

OUR ROOTS AND OUR GROWTH

Mission



We choose to live in community in order to share faith, love and mission.

From the Constitutions of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania



Connecting with God + Connecting with You

5031 West Ridge Road | Erie, Pennsylvania 16506-1249
PHONE (814) 836-4100 | FAX (814) 836-4278
www.ssjerie.org

As Sisters of St. Joseph, we strive to embody a vision of all people united in one earth community of love, unity and reconciliation. We do this through collaborative programs, interaction, prayer and ministry. In our conflicted 21st century world, the Sisters of St. Joseph seek to bring our traditions and vision to life in a way that will speak to our contemporary society and be a positive influence for change.



Connecting with God + Connecting with You

Advancing the MISSION

To advance our mission and assure its continued presence in the world, we actively pursue opportunities that will introduce others to our mission and engage them in our ministries.

Your Support Makes a Difference

- **Sisters in Ministry** – help support Sisters who serve in ministries that receive little or no compensation, thus saving thousands of dollars for the communities in which they live and work.
- **Sisters' Benevolent Care** – help support Sisters who are unable to minister because of medical limitations. For decades, these women earned minimal wages without retirement benefits. Many continue to minister through prayer and spiritual direction – Sisters never really retire!
- **Ministry Support** – help support SSJ sponsored ministries and other organizations that reflect our mission.

We are grateful for your trust and welcome the following types of gifts:

- Cash
- Charitable Gift Annuity
- Appreciated property
- Life Insurance
- Stock
- Real Estate
- Trusts
- Bequests

We also offer several naming opportunities to honor and remember individuals and families. By informing us of your planned gift, you help us prepare for the future and we can acknowledge your generosity during your lifetime by inducting you into the

Mother Agnes Spencer, SSJ, Legacy Society.

SSJ Development Office
5031 West Ridge Road
Erie, PA 16506-1249
(814) 836-4100

Give online through Just Give
www.ssjerie.org

The designation as a diocesan congregation signifies a spiritual and ministerial relationship with the Diocese of Erie. The Congregation, the Sisters of St. Joseph, is responsible for supporting itself.

I/We want to make a difference! Please accept my/our gift to the Sisters of St. Joseph

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Work _____ Email _____

Enclosed is a one-time gift of \$ _____ payable over _____ years. (1-5 years)

I will make payments _____ annually _____ semi-annually _____ quarterly

Initial payment of \$ _____ is enclosed, or first payment will come in _____ (month/year)

Check enclosed (Payable to Sisters of St. Joseph) _____

Charge my credit card _____ Exp. Date _____

Card# _____ PPV(on back of card) _____

Name on card _____

*Mother Agnes Spencer, SSJ
Legacy Society*

Please send me information about financial, estate and gift planning.

I have remembered the Sisters of St. Joseph in my will or trust.

Our ROOTS

Who are the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania? We are one of several religious communities represented in the Erie Diocese. We share a common commitment to living the Gospel values, though our mission and ministries are different.

How long has the Congregation been in existence?

The Sisters of St. Joseph have been serving the people of God, the "dear neighbor," since our founding in 1650 in Le Puy-en-Velay, France.



When did the Sisters come to the Erie Diocese?

Our Sisters eventually made their way to the United States in 1836 and to the Erie Diocese in 1860. The first Sisters came to teach. They soon began ministering to the sick, the orphaned and the elderly, as well.



Are there Sisters of St. Joseph in other areas?

We are members of the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph, a dynamic union of all the Sisters of St. Joseph in the United States who claim a common origin in the foundation at LePuy-en-Velay, France in 1650. This includes over 6500 members of sixteen Congregations throughout the United States. World-wide, there are thousands of Sisters of St. Joseph in more than 55 countries.



Our MINISTRY in the Erie Diocese . . .

We build relational communities. Whether we are among people who live in pockets of poverty and neglect, in middle class neighborhoods, or in areas of greater affluence, we are "sisters of the neighborhood" trying to meet the varied needs of people and to create centers of relationship and unity. True to the dream of our first Sisters, we continue to try to "divide the city, seek the ills and cure them."



The Sisters of St. Joseph established:

- Spencer Hospital (now Meadville Medical Center)
- Saint Vincent Health Center, Erie
- Villa Maria Elementary School
- Villa Maria Academy (now part of Erie Catholic Preparatory School)
- Villa Maria College (now part of Gannon University)
- Saint Mary's Home of Erie
- SSJ Neighborhood Network

We also staffed Harborcreek School for Boys, St. Joseph Home for Children and numerous schools.

We are involved in many ministries:

We are educators, lawyers, doctors, nurses, therapists, social workers, advocates, spiritual directors, parish ministers, theologians, massage therapists, reflexologists, administrators, artists, authors, musicians, poets, and also serve in a myriad of other ministries. We are in soup kitchens, shelters, universities, schools, hospitals, courtrooms, prisons, retreat centers, offices, nursing homes, laboratories, studios, hospices – anywhere there is a need.

We still seek to do, as our history tells us, "whatever is possible for women to do" and, in our present society, we know this is simply everything.

and throughout the world.

We are guided by a desire to continually respond to the ever changing needs of the world. We join with thousands of Sisters and Associates and raise our voices to proclaim a vision of unity in response to situations and conditions which threaten our global community.

Together, the Congregations of St. Joseph are recognized as an NGO (non-governmental organization) of the United Nations which brings the voices and experiences of SSJ communities world-wide into policy discussions at the United Nations.

As part of the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph, and in our local communities, we work to educate, suggest actions and collaborate with various other groups and organizations to provide meaningful and timely responses to various peace and justice issues, including:

- poverty
- immigration
- the death penalty
- human trafficking
- the environment
- climate change
- women's/ children's rights



Our MISSION



We are women who affirm our mission of unity of neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God.

Our mission is rooted in the mission of Jesus Christ the same mission which continually unfolds in the Church.

That all may be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, I pray that they may be one in us. John 17:21

Through a profound and radical response to the Spirit, we fulfill this mission by searching out and undertaking whatever ministry may best bring about this unity. Moved by the love of the Spirit, we commit ourselves to constant response to the ever changing needs of the world.