

# Community Notes

News of the Community of St. John Baptist  
Vol. XIII No. 1

Spring 2011

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The Community of St. John Baptist, Box 240, Mendham, NJ 07945  
973-543-4641 [www.csjb.org](http://www.csjb.org)

# Renewing our Ministry

## Phase II

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN NEWS



#### Dear Friends,

With this page, we introduce Phase II of our Capital Campaign. We begin with a great THANK YOU to all who have worked so hard to bring us to the point of our goal of \$2.5 million in pledges to the Campaign. It is due to all of you that we held the wonderful event in 2008 to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of St. Marguerite's House and our kickoff event with Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori. We owe a special round of applause to our Co-chairs Alan Painter and Myles Varley, and to the Development Board. Special thanks also go to the coordinators of our two special events: the Anniversary Kickoff led by Diana Wilcox, and the icon exhibit "The Glory of Orthodoxy" led by Dr. Corrado Altomare and Tim Carr. All of you who contributed to the Campaign have helped us to complete several urgent projects, and we are grateful to you.

#### Now it is time to introduce Phase II.

We are happy to report that many of the board members have signed on to continue with this project, which is not yet complete. Although our pledges have reached the first goal, the revenue has not yet done so. Payments from County and State grants come in slowly, and we are responsible to make up the matches stipulated: 20% of all County grants and 50% of all State grants. We have not yet raised the full \$500,000 to match our grant from the State. Therefore, we have set our goal for Phase II at \$1.5 million. The plan is as follows:

#### Projected Costs for Phase II

Ramp along the south cloister leading to front door & stone pathway	67,000
Infill of decaying tunnel	60,000
Electric service rerouted underground & new electrical transformer	16,000
Preservation and restoration of rear roof, chimneys, dormers, & replace gutters	310,000
Internal barrier-free passageway to Main Chapel	45,000
Preservation and restoration of Convent front and side roofs	400,000
Restoration of Convent stucco exterior	410,000
<u>Retreat House roof repair</u>	<u>192,000</u>
Total Campaign Goal	\$1,500,000

#### LOOKING AHEAD TO 2013: THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BUILDING OF THE CONVENT

On April 30, 1913, the Community of St. John Baptist gathered on a bare hilltop across the lawn from the newly-built St. Marguerite's Home. There, they laid the cornerstone for their new convent. Our motto is carved on the stone in Latin (translated here) "He must increase, I must decrease," a quote from John the Baptist. Always putting Christ first, we have sought for 100 years to follow this call in this place. As we prepare to celebrate this anniversary, let us work together to restore our center and build for the future.

*Sister Barbara Jean,  
Development Officer*

## A Letter to Associates from Sr. Eleanor Francis



Dear Associates,

Associates and Oblates form the larger family of The Community of St. John Baptist. You are our eyes, ears, hands, feet, and heart serving in the larger community. The Sisters of CSJB are seeking to increase the inclusion of our Associates in our lives and hope that you will get to know some of the other Associates you may not already know. To that end, Associate Jean Marie DuHamel has been compiling an Associates' e-mail list. We are trying to keep our data base up to date. Next, we are planning a List-Serv.. Associates who would like to be part of the List-Serv will receive regular updates of CSJB events. They can learn news of other Associates and perhaps meet Associates in their geographical area. Several Associates have mentioned that they are interested in a prayer chain. Finally, we would like to keep Associates abreast of ways you may serve the Convent or each other. Here are some current needs:

- Help in Convent chapel, gardens, or grounds, “adopt” the Mary chapel
- Help with sacristy work for New York Sisters.
- Contact other Associates by phone, especially the housebound.
- Further help for convent library (along with Associate LindaLee Mundy)
- Run workshops/retreats with or without a Sister
- Computer help
- Arrange for Sisters to visit parishes
- Offer rides to CSJB events.
- Organize a retreat for Associates.
- Help with fund raising.
- Wood finishing at St. Marguerite's
- Create items for Nun Better shop.
- Become a Convent tour guide

*Those pictured here are only a small example our many volunteers.*



**The Rev. John Negrotto and Janet Thomas assist with other Oblates in projects for the Community**



**Lynn Mullin, Carolyn Dunham and Judy Kerr help with our Capital Campaign**



**The Rev. Phil Carr-Jones celebrates the Eucharist on Wednesdays**

Do we have your e-mail address as well as up-to-date street address and phone number?

Please help keep us current. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Please contact me at: [csjb@csjb.org](mailto:csjb@csjb.org) or phone 973-543-4641 ext. 3**

***Sr. Eleanor Francis***  
Superior, CSJB

**P.S. Friends are also welcome to volunteer and join a List-Serv!**

# HAPPENINGS

## St. Mary the Virgin, New York

Sr. Deborah Francis and Sr., Laura Katharine have been busy this spring with a variety of activities. Both are involved in teaching a class for adults on the Apocrypha. Sr. Laura Katharine works closely with the committees of volunteers who set up St. Mary's altar and sanctuary for the many services that are held each week.

Sr. Deborah Francis has started a food program in collaboration with St. Clement's Episcopal Church, a few short blocks away. Members of St. Mary's donate food for the pantry at St. Clement's, and Sr. Deborah Francis volunteers there weekly, where she signs the participants in each week and helps to distribute groceries to those who come.



The high altar



Signing in food pantry participants



## St. Mark's, Mendham

Sr. Barbara Jean has been helping at St. Mark's Church in Mendham since the rector retired at the end of 2010. She has acted as supply priest and as an assistant in the Sunday School. She has especially enjoyed the opportunity to share music with the children, a ministry she practiced there many years ago.

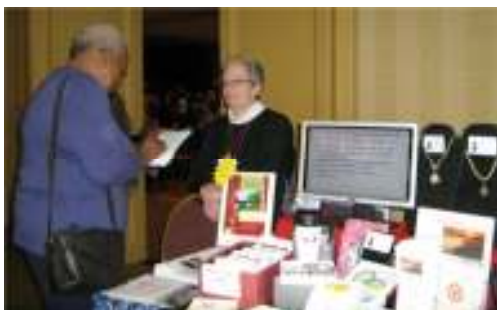


The boys and girls learn a new song



Making pretzels for a lesson in prayer

## Diocese of Newark Convention



Sr. Pamela manages the CSJB exhibit table



Sr. Suzanne Elizabeth & Sr. Mary Lynne & friend at the Good Shepherd Home table



Sr. S. Elizabeth and our Associate, the Rev. Stephanie Wethered

# Entered Into Rest

## Mary (Molly) Kates

Molly Kates, an Associate since 1970, died on January 27. She was 97 years old. At one time she resided in Jersey City and knew the Sisters there when the Community was at Grace Church, Van Vorst. Her husband was the Rev. Frederick Ward Kates, author and editor of several collections of devotional writings. Her funeral was held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Kent, Connecticut. We thank God for her long and faithful life.

## Samuel (Sergio) Altamura

Sam Altamura passed away on February 9 after a long bout with cancer. He was 83 years old. Sam and his wife, Lily, were often at the Convent, helping us with our projects. One memorable project was the time he taught Sr. Jane how to make Italian sausage to sell in Cameroon! Sam's funeral was at Calvary Church, Flemington, on February 14. A month later, a memorial service was held at St. Gregory Palamas Orthodox Church in Glen Gardner. This was arranged by Dr. Corrado Altomare. He is survived by Lily, an Oblate of the Community, and her children, Ruth Altamura Roll and David Altamura, their spouses, and two grandchildren. May he rest in peace and rise with Christ in glory.

## Dorothy Keedwell Whiteside

Dorothy Keedwell Whiteside went to be with her Lord on February 26, 2011. She was 94 years old, and close to her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday. Dorothy graduated from St. John Baptist School in 1934 and was received as an Associate in 1960. For many years she lived near the Convent and volunteered here. In her later years she moved to Virginia to be near family. Last summer her son Steve brought her to the St. John Baptist School reunion, and she enjoyed meeting former students of all ages. She passed away while visiting her granddaughter in Pennsylvania. She will be buried in the Convent cemetery, next to her son, Craig, who predeceased her. We give thanks for her long and fruitful life.

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## *Remember the Community of St. John Baptist*

**Planned giving is the means by which persons may make use of their resources by supporting the Community through Bequests, Life Income gifts, Life Insurance, A Life Estate, or Appreciated Property. Income from an Endowment Fund will be available for programs of retreat, worship, education, or special projects, as well as the future support of the Sisters.**

**For further information, please contact our Business Manager, Maureen Woods, at 973-543-4641 ext. 0, Or email office @csjb.org**

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## The Nun Better Cookbook



Produced by the Community of St. John Baptist to help raise money for our Capital Campaign. There are 380 recipes in the book, which has hard covers with tough comb binding. Each section of the book is marked by an attractive tabbed divider.

Cost \$18 each plus shipping & handling. This is a wonderful gift for any occasion!  
Please contact Sister Pamela, CSJB [Sr-pamela@csjb.org](mailto:Sr-pamela@csjb.org) or call: 973-543-4641 x 9

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## WISH LIST FOR ST. MARGUERITE'S RETREAT HOUSE

We are in need of donations for new furniture:

**\$100 per chair    \$50 per floor lamp**

Please send donations to: Sister Pamela, P.O.Box 240, Mendham NJ 07945

## News from Good Shepherd Home

As this article is being prepared, Sr. Mary Lynne is gathering toys and goods for the 130 children at Good Shepherd Home in Bamenda, Cameroon. She will be leaving for her annual two-month stay on May 17. Of particular interest this year is the restoration of the Grace Bakery, an open-air oven and room for cooling and packaging the many loaves of bread that are baked each week. The traditional beehive-shaped oven collapsed about three months ago, and a plea went out for funds to restore it as soon as possible. This oven is needed for bread for the children, and the surplus is sold in the market. Without this essential lifeline in place, the cost for food in the Home greatly increases. We are thankful to the people at Grace Church, Madison for their immediate assistance when they learned of this crisis, and to the congregation of St. John and Good Shepherd Church in Milford, PA, as well as many others.



Another new development at Good Shepherd Home is the production of a DVD that will soon be for sale. This DVD program is composed of a series of songs and dances performed by the teenagers and older children at the home, and tells stories of life in Africa, the need for education, the urgency of AIDS protection, and the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All of the songs are original and the costumes were created at the Home. The children have been mentored by a team of professional TV producers from Spain with the best equipment, and the quality of the sound and filming is excellent. These TV producers, who volunteered their time, are devoted to helping the people of Cameroon. The DVD should be ready for sale later this year. All proceeds will go to the Good Shepherd Home.

We are grateful to all of the sponsors who have supported the children as they have grown up. It is only this year that the oldest children will be leaving school. Some will go to universities and others to trade schools. All are learning some skill that will enable them to make their way in the world. All of them will always have a home there, since the Sisters have become like their parents. Each one will be guided as they reach adulthood, marriage and establishment of homes of their own.



## St. John Baptist School Alumnae and Former Students

- 1934 Dorothy Keedwell Whiteside** Passed away peacefully at age 94 on February 26, 2011 while visiting with her granddaughter. Dorothy was also an Associate of the Community of St. John Baptist. She is survived by her son, Steve. Dorothy's wish last year was to attend the SJBS Alumnae Picnic, and she was a welcome guest. She is to be buried in the Convent cemetery.
- 1934 Marge Breen Miller** lives in Red Bank, NJ. She is still active at 93, is an excellent bridge player and plays golf with Betty Rutkin Holobinko ('66). She remembers playing jacks with Sr. Mary Barbara, who was then a novice.
- 1941 Kit King Rockwell** is an Oblate of the Community of St. John Baptist, and attends meetings throughout the year. She is active in her church and spends time frequently with her grand children and great-grandchildren.
- 1952 Virginia Kautz Borkenhagen** is living in her paternal grandmother's house in Washington, DC. Her grandmother was also a graduate of SJBS. She is retired and active in the senior center near her.
- 1952 Charlyn Crandall Heidenreich** remembers St. John Baptist School and the good times she had there, and especially remembers Sr. Jane Patricia *WELL!*
- 1964 Claire Stech** wrote to say that she is living in Alexandria, VA, near her daughter, son-in law, and their two sons. Her son lives in Wyoming.
- 1964 Lynn Fairbank Schlesinger** has reconnected with MaryLou Notman Howe
- 1964 Elizabeth "Petie" Lane** had a mini-reunion with Anne, Sally and Pam the weekend of October 15<sup>th</sup>. "Petie" has worked at the NJ Department of Banking and Insurance.
- 1965 Lynn Maynell Klein** sent a beautiful message about Julia Castle Boynton's passing (February 5, 2011).
- 1965 Madeleine Cutler Thompson** wrote to tell us of her new granddaughter, Charlotte, who was baptized on Easter. Madeleine's son-in-law, Marc, has recently returned safely from Afghanistan.
- 1965 Julia Castles Boynton** passed away on February 5, 2011 after a long battle with cancer. Her husband, Steve, is grateful for the support he has received from members of the class of 1965, who reached out to the family. She is greatly missed by her classmates.
- 1966 Betty Rutkin Holobinko** plays golf with Marge Breen Miller ('34) and wants to bring her to a reunion.
- 1966 Gabrielle Grunau** wrote to Sr. Barbara Jean. She is on Facebook, and is catching up with her classmates. She is encouraging other classes to start their own class groups.
- 1969 Roxanne Brissey Gunter** likes the newsletter and Facebook entries. She works as an administrator at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and works in the Department of Family Medicine. She looks forward to retirement soon and riding her horses.
- 1971 Sarah Cowell Christiano** is an instructor at St. Hubert's Dog Training School and lives in Budd Lake, NJ. She studied computer technology at Chubb Institute.
- 1973 Helen Schappert Napolitano** sent her greetings.
- 1980 Ruth Rupprecht** does animal rescue work with her dog, Patrick. **1982**
- 1982 Susan Bernthal** keeps up regularly with Sr. Barbara Jean and connects with many of her classmates on Facebook.

### FORMER STUDENTS

**Cindy Fink** wrote to say that she is married and works as a real estate agent. She enjoys interior design.

**Leslie Mari Michetti** lives in Fort Lee, NJ. Leslie posted a page from the Spero (literary magazine, written by **Suzy Weischedel** ' )

**Elizabeth "Liz" Hicks Shadeck** sent an Easter message: "The resurrection gives our life meaning and direction and the opportunity to start over, no matter what the circumstances." (Robert Flatt) Happy Easter everyone.

**Susy Sileshi King** sent a happy Easter message and a picture of her grandchildren.

*For all other news, please go to [Facebook](#) for [Sister Barbara Jean](#) or [St. John Baptist School](#). Only those who wrote in directly are listed here.*

## Petie 1995 – 2011

Petie came to the Community from the pound. We were his third owners in a year and a week of his life. A Border collie/springer mix, he had two energetic breeds rolled into one, plus being super intelligent! He loved his new home as there were lots of places to run around and get into mischief. (His former owners kept him caged all day while they worked). Petie had lots to learn about the spiritual life and convent living. Three times he narrowly missed being taken back to the pound! Petie soon became part of Convent life, after several weeks and months of training, (the Sisters!) which he really flunked. Nevertheless, he was very good at sitting when told, although the command to 'come' left very much to be desired, being very stubborn – an attribute which remained for most of his life. On one famous occasion he was called in from the front yard and would not come, preferring to entice his caller to chase him (his favorite game). The caller gave up after a while. Not long after that he was seen walking along the cloister, apparently 'hiding' between a group of people who were coming into the house. He came in with them as though it was the most natural thing to do!

Petie had three distinguished characteristics which frequently would get him into trouble. First and foremost was his nose; highly sensitive especially to things which were not good for him. Second was his keen intelligence, used to figure out how to get what he wanted and thirdly, his agility to acquire the wanted item without breakage or damage; like sneaking the only angel cookie off the Christmas cookie plate without breaking the wrap.

Here are some thoughts from others about Petie:

He was beautiful to look at...very handsome...long silky fur...incredibly gentle and tender...endlessly patient - (except for mealtime!)...practiced radical hospitality...was ever alert for lost sheep, kept his flock well tended... worked hard tending (herding) his people, while never losing the importance of play...even as an older dog, he captured us with his puppy playfulness...voiced his opinions in Chapel but only at the appropriate moments...a good run with friends was his greatest joy. What can be said, but that Petie was so many things to so many people. He lived a long happy life, finally succumbing to old age just two weeks before his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. For two days before the end he found new energy and was running around like a three year old. One likes to think he had a premonition of that heavenly place where he was free to run and play once more. He is greatly missed.



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Dear Friends,

It is with sadness and a heavy heart that I write to you. My brother Petie passed away Monday, March 28th. My person and two of the sisters were present as he "crossed the rainbow bridge". It was a peaceful letting go and there was no suffering yet, there is a heaviness here at the convent. This morning I came downstairs as usual and thought to have a drink of water. The water was always sweeter from Petie's bowl! But Petie's bowls were GONE! I felt a hole in my heart. If kitties could cry tears I certainly would have at that moment. Later in the morning the dog sister came into the sitting room where I was lying in a patch of sunlight and scooped me up into her arms. I knew she needed me, needed some kitty love, so I purred and purred and rubbed her chin with my head.....so sweet, so sweet for both of us and a help to ease the pain in our hearts. The house will not be the same without our Petie. Rest in peace dear Petie. You were loved. **LOVE, JACK**

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### NEWS FROM NEW YORK



I like to keep my Sisters on their toes. This keeps them flexible. I hear that is very important in the Religious Life. Humans are not generally very good at detecting (my) subtle mood changes. They like predictable relationships. I think this comes from living with dogs. How boring! What is life without a little mystery? Often I make it very clear that I want a particular thing. If I rush into the bathroom and jump into the tub, they know I want them to turn on the faucet. When I lead them to my food bowl, I want it filled. Should I stare at my litter box, I want it cleaned. If I glare at a sister who is busy at her computer, it means I want to sit in her lap. When she is slow to respond [usually], my recourse is to take matters into my own paws and jump into her lap. At

other times I will play hard to get; so one of my sisters had to learn that the way to be in her lap was just to ignore me! I hate to be ignored except when I want to be alone. For me variety is the spice of life. Have a very Blessed Easter, Love,

**Kookie**

## PONY'S POINT OF VIEW

And greetings to you all this wonderful season of Spring...  
The signs of new life can be seen each morning. Fresh shoots pushing up through the earth, and daffodils everywhere. It's hard to imagine that only a month ago the ground was still hard underhoof, with snow and ice that just wouldn't melt.

Spring just seemed to take forever, didn't it?

By now I am sure you all know about my dear friend, Petie. Oh, we had such great times together years ago when we both were a lot younger. We loved to run together side by side, sometimes taking turns chasing one another.

We will truly miss him... Easter Blessings to you all. Have a great

summer...Love, pOnY



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## *The Strands of Life*

**A Retreat Workshop For**

**New and Experienced Spinners and Weavers - Oct. 18-20**

*Learn from experienced spinners & weavers and share your skills.*

*Materials provided for new crafters. Good conversation with Chaplain Linda Carlson-Scholer.*

***Come and learn!***

*\$250 for 2 nights, 6 meals & honorariums. Sliding scale for commuters.*

*Contact Donna MacKenzie at [donnaspinner@gmail.com](mailto:donnaspinner@gmail.com)*

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## NATIONAL ALTAR GUILD NEEDLE WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 20-25, 2011

CONVENT ST. JOHN BAPTIST, MENDHAM, NJ

HARDANGER, SILK AND METAL THREAD

The instructor will be Marilyn Doyle, a certified EGA teacher, retired Liturgical Arts professor at the United Theological Seminary in Ohio. Three classes will be held simultaneously:

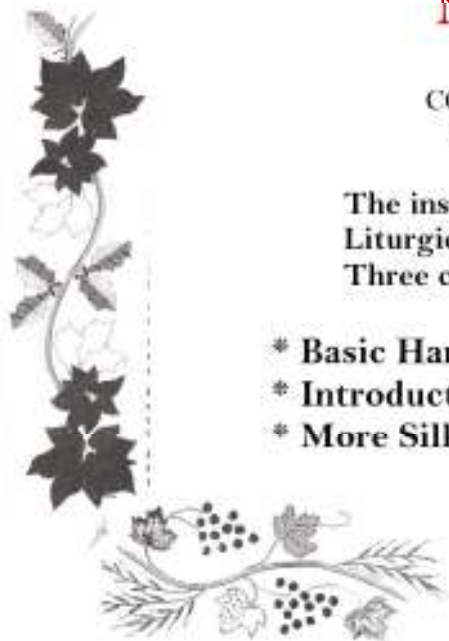
- \* Basic Hardanger Techniques
- \* Introduction to Gold and Metal Techniques
- \* More Silk and Gold Thread Techniques

*For Reservations and Further Information*

*Contact Sr. Suzanne Elizabeth,*

*Convent of St. John Baptist, P.O. Box 240,  
Mendham, NJ 07945*

*Tel. # 973-543-4641 ext. 5 email: [srse@csjb.org](mailto:srse@csjb.org)*



# CELTIC JOURNEYS 2011



**WALES**  
and the  
**NORTH OF**  
**ENGLAND**  
**SEPT 8-18**

*Wales, a land of  
enchantment, with  
dramatic mountains,  
rugged coastlines,  
castles and more  
castles*

Cardiff  
St Davids  
Nevern  
Pembrokeshire coast  
Snowdonia  
Chester  
Fountains Abbey  
Durham Cathedral  
Holy Island

PHONE: 973 543 4641 ext. 4  
EMAIL: [info@celticjourneys.org](mailto:info@celticjourneys.org)  
WEBSITE: [www.celticjourneys.org](http://www.celticjourneys.org)

Community St John Baptist PO Box 240 Mendham, NJ 07945

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## CENTERING PRAYER

Thursday Evenings at the Convent - quiet prayer and music  
with harpist Alix Wiesz most evenings - 7:15 - 8:15 p.m.  
Service of Compline with the Sisters at 8:30

## A JOURNEY TO TRANSFORMATION

A Spiritual Journey Using Centering Prayer and the Wisdom of the Enneagram.

Saturday, Sept. 10, 9am-3pm.

Conducted by Carol Schindler,

Presenter for Contemplative Outreach and Instructor for the Enneagram Institute

\$40 includes Lunch

Contact Sr. Barbara Jean at [srbj@csjb.org](mailto:srbj@csjb.org) or 973-543-4641 ext. 1

Come to

# Commemoration Day

**Saturday, June 25, 2011 + 10:30 a.m.**  
**Eucharist + Greetings + Luncheon**

**Celebrant: The Rt. Rev. Mark M. Beckwith, Bishop of Newark**  
**Preacher: Mary Sudman Donovan, Ph.D., Historian and Author**

**R.S.V.P. The Rev, Sister Superior**  
**973-543-4641 ext. 3 [sref@csjb.org](mailto:sref@csjb.org)**

**Clergy:**  
**White Stoles**