

IN Formation- Vocation SCNJ

E-NEWSLETTER OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH
FALL 2014



JOURNEY TOWARDS THE FUTURE

It is my pleasure to share the enriching experience I had August 22-24 with the young final and newly-professed sisters, novices, postulants, and those who are still deciding about their vocation. It was wonderful for all 22 of us to come together in the Federation House of Charity in New Orleans. It was the first time that most of us met. The occasion provided an opportunity for sharing our experiences, getting to know one another and familiarizing ourselves in a community of love, friendship and faith.



Closing prayer service celebrating with the Flame of Charity.

We bonded very well and wish to build a strong Federation for the future of Charity. It was a fun weekend; the first day we welcomed one another, enjoyed snacks and told stories about our individual experiences on the journey of vocation. It was amazing to hear everyone talk about her vocation – its joys and struggles. This was followed by reflection and a vocation prayer, calling on our founders and some of those who have gone before us to come and journey with us.



Sister Genevieve, top left, poses for a group picture.

On the second day we went out in the city to meet the people of New Orleans. It was my first time there and I noticed that people appreciated music and the arts so much. We went to the museum and there we saw the devastation that happened during hurricane Katrina and how the sisters helped and are still helping rebuild this city. We played different kinds of games and continued to explore our lives together. We did ice bucket challenges and after a wonderful breakfast, some of us began to depart. It was very hard to see people leaving and I felt the way St. Peter did on the day of transfiguration. It was a very good decision to journey together. We are grateful to all who planned this great weekend and brought it to fulfillment.



Sister Genevieve, lower right, meeting in a small group.

Sister Genevieve Nwaizu
Transfer Candidate

Vocation/Formation Director Discernment

For the past year the Council have engaged former Vocation Directors and others with particular interest in this area to discern a future direction and structure for this important ministry.

- In Spring, 2013 the Council met with Sr. Maureen Corcoran as she completed her term.
- Later in Spring, 2013 the Council met with former Vocation Directors to hear their experiences and to discuss future steps. In preparation for this meeting a packet of readings was assembled and information was gathered from the Federation and NRVC on best practices in this ministry.
- After sister took time in the summer to process these learnings, area meetings were held in Fall, 2013. Over 100 Sisters participated.
- In December, 2013 a Think Tank was established to process the results of the area meetings and recommend to the Council a structure for this ministry.
- In April, 2014 the Think Tank completed its work and presented its report to the Council.
- In May, 2014 the Council met with the Think Tank to discuss its recommendations and next steps.
- In early July, 2014 an evening of discernment, facilitated by Sr. Barbara Garland, was offered to the Congregation. Over 40 Sisters attended the energetic and inspiring program.
- In August, Sr. Ellen Dauwer facilitated a meeting with 10 Sisters who had indicated a willingness to continue discernment for this ministry. Held on the sun porch at the Villa, adjacent to the chapel, it was a deeply moving evening for all. Those who felt called to continue to discern full or part time ministry in the area of New Membership were asked to indicate that by the end of September.
- At their October meeting the Council met with the three Sisters who continued in this discernment process: Sisters Diane Collesano, Elise Gittrich, and Maryanne Tracey. Following the meeting with them, the Council appointed the three as a team. They are meeting together and with Sr. Ellen Dauwer to discern the way in which they will work together, a title for their office, and goals going forward.

While the process has been a lengthy one, it has led to deep questions, pondering, and imagining. We hope that the new ministry will engage young adults, women, and all those seeking to respond to God's invitation to love with all their hearts.

Sister Ellen Dauwer

Living Charity Video Series

The Vocation Board has spent the last two years gathering video footage of sisters telling their vocation stories. Our footage has come from sisters during their retreat/vacation time at Harvey Cedars, while working in their offices and from their home at St. Anne's Villa. With the help of Donna Sartor, these one to three minute video clips are available on the Sisters of Charity's Facebook page, on the YouTube channel under the series title *Living Charity* and on Join Us section of www.SCNJ.org. A different sister will be featured each month.



During this year, the Vocation Board is looking to add new members. We are hoping to increase the board by at least one sister and one Seton Associate. By expanding, we will be able to gather more video footage for *Living Charity* and gather new ideas to promote vocations in our communities.

Nichole Ayala
Chairperson, Vocation Advisory Board



Mentoring is a process the Congregation has adopted as part of the initial formation process. The mentor provides the interested woman with support and challenge as she grows in her relationship with the Sisters of Charity. Many Sisters, often members of the Sister's local community or those with whom she ministers, also provide informal mentoring to those exploring vocation with us – as was true in the past as well.

When a Sister transfers from another community, she also receives a mentor to walk with her during the time she moves to full membership with us. This provides a less formal relationship for the transfer sister than the one with her Formation Director.

I'm happy to have that relationship with Sister Genevieve Nwaizu. Hopefully, as I companion her on this journey she'll feel my support and interest, as well as seeing me as another link to the Sisters of Charity.

It's heartening to hear Genevieve speak of the positive experiences she's had living with the sisters at All Saints/Assumption Convent in Jersey City, as well as with the sisters in

Woodland Park and at Saint Anthony's in Elizabeth when she spent some time there. In her ministry in Saint Augustine's School, Union City, she's been able to use many of her talents, both in the classroom and in afterschool activities. She's also experienced working with school leadership and staff as they prepared for and went through the Middle States evaluation successfully. I realize she saw the Charism of Charity vitally alive in the Mission at Saint Augustine's.

When I spoke with Genevieve and Sister Maryanne Tracey about Saint Louise de Marillac, Genevieve related to many parts of Louise's life. The evening of August 19, 2014, provided a chance for her to reflect and make a connection with this one of our "ancestors". She recognized many similarities between the lives of Elizabeth Seton and Louise. She also saw how SC ministries of today reflect many of those begun with Louise's guidance and organizational skills so many years ago.

My prayers now include Sister Genevieve as she proceeds along the path of incorporation.

Sister Edna Francis Hersinger