Circle the City

The Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart Circled the Cities in silent prayer again this year on Sunday July 29 and Monday July 30. Sunday’s gathering took place at Holy Redeemer Lafayette and was organized by Sister Anne Boyer. Sister Anne was joined by Sister Diane Bardol in setting the tone for the gathering as well as introducing the concept surrounding this event. We are grateful for the warm response of our Sisters as well as their “neighbors” at HR Lafayette. There was hardly an empty space in the large recreation room! Such a big response from our friends from different cultures and faith backgrounds is very heartwarming.

Monday’s time of silence took place with the Magnificat Community. Sister Diane provided a brief history of the event, and Jane Selinske lead everyone into the prayerful silence. Jane advertised the event throughout the building and a few people were able to join in along with the residents. Sister Mary Sue Thomas, in particular, enjoyed singing “The Prayer of St. Francis” so much that it was challenging to get her to end the hymn so the silence could begin!

As last year, this event took place in cities across our country, and around the world. Silence is powerful. By harnessing the power of silence and prayer, we hope to spread a feeling of peace and hope across our country and throughout the world.

Backpacks and Duffle Bags

In July we received a request to help obtain some backpacks and duffle bags for kids in foster care at St. Vincent/St. Joseph/St. Francis Home in Bensalem. The request was sent to our Sisters and Associates, who responded generously. We were overwhelmed, though, by the generosity of our neighbors here at the offices, and by others who heard about the collection from our Sisters.

Between donations of bags and cash to purchase some, we were able to deliver 40 backpacks and duffle bags, along with 2 large gift cards to use for additional needs, to the Home. They were very grateful for what was donated. Once again, we have been amazed by the generosity of those we rub shoulders with on a daily basis!
GNSHappenings...

Sisters of Earth Conference:
*Sharing the Wisdom, Shaping the Dream: Creating the Future We Want* was the theme for the SOE conference held in Cincinnati, Ohio July 12-15, 2018. Sisters Barbara Harrington and Sheila Stone, members of GNSH Earth Committee, participated in the various presentations, activities and rituals.

The book, *Active Hope* by Joanna Macy, offered the 4 stages of moving forward in these difficult times. We started with coming from gratitude for the gifts of creation, moved into owning our pain for the world, examined with new eyes how we got here and what we need to move forward in care for our common home. We encourage others to read this book. Another book that was suggested is *Creation and the Cross* by Elizabeth Johnson.

Sister Rosalie Bertell, GNSH was mentioned several times throughout the weekend presentations.

GNSH Book Club
There is a Book Club for our Sisters at Holy Redeemer Lafayette. They recently read Diarmuid O’Murchu ‘The Meaning and Practice of Faith.’

Thank You Note
From Marguerite’s Place, Nashua NH – in a letter of thanks to Sr. Julia Lanigan for a gift Grey Nuns sent to Marguerite’s Place in June, Mary Jordan, Executive Director wrote:

“...Sr. Sharon’s and Sr. Elaine’s legacy continues. They were smart visionaries who created an amazing organization. Because they fostered a culture of respect and faith, Marguerite’s Place has an incredibly dedicated circle of friends, donors, and volunteers. We would not be able to provide housing, childcare and support services without them. Your gift is repaid many times over by the women who become self-sufficient, raise healthy, smart children, and break the cycle of homelessness for generations to come.”

Sr. Irene Murphy
(formerly Sister Mary Regis), 98, died July 31, 2018 in the 78th year of her religious life. Irene was one of 7 children, and followed 2 sisters into the GNSH. She was a teacher for 51 years! Read more about the life and ministry of Sr. Irene here.

Prayer at Holy Redeemer Lafayette & Beyond

Many of our friends and benefactors express concern that our Sisters, no longer having a chapel of their own, will find it difficult to pray together. Perhaps communal prayer is not as easy as it once was, but our Sisters certainly do pray together and have been very creative in arranging their communal prayer life. Mass is offered at Holy Redeemer Lafayette a few days a week, including Sundays as well as a Wednesday Prayer Service, Friday Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Rosary, and Contemplative Prayer Thursday evening. In addition, our Sisters pray together near meal times every day. The prayer space is small, which also makes it a very intimate place to feel close to one another and to God. The Sisters living at the Plaza also gather regularly to pray together, and also to socialize.

Our Sisters living in the Magnificat community and St. Joseph’s Manor, who are able to get around, can often be found in the chapel, or praying the rosary in their rooms.

For everyone concerned, the emphasis on communal living has taken on new meaning, but our Sisters have never faced a challenge they couldn’t adapt to or overcome! We are true daughters of St. Marguerite d’Youville in that regard.
Sock Drive

We will once again be conducting a Sock Drive for the Homeless. Beginning October 1 and leading up to the feast day of St. Marguerite, October 16, we will be collecting NEW, preferably WHITE tube socks (they fit the majority of people). We will coordinate the distribution of the socks with The Joy of Sox, a non-profit which distributes socks to shelters in the Philadelphia area and beyond. As the cold weather approaches, warm, dry socks are a blessing. Socks worn 24/7 last only about 6 months, so the need is great.

Two reasons we ask that the socks be new: 1) the homeless rarely get anything that is new and 2) there are no facilities to wash and dry the socks and we cannot assume that used socks have been properly disinfected. Foot disease is a significant problem for the homeless. We will be seeking partners to join in the collection, so if you know of a business or organization who would like to help, please let us know. We ask that donations be limited to adult socks at this time. Here is a link to our previous effort: Click Here

Season of Creation and Feast of St. Francis

A post is being created with a variety of resources for you to use during the Season of Creation (begins Sept. 1) and leading to the Feast of St. Francis (Oct. 4). The theme for the Season of Creation is Walking Together— a reflection on how we are all part of the global community and how our (selfish) actions in one part of the world may lead to impoverishment in another part of the world. This leads directly into the theme for the Feast of St. Francis which is “Who is my neighbor in a climate threatened world?”

Currently, there are resources available on our website from Global Catholic Climate Movement, the Season of Creation site and Catholic Climate Covenant. Click here

If you come across another resource to add, please send it to Maryellen.

Thank you Note:

Many thanks for the gifts, cards, and calls, I received for my birthday. I appreciate your caring concern and prayer.

Sr. Anne Boyer

She Doth Protest— Appropriately!

On a recent Sunday, a few Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart ventured into Center City Philadelphia to take part in a peaceful protest against Supreme Court Nominee, Brett Kavanaugh.

Although a Catholic, Kavanaugh should not simply be backed because of his faith. We are concerned about his opinions specifically about healthcare and the Affordable Care Act, immigration, labor rights, voting rights and democracy, and the death penalty.

As with any protest, people went with their own agendas, including some we would agree with and some we would not condone. But, we do respect the freedom of all to peacefully protest and enjoyed meeting a wide variety of people.

Sisters Mary Salvadore, Mary Brendan Connors and Mary Elizabeth Looby at rally
Pray for an end to the death penalty, for those scheduled for execution, for the victims of these crimes and all whose lives have been impacted by violence.

Scheduled Executions for September 2018
12: Ruben Gutierrez, TX
26: Troy Clark, TX
27: Daniel Acker, TX

Death Penalty Information
National Catholic Pledge to End the Death Penalty
“All Christians and people of good will are thus called today to fight not only for the abolition of the death penalty, whether legal or illegal, and in all its forms, but also in order to improve prison conditions, with respect for the human dignity of the people deprived of their freedom” - Pope Francis

Catholic Mobilizing Network wants YOU to take action and ask for clemency for those scheduled to die by the death penalty. They have recently updated their website with more opportunities for advocacy. Be sure to take a look! Current Death Penalty information is also available HERE

Richard Rohr, OSF
Center for Contemplation

September
1 Labor Day holiday (offices closed)
   Day of Prayer for Creation (begins Season of Creation)
8 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary-
   Traditional GNSH entrance day.
14 Triumph of the Cross

FUTURE DATES
October
1-16 Sock Collection for the Homeless
4 Feast of St. Francis
15 St. Marguerite’s Birthday (1701)
16 Feast Day of St. Marguerite d’Youville
31 Dedication Day - Grey Nun Foundation Day

NOTICE:
Photographs taken during an event will be for the use of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart and may be published in the newsletter, annual report, or posted on our website, social media, or other communications media. If you do not wish for your photograph to be used, please remove yourself from group photographs, or notify the photographer. Thank you!

Congregational Offices
14500 Bustleton Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19116-1188
Phone: 215-968-4236
E-mail: Vocations@greynun.org
www.greynun.org
Twitter: @GNSH21
Facebook: Greynunofthesacredheart
Instagram: Greynunofthesacredheart
Flickr: compassionate世界观
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