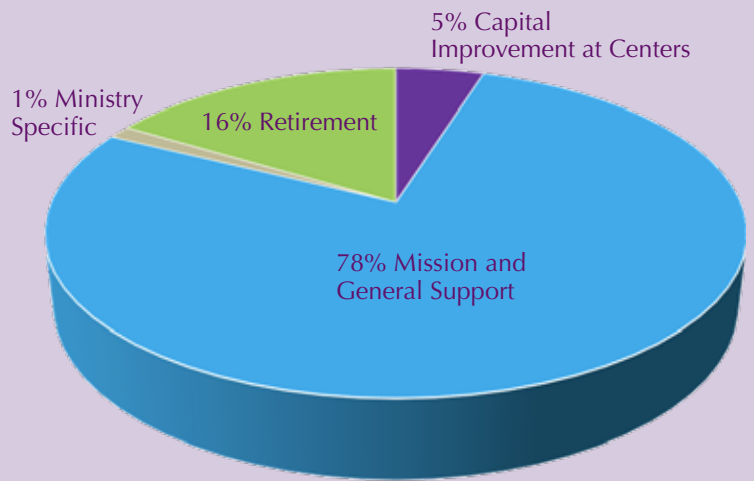
Renovations to the dining room were completed this past spring. Following decades of use, the new paint, wallpaper, blinds, furniture, and carpeting transformed the tired, utilitarian room into a bright, comfortable, welcoming gathering place. In addition, the carpeting and specialized ceiling tiles have greatly improved acoustics for easier conversation.



Courtyard

The center's courtyard was created in 1968 as a quiet space for healing and prayer. Today, it also includes flower and vegetable gardens. Our sisters who garden asked for help to make the space easier to use and maintain. So we installed a hands-free, handicap accessible door and standing-height flower pots, improved the walking paths, planted new grass, and added a new garden area with a fountain. Next, we will purchase benches and handicap-accessible picnic tables, and install a watering system. When complete, these upgrades will ensure the courtyard remains a beautiful and safe sanctuary for sisters and all who visit.

We are so very grateful for your prayers and your financial support. Here is how we used your charitable contributions this past year:



Did You Know?

There are two unique ways to support the sisters that you may not have considered:

Make a Charitable Distribution from your IRA

You can use your required minimum distribution (RMD) to support the Congregation of St. Joseph and reduce your taxable income by making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). To do so, contact your IRA administrator and provide our EIN No: 83-0481134.

Invest in a Charitable Gift Annuity

By making a large gift now (\$10,000 or more), you can support the Congregation of St. Joseph, receive income payments for life, and receive tax advantages that include an immediate deduction for a portion of your gift, partially tax-free income payments, and no upfront capital gains tax (for appreciated securities). Returns are often at above market rates.

To Learn More, contact Melissa Haley O'Leary, Director of Development at moleary@csjoseph.org or **216-688-3474**

The Congregation of St. Joseph cannot give you financial or tax advice, so please consult with your financial advisor before making any final decisions.

TEACH Celebrates 30 Years



On May 21, sisters attended the 12th annual benefit gala for TEACH (Tutoring English to Advance Change), a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph's Mission Network. TEACH empowers English language learners to build their strengths and effective use of their voice, and works toward inclusion of those typically excluded or under-represented. They provide one-on-one tutoring for U.S. citizenship exam preparation.

TEACH, who is celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year, was founded in 1993 by the congregation with leadership by Sister Carol Crepeau, who saw a need in the community and decided to take action. What started as School on Wheels quickly grew and developed into what TEACH is today.

Sister Carol was presented with the Cultural Unity Award at the gala for her work in advancing change. Constantine Bitsas, Executive Director of TEACH, said, "We continue to be grateful for the ongoing support of the Congregation of St. Joseph and for Sister Carol, who led the way. We are also so grateful for all the sisters who continue to be involved with and support TEACH through their presence and volunteerism." ●

To learn more, visit TeachEmpowers.org

Taller de José

Taller de José welcomed over 200 guests to its 14th annual Builder's Day event on April 14th to celebrate the ministry of accompaniment. Taller De José is an agency that offers companionship and personal attention to people who have difficulty finding their way in a complex social services system. In attendance were sisters, associates, and other partners in mission who support Taller de José and their work of connecting the predominantly Spanish-speaking immigrant community in and around Chicago to health, legal, and social services. The fundraiser supports the free services provided by Taller de José.

Chicago has a large hispanic population and has seen a tremendous increase in the number of newly arrived immigrants from Central and South America, many of whom have sought services from Taller de José. In the first 10 months of the fiscal year, over 1,000 individuals were served, a 30% increase over the previous year. The staff have been hard at work attending community events, outreach fairs, and doing presentations at local schools to help make the community aware of all that is available to them at Taller de José. ●

To learn more, visit TallerdeJose.org



^ From left are Sisters Ann Letourneau, Celeste Cotter, Taller de José co-founder Sister Kathy Brazda, Sisters Jackie Schmitz, Pat Bergen, Kathy Sherman, and Chris March, Taller de José co-founder and board member Sister Carol Crepeau, and Sister Terry Middendorf.

^ Sister Kathy Brazda offered remarks during the event as Executive Director Anna Mayer Diaz looks on.

Nazareth Academy



Nazareth Academy students and sisters partnered with community members at the Quinn Center of St. Eulalia Church on May 22 to help plant a garden and build community at the annual Cultivate Quinn event. Sisters Celeste Cotter (in hat) and Julie Cannon (in pink), both class of '51, participated along with Sister Pat Bergen, '63. Part of the Community Builders for Peace project, the students and sisters worked alongside one another to dig out weeds and plant flowers, herbs and vegetables.



On May 21, 165 seniors of the Class of 2023 celebrated Graduation Mass & Commencement in Alexine Chapel on our LaGrange Park campus. Sisters Pat Bergen and Mary Jo Curtsinger, who both serve on the Nazareth Academy board, are seen here gifting each senior with a keytag imprinted with the Nazareth Academy logo and the words, "Saint Joseph, Pray for Us" around it to serve as a reminder to keep the congregation's mission and the values of a Catholic education with them always.

To learn more, visit NazarethAcademy.com

The Well Spirituality Center

This Summer, The Well welcomes you for Drum Circle, Wild Belongings (a ritual inviting us into deeper relationship with the land), Yoga, and Spiritual Guidance. In August, Mary Evelyn Tucker will speak to the essential role of religious leaders at this time of ecological crisis.

Upcoming Retreats

Sacred Earth Retreat

September 14, October 4 & 25, and November 14
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Facilitator: Sister Maureen Wild, SC

During four separate sessions, this retreat will present "Thomas Berry meets...", a dialogue between Thomas Berry and four other luminaries of spirituality. Participate in-person or on Zoom.

Called to Ecological Conversion Retreat

September 20, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Facilitator: Sister Pat Bergen, CSJ

Look around, our human life has gotten out of whack! The state of the world is calling each of us as part of the human community to an ecological conversion, with no time to waste! There is no better time to answer the call than at this retreat, which falls on the threshold of the Equinox. Light and dark are held in a balance, giving us the energy to enter into the ecological conversion that offers the hope for saving each of us and the planet as a whole! Participate in-person or on Zoom.

To register or learn more, visit CSJTheWell.org



1515 West Ogden Avenue
LaGrange Park, IL 60526

Nonprofit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Cleveland, Ohio
Permit No. 2280

Spotlight Photo



The 2023 graduating class of Nazareth Academy celebrate after commencement on May 21st. Congratulations graduates!

If you prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, please email communications@csjoseph.org.



BEYOND THE HABIT

The podcast that moves beyond everyday assumptions of what it means to be Catholic.

2nd Season Out Now
3rd Season Coming Soon!

Listen at
BeyondTheHabitPod.com
or wherever you get your podcasts



Hosted by Sisters
Colleen Gibson, SSJ
and Erin McDonald, CSJ