



## from SISTER MARY

Dear Friends of Emmaus,

Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Dorothy Day grace our cover because they are icons for the theme of this newsletter, "I cannot do everything, but I can do something."

Mother Teresa electrified the globe by bringing dedicated service to the poorest of the poor—the uncared for, the unwanted, and the unloved. Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, started a revolution by opening a soup kitchen, a shelter for the homeless, publishing a newspaper and getting arrested many times to protest injustice.

Of course, both of these women are larger than life figures, who are in the process of being declared official "saints" in the Catholic church. But their message of doing what we can to change an unjust system while caring for the most neglected encourages us to do the same.

Every day I see people like you do the one thing they can to make life better for someone else. I'm thinking of the woman who brought in several one-legged trousers. Her husband, an amputee, had just died. I wish all of you could have been there when David, a veteran amputee, came to the food pantry in his wheelchair and was asked if he could use the trousers. His face lit up and he said, "these are God-sent." Donating one-legged trousers seems like a small gesture but to David it was a huge gift.

I have countless examples like this. Examples that echo Mother Teresa's words, "If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one." Or as we invite in this issue, "I cannot do everything, but **I can do something.**"



*Sister Mary*

## FACE TO FACE: “I cannot do everything, but I can do something...”

### Something I do to make the world better is...

#### SAY THANK YOU

All I do is say thank you to the workers at the soup kitchen and I try to say it as often as possible. Once I walked up to a woman who had organized a beautiful meal for us and said, “It means so much to me that you all took time to serve us today. Actually everybody appreciates it—it’s just that some, some are suffering so much that they can’t say it.” The woman said that my empathy for others had really moved her. So maybe I helped make her world a little better. —Hal, Soup Kitchen Guest

#### WRITE MEANINGFUL STORIES

I want to write about things that matter. For example, I wrote an article about my experiences at the Emmaus Soup Kitchen and got it published on the largest national religion website, Patheos. I titled it “Why I Don’t Like Working at Soup Kitchens,” and hoped the intriguing title led people to read my answer: If I really believe what I profess—that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of a Loving Creator and therefore deserve their innate dignity and the ability to flourish into their fullest selves—then why am I not standing up to the corrupt systems of our society, raising my voice for the marginalized or silenced, and begging for the dignity of all? Why am I not working in the soup kitchen each day? —Breanna Mekuly, summer intern with Joan Chittister



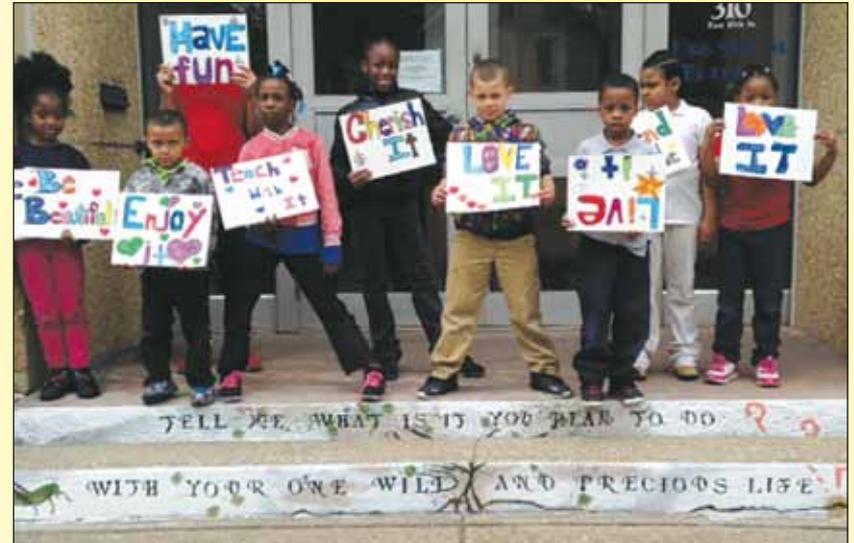
#### INITIATE A HOMEWORK PROGRAM

Yuk! Is how most children feel about homework. But we all know that doing well in school can help lift a person out of poverty. So I started a Homework Chart at the Emmaus Kids Cafe where I volunteer once a week. If a child finishes their daily homework under volunteer supervision, they get a star on the chart. When a child accumulates 15 stars they are eligible for enticing prizes like \$10 gift cards for Kentucky Fried Chicken,

Little Caesar’s, or Tim Horton’s. It’s been a great motivation tool and over 30 children participated last year. I’m hoping even more sign up this school year. Of course none of this could have been done without staff member Sheila Murray who organized most of it. —John Kathman, Kids Cafe volunteer

#### BRING BEAUTY TO THE INNER CITY

I’m enthused about organizing a small project where short poems are being painted and illustrated on the front steps of 20 homes and businesses on eastside Erie. The building that houses the Kids Cafe was one of the first sites selected for the “Step into



Poetry” project and a line from a Mary Oliver poem was painted there. It reads: “Tell me, what it is you plan to do/ With your one wild and precious life?” Stephanie Gear, coordinator of the Kids Cafe, took the children outside to read the poem and then asked them to answer the poet’s question on poster board. “Cherish it,” “dance it,” “love it,” and “live it” were some of their responses. It’s for experiences like this that I am so intent on bringing beauty to broken and blighted neighborhoods. The short poems appearing like johnny-jump-ups throughout inner city Erie are respites for wonder, for imagination, for a new way of looking at life. These short poems contain the potential to sensitize readers to the preciousness of life in all its forms and so reduce acts of violence. Every time the Kids Cafe children pass by the front of the building they are reminded of a very important life question. Now and then, they might stop and try to answer it.

—Sister Mary Lou Kownacki, board member Emmaus Ministries

### GIVE THE WIDOW'S MITE

Sister Mary, in her thank you to me, wrote and asked me if I could afford to send her \$20 each month. She was worried because I am in prison and \$20 is all I get each month from the State for the work I do. But I told her that I'm a Hasidic Jewish man and I am obliged to give tzedaka (charity)... After all, it matters not whether one is Catholic, Muslim, Jew, Jain or other. A hungry belly of a fellow human being is being filled. —John

### COORDINATE NEW SHOES PROJECT

Every child needs a new pair of school shoes. My wife, Rachel, and I are volunteers at the Kids Cafe and knew that a donor, Denny Oswalt, organized a summer bus trip for the children that included a stop at Payless Shoe Source and an afternoon at Splash Lagoon. When Denny died unexpectedly, I said to myself, 'I don't have a lot of money but I know a lot of people who would help continue Denny's tradition.' Sure enough, the members of our parish, the Church of the Nativity of Christ, came through big time donating enough so that each child can select a new pair of school shoes. Plus, we had \$500 left over that will be used toward new school shirts for the children. Seeing how excited and happy the children are on the bus, at Payless, and at Splash Lagoon...well, it makes our year.

Scott Enterprises donates a pizza lunch and afternoon at Splash Lagoon and Payless Shoe Source gives a substantial discount for shoes.

—Matt and Rachel Gregoroff



Rachel Gregoroff helps a Kids Cafe child select his shoes.



Ebony King, Kids Cafe staff, and children

## FOOD FOR THE SOUL

# Congratulations: 60 Years in Religious Life

**Sisters Rosanne Lindal-Hynes:** a founding mother of Emmaus, 25 years as women's advocate and coordinator of Family Christmas program

**Sister Claire Marie Surmik:** 30 years of service to Emmaus soup kitchen and pantry, 25 years as coordinator of food pantry and presently part-time coordinator



Erie Benedictine Sisters Rosanne Lindal-Hynes and Claire Marie Surmik

Thank you for the great love  
you show to every Emmaus guest.



Distributing soup and bread is not everything....  
It's only by feeling our love  
that the poor will forgive us for our gift of bread.

# LET US GIVE THANKS: "I cannot do everything, but I can do something..."



**S.O.N.S. OF LAKE ERIE** (Save Our Native Species) for hosting the 2nd annual fish fry dinner at Emmaus Soup Kitchen in August. Over 20 members spent 5 hours cleaning, beer-battering, frying 90 lbs. of fish on a Friday afternoon to over 200 guests.

**ONE BIRTHDAY GIFT** that Martha Hilbert, Emmaus board member and volunteer, never tires of is the ice cream sundae treat served

at the Soup Kitchen in her honor. One of her son's families, **JOHN AND NANCY HILBERT FAMILY**, have hosted and served the annual treat of Connie's ice cream with "all the fixin's" for 6 consecutive years. This year Martha's granddaughter, Olivia, brought her 2 best friends—Rachel Brugger and Maureen Wilson, juniors at Villa Maria Academy who have been friends since kindergarten—to help prepare and serve the special summer dessert.

From left, Rachel, Maureen, and Olivia



**COLLEGIATE ACADEMY STUDENTS** for \$1,000 collected during a homeroom competition to benefit a local organization... **SEEDLING GARDEN CLUB** for a \$1,000 donation to Emmaus Grove... **VERIFY SERVICES** for selecting Emmaus as its May nonprofit as part of the company's 10th anniversary celebration and involving employees in serving a dinner, preparing fabulous desserts and making a donation... **PENNSYLVANIA KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** who donated \$900 to the Soup Kitchen following the organization's 118th state convention held in Erie at the Ambassador Conference Center... **ROBIN SCHEPPNER, CEO OF AMERICAN TINNING & GALVANIZING, AND EMPLOYEES** donated one-hundred \$20 coupons to Payless Shoe Source to be used for Emmaus children... **GANNON UNIVERSITY STUDENT DINA ROLLINGER** for organizing a book drive for children at the Kids Cafe... young philanthropists **ALEXANDER KRAJEWSKI**, 8, for donating \$27 of his first communion money to Kids Cafe and **GRAHAM LOUIS** for following in his older brother Glenn's footsteps and celebrating his 11th birthday by asking friends to bring food items for the Soup Kitchen rather than presents... **BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY, SAINT JOSEPH PARISH** for donating ten percent of profits from its annual Oktoberfest to Emmaus Soup Kitchen

**MARY ALICE AND TOM DOOLIN**, recent recipients of the prestigious Edward C. Doll Community Service Award, remembered Emmaus Ministries when it came to selecting nonprofits to benefit from a \$12,000 grant that accompanies the award. Also sharing in the grant were the Benedictine Sisters of Erie Neighborhood Art House and the Bayfront East Side Taskforce.



**"FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT,"** a garden ministry started by **STACEY AND DOUG BUETTNER** to provide food for families in need, for making Emmaus Soup Kitchen the recipient of its first harvest. Mike Bailey and Ellen DiPlacido, co-coordinators of Emmaus Grove, worked with the Buettners to create the new garden at Grandview Alliance Church and Emmaus Associate Director, Margaret Kloecker, consulted with them on the type of produce needed at the kitchen and pantry. The garden outreach is a branch of Shares of God's Love, a non-denominational non-profit urban missionary group.

**"FAIRVIEW CARES,"** a fundraising event held by students from the Fairview school district, presented Emmaus Ministries with a \$6,000 check raised primarily through a t-shirt sale and solicited donations. Emmaus was one of four nonprofits selected by the students to benefit from this annual occurrence. After the formal fundraiser, Fairview School **DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT ERIK KINCADE AND HIS WIFE SHANNON** continued the spirit of "Fairview Cares" by parking their 24' box truck in various Fairview neighborhoods and asking residents to fill it with items for guests at the Pantry, Soup Kitchen and Kids Cafe.

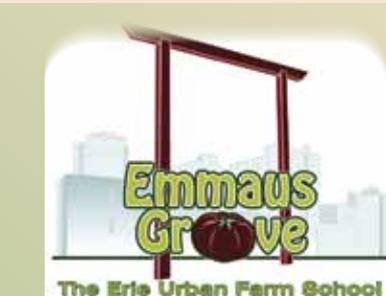


L. to R. Shirley Whaley, Emmaus Soup Kitchen cook; John Feketi, Director of Facilities; Carol Elliot, 3rd grade teacher; Erik Kincade, Superintendent



A new reach-in cooler, a stack washer and dryer, storage racks, metal shelving and a stainless steel work table will be purchased for Emmaus Soup Kitchen from a \$10,000 contribution from the **EMPLOYEES COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND OF GE**. "These GE workers have remembered us with a generous check for 12 consecutive years," said Sister Mary Miller, director of Emmaus. "I don't know what we would do without them."

L. to R. Mike Miller, Jason Madden, John Duchnowski, Mary Ellen Hermann, Rob Celeski, chair/president, and Dave Smock



## ALL ARE INVITED *Harvest Fest!*

Sunday, September 25—1-4 p.m.  
214 East 11<sup>th</sup> St.

Music by **TENNESSEE BACK PORCH**  
Free picnic food and drinks

LET'S CELEBRATE 1,500 pounds of fresh produce—peppers, beets, lettuce, kale, spinach, radishes, onions, zucchini, tomatoes, peaches, cucumbers, squash, eggplant, beans and.... 25.5 lbs. of garlic—

HARVESTED FOR THE GUESTS OF EMMAUS SOUP KITCHEN AND PANTRY

## *In Memory*

*We are grateful to family members who asked that memorials be made to Emmaus in the names of their deceased loved ones.*

Margaret Mary Sabatini Baldini  
Sophie Stella Bruno  
Theresa Michalski Dzikowski  
Shirley H. Thorwart Guilford  
James "Jimmy" Gennario Iesue

Betty Marie Langowski  
Robert J. "Jerry" Lyons  
Edward J. Malinowski  
Valerie Ann (Kehoe) Smith  
Paul V. Verno

Gilda Arduini Vitelli

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Erie Benedictine Sister Mary Miller, director of Emmaus Ministries, is the recipient of the 2016 Monsignor Wilfred J. Nash Principles of Christian Conduct Award presented annually by the Gannon University Alumni Association. “Monsignor Nash is a personal hero of mine and I’m honored to be receiving an award named after him,” said Sister Mary. The Distinguished Alumni Awards are presented to a select group of Gannon University and Villa Maria College graduates whose personal and professional lives set exemplary standards for others to follow. She will be honored during a banquet Friday, September 30, in the Monsignor Addison R. Yehl Alumni Room, Waldron Campus Center.



## NEW BOARD MEMBER



As a child, my mom taught me, “Honey, if you can do something, you should.” So when I was asked by Emmaus—a ministry I love—to serve on its Board, I immediately said “yes,” explained Mary Hoffman. Mary, who presently volunteers at Emmaus, is highly recognized for her 42 years of dedication to Special Needs Students in the Millcreek Township School District, as teacher, director, chairperson and coordinator of multiple programs, including Director of Erie County Special Olympics. She has served on numerous boards, councils and committees and most recently as co-coordinator of Our Neighbors’ Place, an overflow shelter for homeless at St. John the Baptist Parish. She has received numerous awards for her teaching skills, her volunteer work, and

her athletic ability, including induction into the Erie Chapter of Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame for Basketball in 2006. “One gift I can bring is my passion. I honestly can’t think of anything I’ve done in my life that I haven’t given my all and it will give me great pleasure to put my energies into this ministry,” she said.

## ERIE GIVES DAY—August 9, 2016



Thank you, Erie, for your generosity to Emmaus Ministries on **ERIE GIVES DAY**. You donated over \$41,541 to Emmaus and we placed 5th in number of donors with a record 346 individual gifts.

Thanks, too, to the Erie Community Foundation for sponsoring this day of giving and giving a prorated match for every gift from a funding pool of \$250,000.

Thanks, too, for the good works of the 354 local non profits who participated in this event.

STAFF: Mary Miller, OSB; Margaret Kloecker; Claire Marie Surmik, OSB; Lucia Surmik, OSB  
 Rosanne Lindal-Hynes, OSB; Rita Scrimanti; Shirley Whaley and Stephanie Great  
 Companion Editor, Mary Lou Kowmacki, OSB; Liz Allen, freelance writer; Layout, Judy Allison



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[www.emmauserie.org](http://www.emmauserie.org)

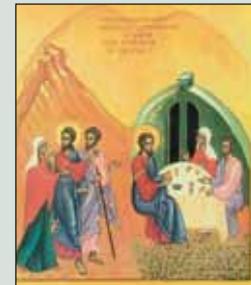


[www.emmauserie.org](http://www.emmauserie.org)

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## EMMAUS ICON

Icon *Road to Emmaus*  
 Iconographer: Sister Marie-Paul, OSB  
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They came to know Him in the breaking of the bread.

Luke 24:35