



Newsletter of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate

Journeying with Josaphata

Great Fast/Lent 2018



SSMI Superior General Visits USA



**Sr. Sofija (center)
with Provincial Council**

The Sisters Servants welcomed their Superior General, Sr. Sofija Lebedowicz, to the U.S. on December 6th. Sr. Sofija was elected on July 24, 2017 during the General Chapter. It was a historical SSMI event as it was the first time in which someone who was not a delegate at the General Chapter was elected Superior General.

Thus, we felt truly blessed that one of her very first visits to the provinces was to the United States. However, it was not just a social trip, Sr. Sofija is definitely a woman of business and concerned about the welfare of each and every Sister Servant in the world.

During her visit from December 6-16, Sr. Sofija celebrated with us our Congregation's feast day, the Immaculate Conception. We held a triduum which was directed by Bishop Paul Chomnycky. Sr. Sofija spoke at the closing celebration of the 75th anniversary of St. Joseph' Home. Sr. Sofija travelled to the Chancery in Philadelphia, where we all were graciously hosted by Archbishop Stefan Soroka, and met with Archbishop as well as Bishop John Bura and Bishop Andriy Rabyi. She also met with our SSMI Lay Associates, travelled to St. Nicholas School in Passaic, NJ which is staffed by two of our sisters, and she is very supportive of our ministries. On December 16th, we bid farewell to Sr. Sofija with a festive dinner, and are delighted that Sr. Sofija will attend the 64th Pilgrimage.



The 64th Holy Dormition Pilgrimage will be on August 11 & 12. This year's theme is: **Mary, our Model of Prayer, "Do Whatever He Tells You..."** (John 2:5)



The Sisters Servants and Bishop Paul Chomnycky, joyfully announce that His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, will preside at the pilgrimage.

For over 60 years, thousands of pilgrims have journeyed to Sloatsburg for spiritual renewal and nourishment, as well as rekindling friendships. Each pilgrimage is a blessed time, but we especially welcome and encourage you to begin making plans to attend this year, as His Beatitude will grace us with his spiritually uplifting words and blessings.

Information about the pilgrimage will be in the diocesan newspapers and our website. A few highlights include: presentations from Fr. Jack Custer on August 11th and V. Rev. Dr. Ivan Kaszczak on August 12th, an exhibit on Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, activities for children, and youth. We have set aside a block of rooms at a local hotel, and will post the details on how you can take advantage of the low group rate.

"St. Joseph's—A Place to Call Home"

by Sr. Michele



On December 10th, the closing celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the opening of St. Joseph's Home was held. Sr. Sofija, Superior General presented Sr. Michele, Administrator, with a papal blessing as Sr. Janice Soluk looks on.

God is pleased by every act of mercy, because in the brother or sister that we assist, we recognize the face of God, which no one can see (cf. Jn 1:18). – Pope Francis

St. Joseph's Home is an Adult Care Facility owned and operated by the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate in Sloatsburg, NY. It is the only Ukrainian Catholic Facility of its kind on the East Coast. We are currently licensed to care for 31 residents and have a long, ongoing waiting list.

As you may already be aware, we, the Sisters Servants, have been trying to raise the funds required to build an addition with resident rooms and the necessary facilities to serve 19 more residents. This addition entails much more than simply adding resident rooms; it necessitates, among other changes, adding laundry facilities, nursing offices, furnaces, new water and septic systems, updates in the security system, enlarging and rebuilding the dining room, sitting rooms and the chapel. Furnishing the rooms and other facilities are also necessary. The cost of this major project is seven million dollars. With this addition, we can accommodate persons with greater needs because we will be licensed as an Assisted Living Facility.

Through the generosity of many benefactors, we have been able to pay for necessary fees prior to building, i.e. acquiring permits and licenses, surveying, architectural plans and blueprints and many other necessities. Groundbreaking and the actual building will require much of the remaining funds.

It has been the dream and mission of the Sisters to be able to enable our elderly to live their remaining years in an atmosphere of dignity and respect, no matter what their needs may be. For over 75 years, the Sisters have provided an opportunity for many elderly and infirm priests, religious and lay people to share their lives with other residents who speak their primary language and, often, have shared their experiences; to worship in the Ukrainian Church that has been their strength throughout their lives; and to receive the personal care that they are no longer able to provide for themselves.

Tia Walker, in her book, **The Inspired Caregiver: Finding Joy While Caring for Those You Love**, writes, *"To care for those who once cared for us is one of the highest honors."* This is what the Sisters Servants have tried to do for many years and hope to continue to do for more people.

We are a generous and caring people. Those who came before us built the churches, schools and institutions we enjoy today. They did this in addition to supporting their families and other causes in our homeland of Ukraine. Today, we continue to support our homeland. What will we do for our future generations here in the United States? May we also continue to build institutions that our descendants will be able to enjoy.

Please help the Sisters to continue to be a voice for our elderly, and to provide a place for our elderly and infirmed to live with dignity, and to continue to practice their faith and traditions during the final years of their lives. With your support, the Sisters Servants can continue to share the joy and pain of our most vulnerable population; to hold their hands and listen to their stories; to pray for and with them when they most need these prayers; and help them to feel the tender touch of the love of God in their lives.



What is Religious or Consecrated Life? by Sr. Eliane - Vocations Director

The Religious or Consecrated Life is about consecrating oneself to a particular spirit of the Christian journey (known as a charism) in service of the Church. Men and women dedicate their lives to serve in Orders, Congregations or movements as priests, brothers, monks, nuns, sisters and consecrated virgins. Some commit themselves to a life of prayer, others to education or health care. Whatever way they live out their charism, they bring Christ to those to whom they minister. Religious and consecrated life has many different expressions. There are many orders, communities and congregations of men and women who commit themselves to this state of life. Some live a contemplative lifestyle, focused on prayer; while others have a missionary focus.

Living as a Religious

While life differs for each consecrated brother and sister, the religious lifestyle can be best summed up in the three vows which most consecrated men and women promise to live by: **Poverty, Obedience and Chastity**.

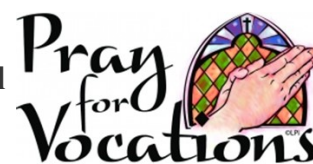
The vow of **poverty** is about living simply. Consecrated men and women have few possessions and what they do have they share in common with their community.

The vow of **obedience** is a profound “yes”: to God, to the people of God, to a religious community and to a specific way of life. This “yes” allows the Religious Brother or Sister to follow God’s call wherever and whatever it may lead them to.

Finally, the vow of **chastity** is a promise to express love in a different way. The vow of chastity is the promise to love God and the people of God through the service of one’s life.

Pray for someone in your family, or for yourself, to be called by God to serve Him as a Sister or a Priest, and have the courage to say “Yes”?

The Sisters Servants extend an invitation to come visit our home, stay and experience our life style, see how the Sisters who have dedicated themselves in the Consecrated Life live today in the service of God and community. If you are interested in visiting or have questions, please contact Sr. Eliane at 973-778-0208 / e-mail her at eliilnitski@gmail.com or contact Sr. Kathleen at 845-753-2840 and e-mail her at srkath25@gmail.com.



National Catholic Sisters Week March 8-14, 2018

NCSW is an annual celebration that began in 2014 to honor women religious with a series of events that instruct, enlighten, and bring greater focus on the lives of these women. It is a chance to recognize all that they do, with the hope that as more young women learn about women religious, more will choose to follow their example. You can check out the NCSW website: nationalcatholicsistersweek.org to learn about the organization, and find an event near you and join in honoring women religious.

THE SSMI's INVITE ALL

TO: 3Ps = Pray, Play, Pizza with the Sisters Servants

WHEN: MARCH 8th - 6:30 PM & MARCH 11th - 2:00 PM

WHERE: St. Mary's Villa, 150 Sisters Servants Ln, Sloatsburg, NY 10974

RSVP: Call 845-753-2840 or E-mail: srkath25@gmail.com

Please respond by March 3rd

St. Nicholas School in Minersville, PA Learn about the Saints *by Sr. Natalya, SSMI*



The theme for the 2017-18 school year at St. Nicholas School in Minersville, PA, was "*Our Saints*". Throughout the year, the saints of the Church have been highlighted during Religion classes and in various school activities. By learning about our saints, students have been encouraged to follow their example of holiness, love for God, care for others and forgiveness and joy.



Among the recent school activities were a variety of charitable collections. Students collected items for the local Women's Shelter during the season of Advent. Sister Natalya delivered the collection with Jr. Sodality president, Ally Rutherford and vice president, Hannah Shimko. The students have decided to collect items for the homeless during the Great Lenten Fast.



The Junior Sodality girls also made hot chocolate and cookies for the student body during Catholic Schools week and, later in the week, milk and cookies to the Pre-K –Grade 3 children, while grade 5-8 students read stories. Sister Zenovia and the 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Schmidt, helped the 4th grade students prepare and present a program about their favorite saints. As the school year continues, the students and staff of St. Nicholas School in Minersville, will continue to learn how to follow more faithfully in the footsteps of Jesus Christ through the example of our Saints.



Pavers/Brick for walkway of our Blessed Josaphata Shrine

Remember a loved one, or express gratitude for a special person or event. This beautiful remembrance can be purchased for \$50 each. Order forms are available on our website, or by calling 845-753-2840.

To have your paver installed by pilgrimage, please order by March 30th.

The Sisters Servants celebrate their 2018 Jubiliarians



75 years - Sr. Tharasia Hladio

65 years—Sr. Consolata Trudick

Sr. Stephanie Sema

Sr. Bernitta Dub

60 years - Sr. Jonathan Duchensky

50 years - Sr. Cecelia Sworin

A celebration will be held in Sloatsburg in August
God grant them many, blessed years!

If you would like more information about the Sisters Servants, check our website: www.ssmi-us.org or contact us.



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Your Contributions Support the Work of the Sisters Servants

We need your help in continuing to serve where the need is the greatest as Blessed Josaphata commissioned us to do so. Please be a part of our work by making a contribution to: **Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, Inc.**

Please remember us
in your will or with an annuity?

*Thank
you*