

IN Formation - Vocation SCNJ

E-NEWSLETTER OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH
SUMMER 2016



Sweat collects at the brow, fingers are pruned and stained with the smell of Windex, and arms ache with the hours of physical labor—such are the humbling gifts of working a service weekend with the Sisters of Charity on Long Beach Island, NJ.

I had signed up for the trip alongside several of my friends with the knowledge that there would be much to do: window washing, gardening, and dusting, to name a few. As a graduating senior, this was my first experience exploring the calm, quiet grounds of Maris Stella—a beautiful and quaint location for anyone of any faith to meditate and reflect. Excited for the opportunity of spending a weekend with the girls I had grown to love and cherish after four years at the College of Saint Elizabeth, I volunteered my services without much thought to the obligations that lay ahead of me. The task was to cleanse and re-beautify the retreat center for the impending guests that were to make their stay.

This led me to question, not what the point was of cleaning the grounds for future retreat-goers, but how could I find joy and purpose in offering help where I would not see the immediate effects? My fellow classmates and I worked tirelessly, scrubbing away the houses' grime and yet we continued working. Who were we working for, if we could not see them? Why were we helping, if every moment wasn't filled with laughter and fun?



Shannon Hoffman, Victoria Mezik and Jonadad Fequiere washed windows so visitors could see the magnificent views more clearly.



College of Saint Elizabeth students and recent graduates generously volunteered their time to help to re-beautify Maris Stella. Front row - Victoria Mezik, Allexus Currie, Jonadad Fequiere, Marie Dervil. Back row - Ju Young Lee, Marisa Gioffre, Ananya Kadir, Cassan Francois, Shannon Hoffman.

To that, I look to the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Centuries old, this icon features the Blessed Virgin Mary holding a young child Jesus, who looks off into the distance at something we cannot see. The painting does not feature the traditional softness in Mary's features that we see in many Western portraits. Much like my experience at the Maris Stella, when I first saw this image, I wondered, "Why is it like this? I don't understand." But the beauty of the image is not obvious for a reason. Jesus looks forward to His fate, and Mary protects Him as a mother would any child.

And that, as volunteers, is what we must do. We must look forward and understand that what we do serves purpose, even if we do not see its effects immediately. We must trust in our Holy Mother to protect and guide us when we are afraid, or lose sight of our purpose. I had a beautiful encounter while looking out into the ocean and into the stars one night of my stay. My friend Anyana, Class of 2017, said, "It is times like these I look up and realize where God is." The answer is everywhere, in everything.

~ Victoria Mezik



(l to r) Alexandra De Bonte, Maria Coppozzoli and Sarah Walsh

Vocation Department Creates First Virtual Tour

Since the arrival of the first Sisters of Charity in 1860, Convent Station, especially Seton House and the Motherhouse, has been filled with sisters that dedicate their lives to changing the world around them. The vocation office has decided to create a virtual tour; for the first time an online tour of Convent Station will be available on our web site and Facebook in the hopes that it will showcase our beautiful buildings and grounds.

Beginning with Seton House, walking through the grounds and campus of the College, and ending with a walkthrough of the Motherhouse, the video will give a step by step narration of the history of the Sisters of Charity. The video will capture the beauty and structure of Convent Station, and it will also attract a new group of people who will enjoy seeing the beauty of our buildings, chapel and grounds. We cannot wait to share the final product with you, and we hope that you enjoy watching it just as much as we enjoyed making it.

~ Alexandra De Bonte



On May 12, 2016 fifteen women came together for an hour of quiet prayer in preparation for the feast of Pentecost. Prayer services using the rich theme of the Holy Spirit opened and closed the sacred hour that we spent together.

This was followed by coffee and enjoying each other's company.

Directors Attend Federation Meeting

Director of Vocations and Formation Sister Maryanne Tracey, S.C. and Director of Seton Associates Rosemary Carroll attended the Sisters of Charity Federation meeting at the Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland June 15 to 19 as members of the Company of Charity Formation Personnel (CCFP). The CCFP includes those who work in recruitment and formation of sisters and all directors of associates in the Federation.

The CCFP set as two of its priorities to "change the face in the mirror" and work toward more diversity and inclusivity in our congregation and associate memberships, and to initiate and expand volunteer opportunities working alongside sisters in their ministries.

This year the leadership teams from each congregation in the Federation also met in Emmitsburg and were joined by the CCFP for several meetings.

~ Rosemary Carroll



Federation leadership and CCFP gather for a picture at their meeting in June.

Sisters of Charity Federation Online Discernment Retreat | Sept. 25-29, 2016

Meet with a sister via Skype or phone to reflect on retreat materials and discernment of religious life. Pray and meet right where you are, on your time! For single Catholic women ages 18-40. Sponsored by the Daughters of Charity and Sisters of Charity. For more information, contact Sister Virginia Ann Brooks, D.C., at sistervirginiaann.brooks@doc.org or 812-963-7559. Register online at <http://called2.be/297AiEM>.

If you know any women between the ages of 18 and 40 and you think they may be discerning what to do with their life, would you please share this information about an online Discernment Retreat?

To learn more visit www.SCNJ.org * choosecharity@yahoo.com * find us on Facebook at [Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth Vocations](#)