

St. Joseph Women's Society
Mary & Martha News

March 2015

Columbia, SC

Spiritual Reading

I am always looking for a spiritual guide for my Lenten journey. I happened upon Sister Joan Chittister's Songs of the Heart-Reflections on the Psalms. The Psalms are great prayer starters. This little book met my expectations to challenge me to deeply ponder the subject presented by the Psalmist. Each chapter offers a reflection, a challenge, a wisdom story and suggested personal response.

In Chapter Three, on Mercy and Justice, Sister Joan writes on a verse from Psalm 85, *Mercy and faithfulness meet; justice and peace embrace. Faithfulness springs from the earth and justice looks down from heaven.* The discussion caused me to stop and think of how I exercise justice and mercy. The book tells a story where the seeker asks, "Who is closer to God, the saint or the sinner?"

"Why the sinner, of course." the elder said.

"But how can that be?" the seeker asked.

"Because," the elder said, "every time a person sins they break the cord that binds them to God. But every time God forgives them, the cord is knotted again. And so, thanks to the mercy of God, the cord gets shorter and the sinner closer to God."

If you are searching for a book for spiritual reflection, Joan Chittister's books are a good read any season of the year.

Gwen Skipper

A Note from Janet

(Janet's message this month offers a tribute to Sister Andrea, in recognition of the love and respect she earned during the many years of her work in our Parish. Sister passed away on Sunday, March 8.)

A Memory of Sister Andrea

Like many of us at St. Joseph Women's Society, I considered Sister Andrea a special friend. At my first attendance at Mass at St. Joseph Sister Andrea called out to me by my name and welcomed me. And I knew then that St. Joseph was the church for me in Columbia.

She loved to play mah jongg and always started every match with the words, "I don't have any jokers." Without jokers it was hard to win at mah jongg, but Sister Andrea often won anyway.

Sister was not quite so good at bridge, but one card player knew she had met her match commenting, "I didn't know Sister Andrea was so competitive."

But she was competitive in all the important ways. She showed love to all and gave help to all that needed it. And she expected others to follow her ways. She was a special person to all who knew her in our church. It was a privilege to know and love her. We will miss her.

Janet O' Keeffe

The Saint Joseph Women's Society are friends in faith who share the Gospel; serve the parish, community, and world; and mold strong Catholic woman leaders.

Message from President

Gwen Skipper

Saint Joseph Women's Society is actively involved with the SCCCW convention in Greenville. We have 15 members that are planning to attend. I wish that all of you were going with us. A committee is working on the 2014 History of our society which will be displayed at the convention. Mary Sue Barnum and Chris Segars are involved in the convention planning. And of course Regina Spell is the Columbia-Midlands nominee for Catholic Woman of the Year.

We have been asked to put together the two "Market Place" baskets from our Deanery which will be auctioned at the convention. Each of the deanery affiliates have contributed toward the baskets.

The first of the baskets is the "Carolina Basket". It will contain anything associated with South Carolina, especially items with the state symbol. The second basket is a "Gift Card Basket". This can be anything from greeting cards to store gift cards. If you have an item that you would like to donate for either basket, contact Gwen Skipper at 345-2250. The baskets will be assembled after our March 15 meeting.

The convention project is for the "St. Clare's Home of Joyful Hope", a home in Greenville for unwed mothers who want to keep their babies. This project will help women who are experiencing a crisis pregnancy. The women will receive classes in parenting, finances, and job skills so that they will be able to eventually support their children. The Saint Joseph Women's Society will make a contribution to the convention project. If you would like to make a personal donation to the project, you may do so by sending a check to St. Joseph Women's Society at the Parish Office. Please write "convention project" on the note line of your check..



Community Outreach

The Caps of Love Project

The project "Caps of Love" is a service project of the National Council of Catholic Women. Plastic caps are recycled to raise money to buy wheelchairs for disabled children.

You can support this effort by collecting hard plastic caps from laundry detergents, hand sanitizer, beverages, toothpaste, shampoo, spray paint, tennis ball can lids, grated cheese, cream cheese, salad dressing, peanut butter, medicines and so many others.

Make sure they are clean with no paper or metal. Bring the caps to our next meeting.

Palmetto Project's Snack Pack Program

The Snack Pack Project is our local ministry that provides weekend food to children who qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches. Our volunteers have successfully delivered 35 snack packs to an elementary school for the past 4 weeks.

Food, provided by the Palmetto Project, is delivered to us every-other Thursday. A team of SJWS volunteers spend less than 2 hours making 70 packs. Half of these are taken to the school on that day. A week later two volunteers take the second set of packs to the school.

If you would like to volunteer to work on the project one Thursday a month give Mary Reeves a call at 353-9954.

Kiss me, I'm Irish! **(On March 17)**

Each year St. Patrick's Day brings to mind my trip to Ireland. What a lovely memory! This trip was on my husband's bucket list as his maternal grandmother was from Ireland. And so it was, we bravely planned a 14-day trip in spite of my husband's health issues.

We flew into Shannon airport in July of 1992, and from my window view I could see why it was so named "Emerald Isle". Ah, the "wearing of the green" begins with the aerial view of Ireland.

We had arranged to stay at farmhouse "Bed and Breakfasts" which turned out to be a wonderful experience. Some of these were quite a distance from the tourist attractions but in this way we were able to spend time in the evenings being entertained by other travelers and the local folks at nearby pubs.

Most of the roads were narrow which made for interesting experiences in our travels. Cows and sheep seemed not to mind trying to share the road with us! Many of the people rode bicycles to get from home to work and other places due to the cost of petrol. No wonder the only overweight people I saw were other tourists.

The Irish people were marvelous hosts so cheerful and full of fun and laughter. We visited all of the tourist attractions and spent a couple days in Dublin. On our last night we watched the sun go down on Galway Bay as we sat before a peat fire in our host's parlor and another guest played the piano with everyone singing Irish songs.

I often chuckle when I remember telling one of our hosts that I had kissed the Blarney Stone and her son's reply was, "I thought you may have done so long ago!"

Happy St. Patrick's Day to one and all!
Edith Teyssier



Calendar

March 15
SJWS Monthly Meeting:
Speaker: Pam O'Toole speaking about her trip to Africa. After the 12:15 Mass in the Lower Level of the Parish Life Center

March 20-22
South Carolina Council of Catholic Women Annual Convention in Greenville

April 5
Easter Sunday

April 19
SJWS Monthly Meeting:
Speaker: to be announced.
After the 12:15 Mass in the Lower Level of the Parish Life Center

April 26
Columbia-Midlands Deanery
St. Mary's Catholic Church in Rock Hill

Church Care Committee

In this ministry of the St. Joseph Women's Society members volunteer time to look after the general appearance of our church in preparation for each weekend. Each week two different volunteers spend about an hour on Friday morning to complete the tasks.

Volunteers are needed for Church care on Fridays in March or April. There will be an opportunity to volunteer at our Meeting or if you can serve on one of the Fridays please contact the committee chair, Lois Barnett, by phone 776-5581.