



Newsletter of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate

Journeying with Josaphata

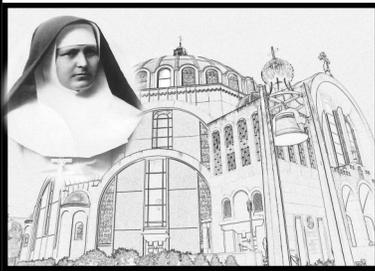
Great Fast/Lent 2017



Glory to God! Honor to Mary! Peace to Us! It is with this mantra that the Sisters Servants celebrate the 125th Jubilee of the founding of our Congregation as the first Ukrainian Apostolic Congregation of Women in Zhuzhel, Ukraine in 1892. This was the mantra of our foundress Blessed Josaphata Hordashevska and our co-founders, Rev. Jeremiah Lomnitsky, OSBM and Rev. Kyrylo Seletsky who listened to their hearts and the needs of their people to courageously make this dream a reality. We have received many blessings and graces during our years of prayer and service with our Hierarchy, clergy and laity. During this Jubilee Year, we have been invited to celebrate this milestone in our Philadelphia Archeparchy and Stamford Eparchy.

May 20-21 *St. Josaphat parish in Rochester, NY* will formally bless, dedicate and place the newly renovated Convent Chapel under the patronage of Blessed Josaphata in honor of the 125th Jubilee of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate.

Oct. 15th *Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of Immaculate Conception, Philadelphia, PA*



Moleben, anointing for healing and veneration of holy relics of Blessed Josaphata Hordashevska, SSMI - Celebration of the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. Archbishop Stefan Soroka and the Sisters Servants invite all to come and join us in celebrating the gift of Consecrated Life in our Church and to pray together as a family.

More Information on these events will be forthcoming.

Sr. Oksana Iwasczyszyn, SSMI - Called Home

Sr. Oksana (Mary Ann) Iwasczyszyn entered into eternal life on Dec. 31, 2016 after living a life of prayer and service as a Sister Servant for 70 years. After retiring from active ministry due to health issues, Sr. Oksana resided at Nyack Manor Nursing Home for the past several years. She was born in Wilkes Barre, PA.

She is best known throughout her religious life as a teacher of the young for nearly 20 years. Then, as most Sisters Servants, she had a career change from educating the hearts and minds of the young, to being a caregiver for the elderly for many years at our



Home of Divine Providence in Chestnut Hill, PA and at St. Joseph's Adult Care Home in Sloatsburg, NY. Sister Oksana's loving care and compassion for the elderly was noted by family members who wrote letters of gratitude. Sr. Oksana's quiet, behind the scenes life affected the lives of many so loudly and profoundly.

Sr. Oksana was preceded in death by her parents, Nicholas and Barbara (Shevchuk), her sisters Ann Finiak and Eva Soltis, her brothers Frank, John and Tony. In addition to her sisters in community, she is survived by her sisters Barbara Brown and Margaret Goda, and her nieces, nephews and their families.

On January 3rd, Bishop Paul Chomnycky, OSBM, celebrated the funeral Divine Liturgy at St. Mary's Villa. In his homily, Bishop Paul said, "Spiritually, Jesus is born and dies in our hearts, in the heart of every sincere Christian every day, Sr. Oksana knew this and lived this conviction with grace throughout her life.

"Eternal Memory!" Interment followed in the cemetery of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate.

"What Rejoicing There Will Be!" by Sr. Michele Yakymovitch



Nearly a month ago, I moved into a new office (the room next door to my old one) more spacious, looks like an office, not cluttered, room to move around, as well as increased capacity for files and papers. I have my paintings and icons too! I was finally able to hang on the wall and admire one picture given to me as a gift. It hangs right next to the wall switch and visible from my desk, as well as it catches my eye (anyone's eye) as I leave the office.

The portrait is taken from Luke 15 – the woman looking for her lost coin. Very unusual compared to every other painting or icon in the office, but VERY APPROPRIATE, I must say. An elderly woman with her hair tied back in a bun and a full length old fashioned dress with full length apron covering the dress is seen bent over in a room with a broom in one hand and a simple coin in her other hand. You, the reader, are probably wondering where all this is going and what purpose it has....

This portrait was given to me when the Sisters Servants began the project for St. Joseph's Home to expand its bed capacity and expand the existing building to meet the needs of more elderly and frail people. The picture was meant to inspire me, encourage me, to pray with, and look to this simple woman and her God for support and strength.

There are days in which all those feelings and emotions come into place, and other days they do not come at all!

To date, donors have been very generous, given of their means and some continue to give again and again as their means provide (like this woman in her simple lifestyle). Unfortunately, it is not enough. It is not quick enough as time passes and prices continue to increase. Also, another grave factor with which we are presently faced with is the license for Assisted Living. Applying for this type of license (along with our adult care home license) would allow us to give additional, specific care in areas we otherwise could not give, or are not licensed, nor allowed to give in our facility. We passed the application process and are in the final phase, which is the financial aspect, of the project. Are we financially able to handle an assisted living section for the home and all that it entails and demands from the government?

As St. Joseph's Home appears before Albany in completion of this application, this is the reality we face. Financially, we are not ready to build. We are not able to raise the needed assets to move forward. We are the elderly woman in scripture, and in my painting who, it seems, has lost it all. She is frantic, as I am, with time running against us! I need your help. The Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate need your help.

Recently, we put out an appeal letter to many of you for your help. Many people responded, for which I am deeply grateful. Among the responses, one came from my hometown of Rochester, NY, and my home parish of St. Josaphat. A gentleman, businessman and owner of a company, sent me an email. His offering is to graciously install in both the existing bedrooms and the yet-to-be built bedrooms, an emergency call bell system. I know this is very costly. I do not know this man, as I moved away from Rochester and my home parish many years ago, but he has graciously offered from his means.

What we hope to accomplish is not for ourselves and never has been. In this year of 2017, St. Joseph's Home along with the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate begin to celebrate seventy-five years of caring, compassionate ministry to the elderly. Throughout these years, we have cared for not only our own infirmed sisters before they needed nursing home care, but we have also cared for men and women of Ukrainian background and of other nationalities as well. We have ministered to not only the priests of our diocese but to Latin Rite retired priests and sisters. We care for the poor and less fortunate, turning no one away because their funds are limited. God has indeed blessed and graced their lives as well as our ministry throughout these 75 years. Can we continue to do this? A service that we are called to do: to care for the elderly in this day and time, to care for the elderly with dementia tendencies, to care for the elderly who are infirmed and lost in their weakness. We are a catholic institution struggling to flourish in the midst of a society that finds it difficult at times to see the hand of God or recognize and acknowledge God in our midst.



I see myself as the woman of limited means struggling to make this dream a reality for our Ukrainian community of elderly as well as the elderly population that surrounds us. Can you offer to do more? Are you, like the businessman I spoke of earlier, that gives to us from his means? Another Ukrainian gentleman who I am honored to call "my friend" has tried to keep costs down for us as he repairs our furnaces here at the Home (we have 3 furnaces - one new and two older ones). He has been a lifesaver!

Our goal is high and at times seems unattainable. That it is, when we work without God's intervention. When we think it is our work alone, it is impossible. When, and only when we gather as one group, united for a common purpose, will it be possible to attain the impossible.

We continue to forge ahead. We strive to raise the much-needed funds, and to work on what is an immediate necessity. We are in the process of upgrading our fire alarm system, replacing units and bringing it up to regulation, what is required. An additional camera security system is being installed not only for more indoor areas, but for the outdoor perimeter of the building as well. We will always take care of the elderly under our care. Unfortunately, there are times we are limited in what we can do.

There are many ways you can help. One way is to mark your calendar for our upcoming fundraisers: **June 10** - art auction and **September 30** - dinner and an evening of classic entertainment with Cher, Elvis and Marilyn Monroe impersonators



May God bless you for the generosity you have shown and given to us in the past that has helped us to live these 75 years of service to others!

For more information to donate or about the upcoming fundraisers, contact:

***Sr. Michele, SSMI
at 845-753-2555 or e-mail
srmicheley75@aol.com***

Please Note Correction

The Lenten Novena will be prayed
from April 5th — April 13th



St. Mary's
Spiritual,
Educational
& Cultural
Center has
been providing
an atmosphere of
tranquility, and a place of spiritual renewal
for almost 40 years.

The Retreat House can host retreats,
seminars, or meetings from the end of August
through the beginning of July for bookings of
mornings/afternoons, overnight, weekends, or
the entire week.

Our Retreat House has hosted
thousands of retreatants who look forward to
their next visit to St. Mary's We encourage
you to "Come and See" our beautiful
Byzantine style chapel, our outdoor grotto,
and our park-like
grounds enhanced
with prayer paths,
meditations trails,
stations of the
cross, a pond and
easy access to Shepherd's Lake.



If you would like to make a reservation, or
for more information, please call Sr. Albina at
845-753-5100 or
e-mail her sralbinag@gmail.com

Upcoming Events for the Stamford Eparchy
to be held at St. Mary's Retreat House

June 10, 2017- Christians as Caregivers
October 1, 2017 - Eparchial Family Day Retreat
*Details of these events will be publicized in THE
SOWER and on the Eparchy's website*



SSMI's Announce 13th General Chapter in Rome July 9 - 30, 2017

According to the SSMI Constitu-
tions a general chapter is convened
every six years. The General Chap-
ter is the highest authority in the Congregation.
There are many reasons for the Chapter, but two
major ones are the election of a new
Superior General and General Councilors
AND
to propose changes in the Constitution, when the
need arises, for approval of the Apostolic See

***We ask for your prayers during this
General Chapter***

63rd Holy Dormition Pilgrimage

August 12-13, 2017

**Theme: SSMI's Celebrate 125 Years
Glory to God! Honor to Mary! Peace to Us!**
Start making your plans to attend!

Gather parishes
together to order
your bus now!



**Mark Your
Calendar**

Your Contributions

**Support the work of the
Sisters Servants**



We need your help in continuing
our ministries which will aid us in
carrying out the charism of Blessed
Josaphata to be a "living light for all people."

Please send your contributions to:
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website: www.ssmi-us.org