



Our Times

Newsletter of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius

Jankola Library and Slovak Museum

Treasures in Good Hands

"God will provide" is no insignificant saying for the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Over the one hundred and sixteen years of our community mission, God has faithfully provided us with direction, protection and assistance. Most recently, the Jankola Library and Slovak Museum has been a focus of attention.

Since 1968, our Jankola Library and Slovak Museum has been an important depository of Slovak literature, culture and the arts in the United States. Bearing the name of our founder, Father Matthew Jankola, the library and its succession of Sister Directors have fostered scholarship and multiculturalism in the materials that have been donated to the library. Over 20,000 books, Slovak periodicals, newspapers and maps along with Slovak art and crafts were available to scholars and students of Slovak culture and history. But, over the years, visits to the Jankola Library have decreased. One reason is that there is currently greater interest in genealogical data than in Slovak history. Families whose members emigrated to the United States are interested in knowing the history of their immigrant relatives and what contributions they have made to their adopted land. These stories are contained in the collections of Slovak periodicals and newspapers that were stored but not readily available in our library.

As our community anticipates the future disposition of our Motherhouse property, we realize our responsibility to care for the treasures that have been entrusted to us in the Jankola Library. God has provided us with the best possible collaborator! The National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NCSML) in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is a subsidiary of the Smithsonian Museum and is willing and delighted to receive the contents of our library and museum. Their mission is to engage the global community with unique Czech, Slovak and American stories to inspire individuals with universal themes of culture, freedom, democracy and immigration. Our search for a collaborator led us to the NCSML whose commitment to



Top left: Finding an image of Saints Cyril and Methodius in the NCSML museum, Sister Carol Ann feels right at home.

Top right: Sister Barbara Sable shares words of hope and gratitude at the opening of the Furdek Special collection.

Above: A large wall plaque tells of our SS.C.M. significant contribution to the NCSML library.

Right: Library rolling stack shelving provides ample space for the books received from the Jankola Library.



What's Inside?

Sister Barbara Sable	3	Sister Pamela Smith.....	7	Observances.....	10
Christian Unity Service.....	3	St. Cyril PSK.....	7	When We Wish/Legacy.....	10
October to March.....	4-5	+Sister Gloria Marie.....	8	2025 Jubilarians.....	11
St. Francis Center.....	6	+Sister Irene Rose Kmetz.....	8	Pilgrims of Hope	12
		+Sister Margaret Dubas.....	9	Save the Date.....	12

Below left and right: Dalibor Mikulas anticipates filling the inside of the semi parked behind the Motherhouse kitchen; only a day later, David Muhlena lifts a flat onto the truck for Dalibor to move closer to boxes already loaded.



Center: A volunteer along with Sisters Michael Ann, Loretta Marie and Barbara Sable stand with David Muhlena and Dalibor Mikulas who are ready to drive the second installment of materials from the Jankola Library to Cedar Rapids.

Above left and right: Museum Curator Stefanie Kohn has a giant roll of bubble wrap for museum items that will find their way to Cedar Rapids. They will carefully join a world-famous collection.

Right and far right: The first astronomical clock in the United States on the NCSML grounds houses a sculpture of Mother Pius as a novice. Her ministry continues!

those who emigrated to America and contributed their hard work, skill and vision to the growth of this nation mirrors our own. Their ability to digitize our collections will assure that these materials will be respectfully kept and widely used to honor the history of Slovak immigrants and their contributions.

The step-by-step transfer of boxed periodicals, newspapers and books began December 4-8, 2023, when Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Dr. Dalibor Mikulas and Library Director David Muhlena made their first of three trips to Danville with a mid-sized rental truck. In advance of their visit, Stephen Baluch had begun packing the materials, happy to help us contribute to the NCSML.

In May of 2024, Sisters Barbara Sable, Michael Ann, Carol Ann and Jeanne Ambre went to Cedar Rapids for the opening of the Furdek Special Collection at the NCSML. As part of their 50th Anniversary celebration, our contribution to their library was unveiled and recognized. It was gratifying to see how grateful the officials and members of the NCSML are to the SS.C.M.'s.

A second visit in August of 2024 filled another mid-size truck. And then, in November of 2024, Dr. Dalibor Mikulas and David Muhlena visited Danville a third time with Stefanie Kohn, Curator of the Museum in Cedar Rapids. For this visit, they rented a semi in anticipation of the transfer of additional boxed periodicals, newspapers, books and items for display in the museum. The truck was loaded with two rented forklifts which were used by all three of our guests to fill the truck!

An additional tie between the NCSML and the SS.C.M.'s was revealed and rung at a ceremony in Iowa. The Cedar Rapids Orloj, the first astronomical Clock Tower in the United States, was dedicated on September 27, 2024. One of the twelve wooden sculptures that circulate to music following the ringing of the clock is a figure fashioned after a photograph of Mother Pius as a novice. She represents all religious who ministered in education to Czech and Slovak immigrants. What a "moving" testimony!



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Phone: 570-275-3581; Mission Advancement Office: ext 153; Development Office: ext 101

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Graphics and Layout: Sister Jeanne Ambre, SS.C.M.

from the General Superior

by Sister Barbara Sable, SS.C.M.

Called to Share Christ's Hope

Pope Francis has declared 2025 to be a Jubilee Year of Hope and has invited us all to be Pilgrims of Hope. Bishops across



the United States are calling all to celebrate this year with special Pilgrimages of Hope, and outreach to those who need hope in their lives. The Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville has been named by Bishop Timothy Senior of Harrisburg as a special place of pilgrimage during this year, and we have already seen individuals and groups of pilgrims coming to the Basilica to pray as pilgrims for an increase of hope. You are all welcome to come to the Basilica, especially this year.

Why is hope important? Hope is like a beacon that shines in the distance, guiding us through storms. Hope is our ally so as not to lose faith that Christ makes all things new. How can we live out this Jubilee of Hope? We can be a source of hope for all those with and for whom we live and work. We can look for opportunities to bring God's love to others, including small acts of service and compassion in our daily lives. We can speak in defense of those whose voices are not heard. Every day, we can look for and find ways to offer hope and show God's love to those we encounter. It is through these moments that God's love and the promise of hope can be witnessed to by our actions and words.

Building on the strong foundation of where God has brought us so far, we can continue to listen for the Spirit's voice, calling us, strengthening us, and equipping us for opportunities to share Christ's hope in our midst, as we continue to work every day toward witnessing to, proclaiming and building God's Kingdom as Pilgrims of Hope.

Sister Barbara Sable

Praying for Christian Unity Together

That All May Be One

In keeping with Father Jankola's desire that we Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius pray and work for the unity of all Christians, we used the week of Prayer for Christian Unity to host a prayer service in the Basilica on Sunday, January 19, 2025.

All the Christian Churches in the Danville area were invited to join us in prayer and song. Choirs from the Saint Columba Youth Group, Shiloh United Church of Christ, Zion United Methodist Church, and the Sisters in Danville added music to the service. Readings were proclaimed by several Christian ministers and Father Timothy Marcoe, pastor of St. Joseph parish in Danville, gave the homily.

A beautiful sense of joy and unity was felt by the people in attendance. A sizeable number of people were in attendance, in spite of the snow and cold winds which made travel precarious.



Left: On cue from Sr. Michael Ann, Sr. Denise Marie lights the Paschal candle.

Far left top: A few opening words from Sr. Barbara Sable welcome those assembled and the ministers seated in the sanctuary.

Below: The Choirs from Shiloh UCC and Zion Methodist Church added their well-practiced harmony to the prayer "that we all may be one."



Left: Seated close to the sanctuary, Sr. Suzanne and the Saint Columba Youth Group choir were ready to sing and anxious to show everyone the "Hope is Here" on the back of their T-shirts.

From October to March

The last six months since the Fall 2024 **Our Times** have generated many photographs. We hope that these two pages will be a successful attempt to catch you up on what the Sisters have been doing. Keep in mind--there is not enough room to recount it all! An excellent way to keep up is our Facebook page: Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius.



October 2024: October 19th saw a sanctuary full of graduates for the St. Cyril Academy Homecoming (left). The same day afforded Janet Stefano ('66) an opportunity to purchase a bear from Dawn Orzechowski (above) at the Flea Market + in the Auditorium. Just the next day, the first of two water main breaks made a watery mess.

Right: Danville Jubilee Kitchen opportunities in October and March brought Sisters, Associates, and then the Justice Circle members to Trinity Lutheran Church to provide a warm meal for those who came.



Above: Members of the SSCM Vocation Team joined Sr. Deborah Marie at the National Religious Vocation Conference in Minneapolis.

Right: Sr. Thomas More was joined by friends at the 25th anniversary celebration of the dedication of St. George Church in Mifflinburg. Sister spent 20 years there in the Religious Education program.



Above center: Enjoying the Fall foliage.
Above right: Blessing Maria Hall on Epiphany.
Above: Sr. Suzanne brought the St. Columba Youth group to Maria Hall to sing carols before Christmas. Joy to the Sisters and peace to the singers!



Left: Looking ahead to the Summer of 2025 community meetings (Chapter), all the Sisters gathered in December for pre-Chapter discussions. Every four years, Chapter is the direction-setting assembly that charts the course for the following four years and elects the Leadership Team. As a member of the Chapter Steering Committee, Sr. Linda Marie explains an activity.



Left and above: On March 18th, during Ministry Week at Maria Joseph, the Sisters invited all the staff members from Maria Joseph Manor, Nazareth Memory Care, Emmanuel Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Sunset Lane Hospice and the Meadows to one of six settings for a hand-blessing ceremony. Knowing that they share in our mission of compassionate care is vital for them, as is knowing how much we appreciate their service and sacrifices.



Far left and above: Family members and many of Sister Susan Polchin's religious Sisters gathered on March 16th to celebrate her 102nd birthday. Left: Both Emmanuel residents, Sr. Virginia Dewan and Sr. Susan are welcomed to the party by the community birthday cake (aka Sr. Seton Marie) and Sr. Barbara Sable.



Left: A most generous benefactor sent this vanful of Sisters to a concert by the Shamrock Tenors. Above: At Maria Hall, the annual Float into Spring makes the Sisters and the staff happy--even when the outside temperatures disagree.

Always Busy in South Carolina

Every week and for every holiday, the Saint Francis Center on St. Helena Island is open and Sisters Canice, Marcine and Agnes Marie with their many generous volunteers are ready to serve. Orchestrating the food distributions, the resale shop and programs for house and roof repairs, they provide many people with what they need to live safely and happily.

As the Diocesan Director of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and Liaison for Religious, Sister Pamela Smith traverses the state to plan, direct and attend services. All this while writing articles for the monthly diocesan magazine and teaching courses to prospective deacons at St. Leo University.

These are four very busy Sisters!

Above: Friends of Callawassie Island award the St. Francis Center \$5000 for the help they provide to the people of Beaufort County.

Right: It's families that need the most help--and the rewards? So many smiles.

Far right: Afternoon pickup for combination air conditioner and heater units deliver 40 at a time to those who have registered in advance for them.

Right: During a March visit of the SSCM Leadership Team, three new Associates were welcomed on Sunday, March 30th. Sharon Bouchard, Denise Crowley-Treier (Karen Taylor served as proxy) and Linda Clark were pinned and presented a rose. Already faithful

SFC volunteers, they join the ranks of card-carrying SSCM Associates, sharing our Mission, Charism and Spirituality.

Right: Sr. Carol Ann, SSCM Councilor, assists the oldest SFC client at a Tuesday food distribution.

Far Right: Wednesday's Second Helping food distribution gets two additional hands from Sr. Barbara Sable at the end of the visit of the Leadership Team.





From top to above: Following a St. Gregory the Great Lenten Retreat given by Srs. Canice and Pamela Smith, the written worries of the women retreatants were buried at the foot of the cross on St. Helena Island.

*In February, Sr. Pamela Smith gave an ecumenical retreat on the Theology of Creation at Springbank Retreat in Kingstree SC.

*Affectionately referred to as the "mother of the deacons" for her theology courses through St. Leo University, Sr. Pamela Smith is pulled into the photo of the 19 permanent deacons ordained in February for the Charleston Diocese.

*Standing with the South Carolinians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty and the South Carolina Christian Action Council, Sr. Pamela Smith helps engage in dialogue, deliver petitions and attend prayer vigils to halt executions in South Carolina. Execute Justice--Not People!

St. Cyril Preschool and Kindergarten

Learn, Play, Pray and Perform



Left: The St. Cyril Preschool and Kindergarten celebrated National Read Across America Day on Friday, February 28th, since Dr. Seuss' March 2nd birthday fell on a Sunday, this year.

Left below: A conference room full of families brought many stuffed animals to life on a mid-March evening. It was a veritable zoo as more than bears were built!

Left center: Pay for Play in February raised money for Kidsville at Washies Playground in Danville.

Below: Learning the letter I calls for a measuring exercise,



Above left and right: Knowing the real meaning of Christmas, the students learn their lines, wear their costumes and perform in the annual Christmas pageant.

Left: Anticipating a dinner of turkey and dressing, the students entertain with Thanksgiving songs.



In Memory of
Sister Gloria
Marie Kascak,
SS.C.M.

Born:
July 17, 1934
Professed:
August 3, 1955
Went Home to God:
December 5, 2024

Sister Gloria Marie Kascak, SS.C.M. (Lorraine Kascak) died at Emmanuel Sunset Hospice in Danville on December 5, 2024. She was born in Bridgeport, CT, on July 17, 1934, the only child of Mary Galya and Golly Kascak. She attended Holy Name of Jesus primary school in Stratford, CT, where the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius taught, and Saint Cyril Academy in Danville.

After graduating from Saint Cyril Academy in 1952, she entered the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius on February 2, 1953, made her first

profession of vows on August 3, 1955, and her final profession of vows in 1960.

Sister Gloria Marie received her B.A. in Education from Marywood University. Sister's 57-year career in education brought her to several places, serving as teacher and/or principal in Perth Amboy NJ; Plymouth, Hazleton, and Jessup, PA; and Stratford CT. She also served as parish minister at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stratford, CT, and served in the Diocesan Office of Education in Bridgeport, CT.

Sister Gloria Marie returned to Danville in 2017, where she then served as sacristan at Emmanuel Skilled Care and Rehabilitation Center in Danville, and also as an aide at Saint Cyril Preschool and Kindergarten where she provided after-school care.

When celebrating her 50th anniversary as a Religious Sister, Sister Gloria Marie wrote, "The joys I have experienced and taken delight in as a consecrated religious have been varied and many. Whether teaching, studying, administering or spending time with the Lord in prayer, inner joy was always present in my life. God has helped me to trust him that all will be well. We are all safe in his presence and we can lean on him because he provides a safe place for us to rest at all times."

Sister Gloria Marie was well-known for her beautiful smile and kind disposition--she is greatly missed by all of her Sisters-in-Christ.

Sister Irene Rose Kmetz, SS.C.M., died Tuesday, December 24, 2024, at Emmanuel Center in Danville. She was born in Gary, IN, on March 13, 1934, the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Hreha) Kmetz. Sister Irene Rose grew up in a large, close family of 7, her Mother and Father and 5 children. Sister often said that one great joy as a Sister included the wonderful family of Sisters in Community with whom she lived each year. She knew well what joys come from being in a large family.

She attended Holy Trinity School in Gary and graduated in 1951 from St. Cyril Academy in Danville, PA. She entered the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius on September 8, 1951, was received as a novice on August 13, 1952, and professed vows on August 9, 1954. Sister Irene Rose received a Bachelor of Arts degree in education from Marywood University in Scranton and a Master's in Reading from Cardinal Stritch College in Milwaukee, WI.

When she celebrated her 65th anniversary as a Religious in 2019, Sister said, "I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, and as a student in Danville, I asked myself, 'Why not be a Sister and teach for Christ?' I entered the SS.C.M. community right after high school and here I am, 65 years later, doing the Lord's work to spread His Kingdom." Sister Irene Rose served in education for many years as both Teacher and Principal

In Memory of
Sister Irene Rose
Kmetz,
SS.C.M.

Born:
March 13, 1934
Professed:
August 11, 1954
Went Home to God:
December 24, 2024



in the Dioceses of Harrisburg and Greensburg, PA, Gary, IN, and Chicago, IL.

Sister also had a great love for serving the elderly and did so for nearly 25 years at Villa Saint Cyril and St. Benedict Home, both in Illinois. In this capacity she served in many roles, including Transportation Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, and patient escort. When Sister Irene Rose was missioned to Maria Hall in Danville, PA, she served in various capacities, most notably as coordinator of the Religious Articles Shop, which she managed with her sister, Sister Rosanne.

Sister Margaret Dubas, SS.C.M., formerly known as Sister Kenneth Marie, died at Emmanuel Hospice Center, Danville, on March 8, 2025. Born in Baltimore, MD, on September 25, 1942, she was the daughter of John and Jean (Hemmock) Dubas. She attended St. Michael Elementary School, in Jessup, PA, and graduated from St. Patrick High School in Olyphant, PA. She entered the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Danville, on September 8, 1960, and professed her final vows on August 15, 1968.

Sister Margaret Dubas received a B.A. in education from Cabrini College, an M.S. in Secondary School Science from Villanova University, and an RN from Geisinger Medical Center School of Nursing. Sister served in the ministry of education for most of her Religious Life, as a Science and Math teacher at Lebanon High School in Lebanon, PA, at Villa Sacred Heart Teacher Training Institute and at Saint Cyril Academy in Danville, PA. Sister also served as an instructional aide at St. Cyril Preschool and Kindergarten, and served as a Councilor on the Congregational Leadership Team.

During her years at Saint Cyril Academy, in addition to her teaching duties, Sister served as Class Moderator and Activities Director, and she began a Bowling Club, a Hiking Club in connection with the International Volksmarch Association, and a Medical Explorers Troop in conjunction with Geisinger Medical Center. Sister Margaret Dubas inspired many students to consider careers in science, and served as a mentor for many as they successfully went on to become

In Memory of
Sister Margaret
Dubas,
SS.C.M.

Born:
September 25, 1942
Professed:
August 12, 1963
Went Home to God:
March 8, 2025



doctors, nurses, veterinarians and teachers.

Sister Margaret Dubas believed that her parents gave her the strong faith formation that guided her through life. The family prayed the rosary together daily. Their selfless giving to the church and the community was always an inspiration to her, and a model for her own life of service.

At Sr. Dubas' wake in Maria Hall, the nurse volunteers of SUN Nurses Honor Guard surrounded her coffin and gave their fallen colleague a moving tribute.*

(Sunbury, Union and Northumberland Counties)



Servant Leader Awards

Doing as Jesus Did

Honoring those Junior and Senior students who exemplify Servant Leadership in their parish, school and community is an annual celebration in Danville. On Sunday, October 27, 2024, 20 such students were honored, along with five Father Matthew Jankola Lifetime Servant Leaders. They were:

Kathy McWilliams for Evangelization, Karen Erlston for Care for the Elderly, Betty Brown for Care for Wounded Families, Jeanne Prevett Sable for Care for Creation, and Judy Brokus for Justice and Peace.

Certainly, Jesus is well pleased with so many people who choose to imitate him!



Left: Sr. Barbara Sable poses with Judy Brokus, Betty Brown and Kathy McWilliams following the ceremony.

Bottom left: The sixteen Servant Leaders in attendance stand for a photo opportunity.

Below: The welcoming committee in the lobby and the awards in the Basilica await the students and adults to be honored.



Our Prayers Are for You

Scheduled to include the World Day of Consecrated Life, the annual Eucharistic Devotions at Villa Sacred Heart were held on February 2-4. Two days of Exposition at Maria Hall were followed by one day in the Basilica. Friar Nicholas Spano, OFM Conv, (*right*) preached the three days and the closing.

At Maria Hall on the World Day of Consecrated Life, February 2nd, the Sisters all renewed their vows at Mass (*below*), and listened to the readings proclaimed by Sr. Mary Charlotte, RGS. (*below right*)



During Advent and then back by popular demand in Lent, Dr. Marie Noel Keller, RSM, (*right*) led two days of reflection for the St. Cyril Spiritual Center. In Advent, Sister spoke about the Infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke and expounded on the Beloved Disciple in Lent.



Above: The Lenten ambiance for the Maria Hall auditorium reminds us of the love of God for us all. Left: Prayer Outside the Walls in December and again here in March asks us to brave the weather to pray for all those who are in most need of our prayers.

When We Wish



Transportation is a big concern for the Sisters who depend on walkers or wheelchairs. Their options for attending community celebrations, liturgies and activities decrease as the number of cars from which they can enter and exit declines. A used van like the one pictured above would make it possible for many Sisters to get back into the "I'll go!" column for community events. If you can help us raise the \$50,000 we project this will cost, we would be so grateful, and our have-wheels-will-travel Sisters will forever remember you in their grateful prayers. Who of us ever thought that stepping up into a car would become a deal-breaker for getting out of a house and going someplace? Life happens, but God always provides good people with solutions!

You Are Invited to Leave a Legacy

With a gift through your will, you can support the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius and ensure that our mission of witnessing to, proclaiming and building the Kingdom of God will continue into the future.

An example of bequest wording:

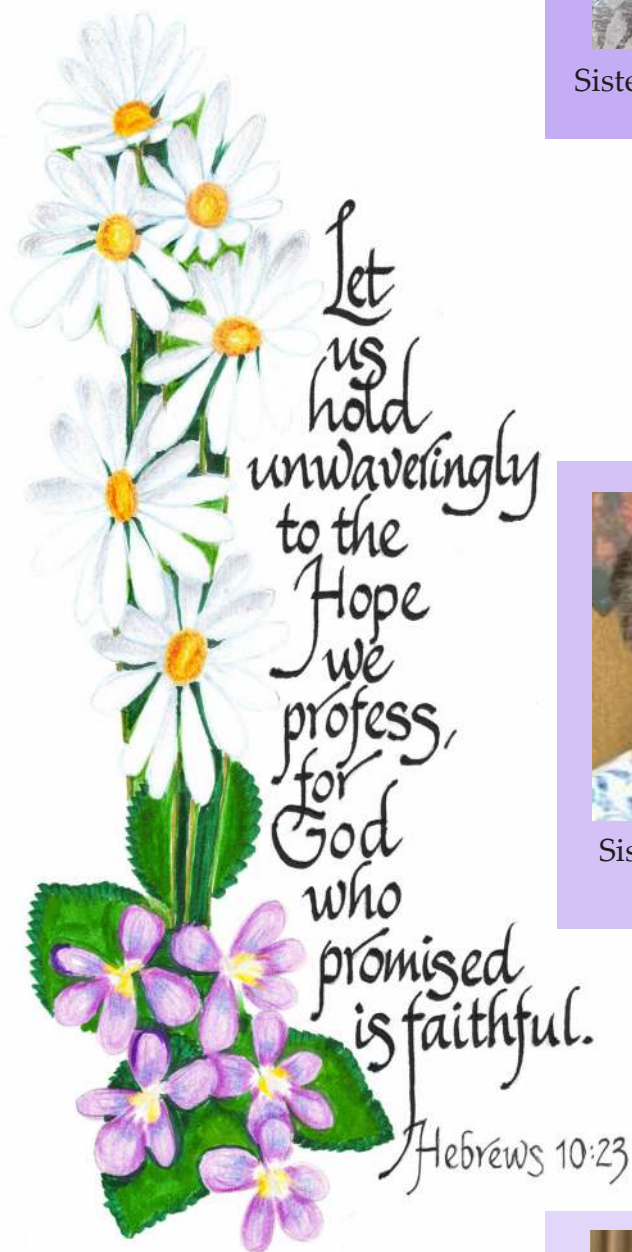
I give, devise and bequeath to the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, a not-for-profit organization located in Danville PA, the sum of \$___ (or ___% of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate) for the unrestricted use and general purposes of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

It is a good idea to let your heirs know about the charities to which you are donating.

If you would like more information about giving to the Community in your will, please contact:

Sister Barbara Sable, SS.C.M.
General Superior
570-275-3581 ext 300
barbarasable@hotmail.com

2025 Jubilarians



Sister Donna Marie
70 Years



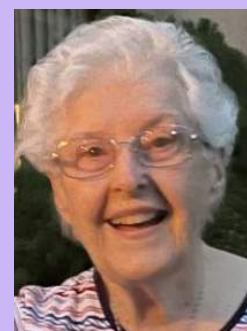
Sister Virginia
Dewan
65 Years



Sister
Denise Marie
65 Years



Sister M.
Christopher
65 Years



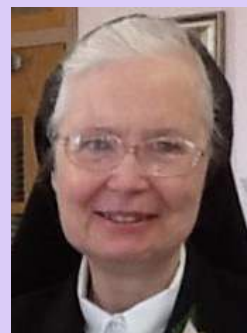
Sister
Carol Marie
65 Years



Sister Madonna
60 Years



Sister
Irene Marie
55 Years



Sister
Loretta Marie
55 Years



Sister Pamela Smith
50 Years



Sister
Joanne Marie
55 Years



Sister
Agnes Marie
55 Years





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Thank you for reading our Newsletter!



Mission: In the name of Jesus we teach and heal.
Spirituality: Christ centered and Mary-modeled.
Motto: Thy Kingdom Come!



*Basilica of Saints Cyril
and Methodius*
Year of Hope

The Diocese of Harrisburg has named the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius one of its seven pilgrimage sites during the Jubilee Year. Come visit the Basilica during this special year of grace and spiritual renewal, receive a Passport and have it stamped with a seal made especially for this purpose. Make a pilgrimage; bring a group to pray!



Save the Date *Saturday, July 12, 2025*

SSCM Summer Festival

50th Anniversary

*Fun*Food*Flea Market*Games*Cornhole*Furniture & more*

10:30 am-5:00 pm
5:00 pm Liturgy for Sunday

