

In

HARMONY

Sisters of Mercy, New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community

Philippine sisters profess perpetual vows

Both had similar reasons for choosing to become Sisters of Mercy. For Josefina de Guzman, it was the “blend of contemplation and action” she saw in the sisters she knew. Teresita Fernandez Magallon was attracted to the sisters’ “relevance in responding to the needs of our times.”

On June 13, both professed their perpetual profession as Sisters of Mercy at Corpus Christi Church, Iligan, Mindanao, Philippines. Sister Nancy Hoff, NyPPaW president, presided over the ceremony. Sister Kathleen Ann Kolb, NyPPaW’s coordinator of health and wellness, also attended the ceremony.

Several years ago, Josefina had been working as a lay missionary doctor north of Manila at a mission hospital managed by the Holy Spirit Sisters when she returned to Ozamis City to take care of her ailing father. During that time, she became a member of the Tertiary Order of the Discalced Carmelites.



Pictured, from left, are: Sister Kathleen Ann Kolb, NyPPaW Coordinator of Health and Wellness; Sister Josefina de Guzman and Sister Teresita Fernandez Magallon, who professed perpetual vows June 13; and Sister Nancy Hoff, NyPPaW president.

“As a tertiary, I became more and more familiar with an amazing blend of contemplation and action. It is possible! In Ozamis City, I had

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NyPPaW supports grandparents raising grandchildren

Fourteen years ago, Patti’s daughter, Heather, showed up at her parent’s doorstep and dropped off Kiley, Patti’s five-year-old granddaughter. A fully-packed suitcase accompanied Kiley.

“Take her before I hurt her,” Heather said before leaving. She was battling addictions, and her choices had created an environment that was not healthy for raising a child.

And so began a new journey for Patti and her husband, Bill. Like an increasing number of

parents, they became grandparents raising at least one of their grandchildren. According to a U.S. Census Bureau survey taken in 2005, eight percent of children under age 18 are being raised by grandparents.

At a time when couples their age were empty-nesters thinking about their retirement years, they were now responsible for Kiley’s

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In Harmony

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Sister Nancy receives honorary doctorate



Sister Nancy Hoff, NyPPaW president, displays her honorary degree from Trocaire College, Buffalo. She is pictured with Jeffrey R. Hughes, Trocaire board chair, left, and Paul B. Hurley Jr., Ph.D., college president.

Trocaire College, Buffalo, honored Sister Nancy Hoff, NyPPaW president, with an Honorary Doctorate of Sacred Theology, during graduation ceremonies May 17. According to the college, Nancy was honored for her significant contributions in the fields of education, scholarship, religious studies and health sciences. She was also recognized for her “unwavering support” of the college’s mission.

Nancy delivered a commencement address in which she invited the 304 graduates to pay attention to six responsibilities as they live their lives in “God’s classroom.” They are:

- **Pay attention to the fact that we are citizens of the world and are part of a larger world community.** “What happens in Europe, Central and South America and Asia affects those of us in the U.S. and vice-versa.”
- **Pay attention to your dreams and desires.** “Don’t settle for mediocrity or for being less than who you know you are capable of being ... Sometimes we have to take a leap of faith.”
- **Pay attention to your relationships.** “All of the success in the world will be empty if the people who are most important to us are not there to share it.”
- **Pay attention to the lessons that you have learned at Trocaire:** “lessons about the dignity of every person, treating people with compassion and respect; about the importance of professional competence and placing yourself at the service of others.”
- **Pay attention to God at work in your life.** “God IS at work in your life and sometimes God works in surprising ways.”
- **Lastly, pay attention to the blessings that come into your life every day.** “A line in one of Sheryl Crow’s songs says it all: ‘It is not having what you want but wanting what you have.’ At night, before you sleep, take two minutes and reflect on one blessing that was given to you in that day.”

COMMENTARY: Forty years later, vision comes right on time

By Sister Cynthia Serjak

When I remember the night of the election of Barack Obama as our 44th president, the image that comes to mind immediately is the face of Jesse Jackson. What joy, clearly visible through free-flowing tears! I thought, "Jesse, you've waited 40 years to see this day." For it was 40 years since the eloquent voice of Martin Luther King Jr. sang in our land, 40 years since the tender heart of Bobby Kennedy called us to live differently, 40 years since the hopes of the '60s seemed dashed and scattered.

In the days following the election, I continued to mull over those 40 years. I came into adulthood in the '60s. I marched against the war in Vietnam. Sisters in my novitiate were arrested in civil rights demonstrations. We sang the songs of promise, "This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius . . ." "This land is your land, this land is my land . . ." Still, lurking in the shadows were other voices saying it couldn't be so, we really couldn't change the world – yet.

At some point in my mulling, I remembered a line from William Bridges' book, "Managing Transitions." He wrote that it didn't take Moses long to get the Israelites out of Egypt, but it took 40 years to get Egypt out of the Israelites. The latter part of this sentence implies that it takes about 40 years for old ways of thinking to be transformed, 40 years for significant social and cultural change to occur. It means that it takes time for new ideas to get hold of enough hearts so that change can be brought to reality. It means that a generation or two has to die.

The lesson here is powerful. When significant change is dawning, that doesn't mean it will occur tomorrow. As the prophet Habakkuk says:

(God speaking)

"Write this. Write what you see.

Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run.

This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming.

It aches for the coming – it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie.

If it seems slow in coming, wait, it's on its way. It will come right on time."

People wandering in the desert wondered if they would ever find the Promised Land. They criticized Moses for leading them out into that wasteland. What they didn't know was what was happening inside them in the wilderness. While they were struggling to embrace the vision, what they needed to bring that vision into reality was growing inside them. They were being shaped into a new people, a people ready for the next thing that God wanted to do.

People in the '60s wondered if they would ever see that glorious new world foreshadowed in the words of the prophets of that time. Meanwhile they wrote the vision on poster after poster, sometimes in their own blood. They ached for its coming. For many it seemed too slow, too slow. What they couldn't see was that in them, as in the Israelites, a new and different people were being formed, a people ready for the next challenge that God had for



Sr. Cynthia Serjak

them. Change was working from the inside out.

How fortunate that Jesse Jackson was alive to see Nov. 8, 2008, to see this next "promised land" unfolding in his own time and country. There must have been pain in that sight as well; knowing that he himself was not to be the one to take the vision into reality.

Perhaps that night in Chicago's Grant Park some people were thinking of the words that have haunted me since I first read them in the '60s. They are from Christopher Fry's play, "A Sleep of Prisoners":

"Thank God our time is now when wrong

Comes up to meet us everywhere,

*Never to leave us till we take
The longest stride of soul (we)
ever took.*

Affairs are now soul-size.

The enterprise

Is exploration into God."

The work is never over, because as each vision comes into fullness the next 40 years are already at work in us. Even now, in the young ones, a new vision is being born, one that will come to fullness in its own time. We must listen hard when the emerging prophets begin to speak, so that we don't find ourselves in the way of what wants to happen next.

I thank God I have lived these 40 years of watching, talking, writing, aching, of seeing things change slowly into what is needed for this time in history, when it seems the vision has come, right on time.

Sister Cynthia Serjak is NyPPaW's Incorporation Minister.

Grandparents (From Page 1)

schooling, security, physical needs, transportation and discipline. They became her support system and had to deal with new stresses and the loss of some of their retirement years.

“I was shocked,” said Patti, when she learned through Kiley’s grade school guidance counselor that several students in the school were being raised by their grandparents.

Patti said she and Bill are at the tail end of raising Kiley, whom they legally adopted and who is now in

college. But, she said, they and others could have used some outside help along the way.

“We needed a place to talk with other grandparents who were in the same situation,” she said. Needs that could be addressed could be problem-solving schools and how to deal with social networking Internet sites so popular with teens today.

Although the names have been changed, this story and so many others like it are true, which is why

NyPPaW has started a program to support grandparents raising their grandchildren. The program is the fulfillment of an initiative started in 2007 at NyPPaW’s first assembly as a new community.

“A tradition of the Sisters of Mercy is to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of a particular culture and time. A few years ago, we noticed that more and more

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VOWS (From Page 1)

the chance to do just that: taking care of my father and others who came into my clinic, and reaching out to handicapped special children and street children.”

In 2000, after a discernment retreat she moved to Iligan City to work at a private pediatric clinic where she had a life-changing experience: she met Sister Rose Palacio. The two met at the Carmelite Chapel in Ozamis City while attending a funeral Mass for her classmate. There, Josefina explained that she heard an inner voice that said, “Go to Sister Rose and introduce yourself to her.”

“That was the start of the Mercy call,” she said. Sisters Julpha Meron, Francisca Margate and Rose invited her to attend the Sisters of Mercy “search-in” program.

She accepted the invitation which, she said, completed the call to Mercy life.

“I heard the Lord’s voice loud and clear! The blend (of contemplation and action) is completed by the religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. And not only that, there is a fourth vow, to serve the

“Indeed, God’s grace is amazing.”

Sr. Josefina de Guzman

poor, the sick and the uneducated! Indeed, God’s grace is amazing,” she said.

Today, she is the anatomic and clinical laboratory supervisor at Mercy Community Hospital and ministers to the sick at the Mercy Mobile Clinic, both in Iligan City.

Josefina wants to model her life after Catherine McAuley.

“Her pathway is that of a living witness of Christ’s presence in the world. I do it by being lovable, emphasizing hospitality and pursuing the integrity of word and deed befitting a religious sister,” she said.

Teresita’s decision to become a Sister of Mercy was influenced by the sisters’ pastoral ministry in the Indigenous Peoples Apostolate in Ipil Prelature, Zamboanga Sibugay Province, Mindanao, where today she is coordinator.

“I consider it a privilege to be with them on how we struggle to fight for life in striving for a brighter tomorrow. Most of our people living in the mountains need an education and, as our fourth vow says, we care for the sick, poor and uneducated,” she said.

She joined the Sisters of Mercy several years ago, but realized that she was too young for that type of life and went back home. Years later, however, she decided to return to the convent to partake in God’s mission.

“I was more responsible and mature in looking at life’s wider and deeper meaning and willing to share the many graces and surprises of our Lord. I felt an inner joy within,” she said.

She explained that she was attracted to the simple lifestyle of the Sisters of Mercy.

“I want to be a Sister of Mercy responding to the needs of our times and creation, to become a light and hope for those who hunger for peace and to be a God-centered person,” she said.

Tradition (From Page 4)

grandparents were taking on the responsibility of raising their grandchildren,” said Sister Mary Dolores Jablonski, executive director of the Mercy Center of Aging, Inc., Erie. She said the center has the expertise to support the program for NyPPaW’s geographic areas.

Karen Narusewicz, who directed community programs for Bethesda Children’s Homes, Erie, will facilitate the program. She started the post June 1. Karen said she will be based in Erie but traveling to Buffalo, Pittsburgh and Rochester to learn the needs there and work to meet them. She will work with Sister Guadalupe Lumantas, a councilor on NyPPaW’s leadership team, to discuss ways to address similar issues in the Philippines.

“I want to develop a relationship and partnership with sisters and agencies in each area which will have its own unique needs and clientele,” she said.

She explained that some areas already have been serving grandparents. For example, Pittsburgh has a support group and, of course, Erie has the Mercy Center on Aging. Buffalo and Rochester each offer grandparents Respite Days and support groups.

Sister Anne Maloy, director for Mercy Respite for Caregivers in Rochester, explained that many grandparents raising grandchildren remain in poverty due to their limited income and inadequate housing. Along with this is the declining health of the grandparent, and the stress that they often experience while coping with the mental health issues of their grandchildren, such as loss, neglect and abuse.



Karen Narusewicz, center, started her new post as director of NyPPaW’s Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program on June 1. Pictured, from left, are: Wendy Braine, board chair for the Mercy Center on Aging, Inc., Erie; Karen; and Sister Georgine Scarpino, NyPPaW sponsorship director.

Anne, chair of the NyPPaW’s Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Advisory Committee, said grandparents, while caring for their grandchildren, often neglect their own self-care and experience depression.

“The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) program offers many services, such as support groups and respite care days so that they can have a day to call their own and an opportunity to relax, be

renewed and take a break from their grandparenting responsibilities. The GRG program assists with access to needed services, support and care for these grandparents,” she said.

Karen added that besides support groups in which grandparents can share their experiences, the program can offer workshops addressing health and legal issues.

“We want to be able to take this program where it is needed in the community,” she said.

“I want to develop a relationship and partnership with sisters and agencies in each area which will have its own unique needs and clientele.”

Karen Narusewicz

To Sister Fidelis, it's all about building strong neighborhoods

On the children's television program, "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood," Pittsburgh's Fred Rogers used to sing, "Won't you be my neighbor?"

Ten years ago, Sister Fidelis McDonough began knocking on doors to meet neighbors living near the Convent of Mercy in Pittsburgh's Oakland section. It was a response to an Institute chapter decision to reach out to the neighborhoods surrounding motherhouses to learn about and meet their needs.

"I just started talking to them and asked them to tell me about themselves," said Fidelis of her door-to-door approach.

Fidelis said most were African-American, low-income and of a faith other than Catholic. Not everyone wanted to talk with her; some would not answer the door, others peered from behind the curtain of their front window. But she invited those with whom she chatted to visit the Convent of Mercy. Several took her up on her offer and made the monthly visits a must on their calendars.

And that was the start of Mercy Neighborhood Ministries, which today offers a number of activities and support services for children, teens and senior citizens who live in this inner-city area.

"I have tried to get them to think 'neighborhood' and empower them," Fidelis said. She likened this involvement with neighbors to what Catherine McAuley did more than 150 years ago in Dublin, Ireland.

Fidelis and her group of women formed the WOWOs, the West Oakland Women's Outreach. About 20 women gather once a month to play cards, bingo and enjoy refreshments and conversation with each other and the sisters. Other activities include an afternoon cruising Pittsburgh's rivers on the Gateway Clipper, porch parties at the convent and

attending events on Dr. Martin Luther King Day.

Mercy Associates in Pittsburgh sponsor an annual Thanksgiving dinner with all of the trimmings for the WOWOs at the convent.

Fidelis says the women, all of whom are not Catholic, occasionally join the sisters in the chapel for worship.

"All of this is a chance for the women to get to know each other," she said. "They need an opportunity to talk with each other."

In her travels through the neighborhood, Fidelis

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School to Career Program presents Shining Star Award to Sister Fidelis

Recently, the School To Career (S2C) program held its annual Student Recognition Ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of 20 inner-city youth who have completed their year of study and work in the S2C program.

A collaboration of neighborhood community, school and family, School To Career helps to prepare high school students to become competent, confident, contributing citizens of our society. This year, the recognition ceremony took place at the Convent of Mercy, making the event very special for the staff, students and their parents, and the Sisters. The ceremony celebrated 14 students who made honor roll and seven students who are graduating six of whom are enrolled in college.

To her surprise and amazement, Sister Fidelis McDonough received the Shining Star Award, acknowledging her ongoing support of S2C staff and the students they serve.

"We are so proud of Sister Fidelis and what she has accomplished in the local neighborhood," remarked Sister Linda McCutcheon, coordinator of administrative services for the Convent of Mercy. "Truly, she enhances for our times the meaning of the 'Walking Sisters of Mercy.'"



Sister Fidelis proudly displays her Shining Star Award.

Neighbors (From Page 6)

gave a caring ear to a woman who suffered from several years of domestic abuse. She helped women, who feared living in the neighborhood, learn to depend on each other. Another woman and her family were in danger of losing their home, and Fidelis helped them to save it.

Across the street from that family, Fidelis met a woman who operated a daycare in her home. Working with Carlow Campus School, she helped the daycare get desks and backyard playground equipment for the children.

“One woman in the neighborhood told me that she couldn’t get over what the sisters do for her and others. She said the sisters are always looking out for them,” recalled Fidelis, who previously ministered to the poor in Tennessee and Mississippi.

A former teacher, Fidelis has a kind heart for children, and one of the first actions of her fledging neighborhood ministry was to supply a television and stand for an after-school program for grade school students run by Breechmenders Ministries in Pittsburgh’s Oak Hill section. Eventually, that program ended.

But an after-school program for teens, operated by Oakland Planning and Development, is alive

“In all of these ways, we are still a Mercy benefit to the neighborhood.”

Sr. Fidelis McDonough

and well. The Sisters of Mercy provided the house for the program, while Carlow University takes care of paying the utility bills, and Carlow students mentor and tutor the students. Fidelis sends after-school students, who make the honor roll in school, special cards of encouragement. The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center helps place these students, who have a grade-point average no lower than 2.5, in internships at the hospital.

And Fidelis arranged with Carlow’s Service Learning Center to meet with and do works of service for neighborhood’s elderly residents on Mercy Day, Sept. 24. She encourages both students and neighbors to get to know each other.

“It’s all about building relationships, and some of them continue after Mercy Day,” she said. Students have done yard work, painted porches and washed walls and windows for residents.

“In all of these ways, we are still a Mercy benefit to the neighborhood,” Fidelis said.

Sister proud as her brother installed as Michigan bishop



Family members of Bishop Paul J. Bradley gathered for his installation Mass in Kalamazoo, Mich., June 5. Pictured in the front row, from left, are: Sue Baughman, Sheila Silbaugh, Adele Strutt and Michele Bradley. Pictured in the back row, from left, are: Sister Mariella Bradley, Bishop Bradley and Francis Bradley.

When Bishop Paul J. Bradley was installed June 5 to head the Diocese of Kalamazoo, Mich., one particular Sister of Mercy was watching closely: his sibling, Sister Mariella Bradley.

“To be sure, my four sisters, my one brother and I are so very proud of Paul,” she said.

Mariella joined family members for the installation of the Pittsburgh native at St. Augustine Cathedral, Kalamazoo. Mercy Sisters Linda Kaman and Jane Fadgen of Pittsburgh also attended.

“Their supportive presence meant a great deal to me; they, in turn, were

thrilled to be a part of this magnificent moment in the life of (my brother and the family),” she said.

Bishop Bradley, who was ordained a priest in 1971, was auxiliary bishop in Pittsburgh for three years and administrator of the Diocese of Pittsburgh in the 18 months it took for a new bishop to be named there.

Mariella said her brother was loved by priests and people alike and will be sorely missed in the Pittsburgh Diocese. She said her brother’s call is one to serve God’s people. She described him as a “gentle, humble,

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Bishop (From Page 7)

and compassionate shepherd who is genuinely interested in his parishioners, their lives and their spiritual well-being, preaches from the heart and lives his episcopal motto, "Waiting in Joyful Hope."

According to the Catholic News Service, the Diocese of Kalamazoo has a significant number of Spanish-speaking Catholics among its 100,000 members. Bishop Bradley briefly addressed them in their native language.

In his homily, he also addressed the woes of Michigan's auto industry.

"These are challenging times in southwest Michigan, in all of Michigan, in all of the country," he said. "It is possible that people are discouraged, that there is an inclination to lose hope for the future."

He advised Catholics of the diocese not to despair, declaring, "This is not a time to lose hope; this is a time to be renewed in hope."

Said Mariella, "The Sisters of Mercy would give him the greatest tribute if they would remember him in their prayers as he encourages the people to the people to 'Wait in Joyful Hope.'"

Buffalo fashion show way of saying 'thank you'



Jenna, one of the students in the Women and Girls Sewing for Confidence and Self-Worth Program, displays her quilted projects and covered folder during a fashion show at Mercy Center, Buffalo, May 9.

Women and children who are students learning sewing skills at the St. Brigid Food Pantry and Outreach on Fulton Street, Buffalo, presented a fashion show May 9 at Mercy Center, Buffalo, as a way to say, "thank you."

Their gratefulness stemmed from a \$4,000 grant given the Women and Girls Sewing for Confidence and Self-Worth Program by the Many Faces of Mercy Giving Circle, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy.

The show featured the sewing accomplishments of the women and children who attend the weekly classes at the outreach office. Displayed were garments, quilts and home decorator and craft items, some of which were offered for sale.

Each member of the Giving Circle received as a "thank you" gift from the women and their instructors a "green" shopping bag that they had sewn; the girls and their instructors presented each member with a handmade bookmark.

Mercy Sister Kathy Sisson and Sister Michael Jordan, a Franciscan Sister of St. Joseph, who are outreach coordinators at St. Brigid's, opened the show by introducing the sewing instructors, many of whom

"While the children have become excited being part of a class where they learn a new skill, they become more confident in themselves."

Sr. Kathy Sisson

are members of the American Sewing Guild.

"All of the adult women wore one of the outfits they had sewn, and they were transformed by showing their garments to the folks who had come," Kathy said.

According to Kathy, the women have formed a small community as they learn the skill of sewing while having companionship and safety in their lives.

"While the children have become excited being part of a class where they learn a new skill, they become more confident in themselves. This has far-reaching positive effects in all areas of their lives," she said.

She explained the sewing program teaches the

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Fashion (From Page 8)

technical and hands-on approach to learning all of the facets involved in the skill of sewing. Initially, the instructors direct the projects of participants. As their skills evolve, the adult students have become self-directed in their choices of additional projects. Children receive a gradual introduction to basic skills with simple project choices.

Kathy said both groups go to Jo-Ann Fabrics during the year to experience the opportunity of choosing level-appropriate patterns with suitable fabrics and notions to enable completion of a more self-directed endeavor. This teaches them self-confidence in a way that living in the Perry Housing District doesn't necessarily encourage.

One of the instructors, Kathy Andrews, said: "Being able to sew and have the opportunity to sew is a special gift. It is a gift that those who can, and do practice the art of sewing, love to share."

The St. Brigid Food Pantry and Outreach is a Catholic Charities Office located inside the Commodore-Perry Projects in Buffalo's first ward. The center includes a food pantry, referral services, nutrition classes, reading classes for children and offers, from generous donors, clothing and personal needs items.

Sisters of Mercy honored in Buffalo; senior housing project announced

On a day when United Memorial Medical center honored the Sisters of Mercy in Buffalo, the hospital announced June 9 the start of renovations to Jerome Towers, a new senior housing project.

United Memorial, in partnership with Conifer Realty LLC, will renovate the top four floors of the former St. Jerome Hospital on Bank Street, Batavia, N.Y., to achieve 37 one- and two-bedroom rental units for low- and moderate-income seniors.

St. Jerome Hospital, founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1917 and later operated by the Catholic Health System of Western New York, merged with Genesee Memorial Hospital on Jan. 1, 2000, to create United Memorial Medical Center.

Sister Peggy Gorman, who was president of the Mercy Regional Community of Buffalo at the time, said it was a sad day when the community turned over St. Jerome Hospital to Genesee Memorial Hospital. But, she said, the decision was made for all the right reasons.

"It became evident that there was not a need for two hospitals in Batavia, and if we were to agree to turn St. Jerome over to Genesee Memorial, the people would be assured of health care remaining in Batavia. Removing all the religious symbols and offering them to the people of Batavia was an event in itself. To see the potential for the St. Jerome Hospital building today brings light and hope into the eyes of all, especially the Sisters of Mercy," said Peggy in remarks at the event.

Sister JoAnne Courneen, who represented NyPPaW leadership at the event, said that because of the Sisters of Mercy's 82-year history in Batavia, it was like a homecoming for many who attended because they had an opportunity to visit with

"To see the potential for the St. Jerome Hospital building today brings light and hope into the eyes of all, especially the Sisters of Mercy."

Sr. Peggy Gorman

friends and former coworkers. She cited remarks by Mark Schoell, United Memorial's president and chief executive officer, who stressed the merger was more of a union of two hospitals.

"To me this means they brought together the best of both, and that is why it has been successful," JoAnne said.

Since the hospitals came together nearly 10 years ago, the majority of the main hospital building on the Bank Street campus had been underutilized or vacant. In December 2007, United Memorial opened The Jerome Center, which houses comprehensive outpatient diagnostic services, occupational medicine, specialty and primary care services on the ground floor of the former St. Jerome Hospital.

Hospital officials said the addition of senior housing will complete a multi-phased community. The facade of the building will remain intact as a treasured local landmark. Senior housing residents will have access to the medical services, gift shop and café located on the ground floor without having to exit the building. Residents will also be able to enjoy the convenience of having the YMCA and Senior Center located within steps of the facility.

The project is expected to be completed in a year and represents an investment of \$8 million into downtown Batavia.

News from Around NyPPaW

NyPPaW

Discussing Mercy education



Barbara Behan (Erie), left, makes a report as Sister Georgine Scarpino (Pittsburgh), NyPPaW sponsorship director, takes a few notes during a meeting of the NyPPaW Education Sponsorship Council June 12 in Erie. At the meeting, each member gave an update as a liaison with special emphasis on enrollment and financial concerns concerning the Mercy-sponsored schools which they represent. Also, members approved trustees for Mt. Mercy Academy, Buffalo, and discussed strategic initiatives of each school.

Lights, camera, action!



Sister Cynthia Serjak, right, NyPPaW Incorporation Minister, was in Buffalo April 25 to be videotaped for a presentation on new membership rituals for use in Mercy communities within the Institute. She first presented the talk at the Mercy Conference of New Membership Personnel in February, and the Institute wanted to give it wider distribution. Pictured videotaping is Sister Sue Weetenkamp of the South Central Community as Cynthia pauses for a reflective moment.

Speaking of sponsorship



Sister Patricia Prinzing, a councilor on NyPPaW's leadership team, speaks during the first-ever conference for Mercy Sponsorship Councils held in April in Parsippany, N.J. "This conference has expanded our thinking and understanding of sponsorship and allowed us to envision new possibilities to continue the mission of Mercy into the future," she said. NyPPaW leadership and other representatives joined participants from the Institute and other Mercy communities to understand and learn about the sponsorship of ministries.

News from Around NyPPaW

BUFFALO

Respite Day



Sisters of Mercy in Buffalo June 17 offered a Respite Day for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. The day at Stoneybrook, Orchard Park, N.Y., offered talks on meditation and prayer, stress reduction and self-care. There was also an opportunity for exercise, lunch and conversation. Pictured at the event, from left, are grandparents: Georgianna Ford, Jane Mieth and Jean Buchanan.

ERIE

Erie retreat



Benedictine Father Thomas Hart, a priest of the Benedictine Archabbey, Latrobe, Pa., conducted a retreat in Erie for the Sisters of Mercy June 22-28. He is pictured with Sister Ann Driscoll (Pittsburgh), Sister Phyllis Marie McDonald (Erie) and Mercy Associate Margaret McMahon (Erie). Father Hart, a professor of theology at St. Vincent College, Latrobe, since 1993, said during the retreat that all faiths have something to give and share.

ERIE

Sustainability 'heart and soul'



Thomas Gamble, Ph.D., president of Mercyhurst College, Erie, presents the college's Sustainability Award to Sister Maura Smith (Erie) on April 20. Maura received a plaque which called her the college's "Heart and Soul of Environmental Sustainability" and recognized her decades of "intellectual, spiritual and moral leadership on environmental sustainability as a Mercyhurst educator and member of the board of trustees." The college plans to plant a perennial peace garden honoring Maura.

Time to dance



Sister Hellen Khisa, a Little Sister of St. Francis, leads her brother, Anthony Khisa, in a dance at a reception sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy in Erie to celebrate her graduation from Mercyhurst College. A native of Kenya, Hellen earned a bachelor's degree in special education through a program in which the college and the Sisters of Mercy provide academic scholarships to women religious from developing countries.

News from Around NyPPaW

ROCHESTER

New associates in Rochester

The Sisters of Mercy in Rochester welcomed new Mercy Associates at covenant ceremony in the chapel of Mercy Center, Rochester, June 7. In the photo below, pictured sitting in the front row, from left, are: Jane DeSmith, Brenda Litts, Ann Maloney and Albert Richards. Standing, from left, are: Jean Galofaro and Sister Barb Stinard, coordinators for associates in Rochester; Mary Therese Anselmi; Marlene Fanara; Millicent DeLucia Lewis; Mary Ann Fanara; Kay Ambrose; Janice Jackson; Goldie Rogers; Mary Anne Richards; Ruth Mann; Kathleen Kenny; Cheryl McElhatten; and Dovie Short. In the photo at right, Ted and Shirley Semesky made their covenant June 9 at Notre Dame Convent Chapel, Elmira, N.Y.



PITTSBURGH

Women in theology



St. Vincent College, Latrobe, is observing its 25th anniversary this year of offering co-education. On April 2, the Theology Department held a symposium/dinner for theology faculty and student theology majors to celebrate women in theology at the college. In 1970, Sister Patricia McCann (Pittsburgh) was the first woman to teach in what was then called the Religious Studies Department. Also, she served on the Co-education Study Committee to effect the transition to co-education. Sister Sheila Carney (Pittsburgh) and Sister of Divine Providence Michele Bisbee also taught there. The three presented a panel discussion of women in theology at St. Vincent. Pictured, from left are, Benedictine Father Rene Kollar, who teaches at the college; Michele; Patricia; Sheila; and Kimberly Baker, Ph.D., a teacher at the college who organized the event.

News from Around NyPPaW

PITTSBURGH

Water damage at Convent of Mercy

Heavy rains in Pittsburgh June 17 flooded the basement of the Convent of Mercy damaging the dining room, conference room, kitchen, storage rooms, hallways and bathrooms.

“The water was coming from everywhere,” said Sister Linda McCutcheon, Pittsburgh house coordinator. “The sewers and drains could not contain the amount of water coming into the building.”

She said the water level in the dining room was two feet; the infirmary elevator was flooded with two feet of water. Areas affected by the flooding will be closed for a month or two as repairs continue, she said. During that time, meals are being served in the Mercy Hall dining room, exercise room,



Pictured after the flooding receded is a box marked by a water level. The box was between the kitchen and serving area in the dining room.

television room and porches of the convent.

“At the present time, I do not have a dollar amount of the damages, but it is extensive,” she said.

New Mercy Associates



New Mercy Associates were welcomed in a Covenant ceremony in Pittsburgh at the Convent of Mercy’s Our Lady of Mercy Chapel on April 28. Pictured, from left, are Dorothy Brisbane and Colleen Gardner.

Sister Arvella Marie Spohn Pittsburgh March 27, 2009

Sister Arvella Marie Spohn, 89, formerly Sister Mary Florentine, was a Sister of Mercy for 58 years. She taught in Pittsburgh Catholic elementary schools for 20 years and later ministered in the personnel office and printing services for the Pittsburgh regional community. Arvella Marie was remarkable for her constant and thoughtful concern for oth-



Sr. Arvella
Marie Spohn

We Remember

ers, her vocal appreciation of even the smallest kindness toward her, her simplicity, her meticulous care in all she did in the ministry of record-keeping for the community and the particularly fine work she did in sewing. Most of all, the sisters recognized her prayerfulness and the primary role of the Eucharist and the Daily Office as the center of her life from which flowed her energy for ministry.

Sister Mary Juliana Jackson Buffalo March 30, 2009

Sister Mary Juliana Jackson, 88, taught children in Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese in Buffalo and served on the staff of Julianna Apartments in Buffalo. She used her massage therapy skills with the residents of the West Seneca, N. Y., Development Center and with the sisters at Mercy Center’s Health Care Unit. She loved social



Sr. Mary
Juliana
Jackson

(See JACKSON on Page 14)

We Remember

Jackson (From Page 13)

gatherings of her family and religious community and enjoyed reading, painting, drawing and sculpting. Many will remember her sense of humor and prayerfulness.

Sister Flora Catherine Cendrosky Pittsburgh April 21, 2009

A Sister of Mercy for 61 years, Sister Flora, 78, received a bachelor's degree in education and music from Mount Mercy College (now Carlow University), Pittsburgh, and a master's degree in Spanish from the State University College, New Paltz,



**Sr. Flora
Catherine
Cendrosky**

N.Y. She spent her 34 years of teaching in Pittsburgh-area elementary and secondary schools, and taught for six years at the Academia Catolica, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Quiet in many ways, Sister Flora had a strong spirit of independence. She celebrated life and delighted in planning entertainments for holiday parties. Her Sisters in Mercy knew her to have been kind and generous.

Sister M. Mercy McGrady Pittsburgh April 30, 2009

The second of fourteen children, Sister Mercy, 75, served on the faculty of Mount Mercy College (now Carlow University), Pittsburgh, and was executive director and chief op-

erating officer of Holy Cross Hospital, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. She earned a doctorate from the University of Minnesota. A quiet, gentle woman and friend, Mercy was also fun-loving with a sharp wit. She was always open to new ideas and enjoyed engaging in political discussions. Mercy delighted in seeing students catch on to math principles and develop self-confidence as she tutored after her retirement. She loved to create special gifts for her dear family and friends. Also, she gave strong support to The Mercy Water Project in Peru and to missionary priests in Guatemala.



**Sr. M. Mercy
McGrady**

Sister Mary Carmella Coene Rochester May 28, 2009

Sister Carmella, 100, taught in the Diocese of Rochester for 80 years. Nearly 70 percent of that time was spent in New York's Southern Tier teaching math and science to high school students. Sister is fondly remembered for her dedication to teaching, her desire to help students become the best they were capable of becoming and her "energizer bunny" attitude of never giving up. She was still tutoring students into her 90s. The Elmira community will certainly miss her but knows that she will continue watching over Notre Dame High School.



**Sr. Mary
Carmella
Coene**

Sister Mary de Chantal Fortune Rochester June 12, 2009

A native of Watertown, N.Y., Sister de Chantal, 85, was a teacher, pastoral associate and hospital chaplain in the Diocese of Rochester. Her delicate compassion and quiet humor seeded hope in the midst of tense situations. Her life carried the fragrance of a perfect rose to every person she served and into every circumstance she faced. Her gentle, gracious smile will be greatly missed.



**Sr. Mary
de Chantal
Fortune**

Sister Carol Wulforst (Sister Mary Avila) Rochester June 13, 2009

Sister Carol, 73, viewed her ministry as a gift to those she served. Whatever she did was done with courage and conviction, expressing in concrete ways her deep sense of faith, hope and love of God. Even the most difficult circumstances were sprinkled with her ever-present, joy-filled sense of humor. As teacher, school administrator and Chilean missionary, she touched the lives of many. Sister Carol became the first president of Our Lady of Mercy High School, Rochester, from 1991-2004. She was one of two of Rochester's local leaders at the time of her death.



**Sr. Carol
Wulforst**