



Sponsored Ministries of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston

The Bridge

BETHANY HEALTH CARE CENTER + BETHANY HILL PLACE + FONTBONNE ACADEMY
JACKSON SCHOOL + REGIS COLLEGE + SAINT JOSEPH PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL + WALNUT PARK MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Strongly and Gloriously Living a Life of Love by Maggie Reardon Class '18, Fontbonne Academy

An education stemming from the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph revolves around not only excellence in education of the mind, but also excellence in education of the soul. Perhaps the greatest lesson I have learned from the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph during my time at Fontbonne is that through the Gospel values, we as a community and a world are innately capable of living a life of love and unity in which we serve the dear neighbor without distinction and through this, we become strong.



Student Volunteers at Rosie's Place

In the wake of the controversy and violence of today's world, it seems easy to forget God's intention for us, as people of the Earth, to live together in the light of His steadfast love. It seems even easier to forget that we are called to live out this intention in our homes and communities both near and far. However, as a young woman taught through the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, I am reminded of this each day through the acts of kindness and inclusion that are encouraged in our community.

As young women of gracious hospitality, we are called to serve others by acting inclusively. This manifests itself in various ways at Fontbonne; whether it be through squeezing together to fit another girl at a lunch table; or helping to open a locker for someone who is struggling. There are truly no boundaries for the impact that loving actions have. This love is capable of transcending cultures and languages. Recently, Fontbonne hosted its annual International Cultural Festival, an event for all to celebrate the diversity of our community. From food to music to dance, it was an opportunity to showcase pride for our origins and also to recognize that we are intrinsically similar as we have come to Earth to love and be loved.

One of my favorite spiritual songs is **Glorious** by David Archuleta performed by the One Voice Children's Choir. This song embodies the idea of intrinsic belonging, love, and unity. The lyrics resonate with me because of the similarities between the song and the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

It's like a symphony
Just keep listening
And pretty soon you'll start
To figure out your part
Everyone plays a piece
And there are melodies
In each one of us
Oohhh it's glorious

As revealed to us in the beautifully written song, everyone plays a vital piece in our lives and when we all come together as one we create a glorious symphony for the world to hear.



The Ellie Fund Walkers

We the people of God's Earth are here to serve as the hands and feet of Christ knowing that, through the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, we all have the capacity to carry God's intention, serving those around us with love and acceptance. It is through this mission of unity that we become strong and gloriously live a life of love.

Celebrating National Catholic Sisters Week by Mary Rita Grady, CSJ, Mission Effectiveness Facilitator, Regis College

This year, the Association of the Colleges of the Sisters of Saint Joseph (ACSSJ) celebrated National Catholic Sisters Week in conjunction with their celebration of the Feast of Saint Joseph. Regis College, with the coordination of Mary Lou Jackson, Special Assistant to the President for Mission, conducted varied activities for students, faculty and staff. During the week, there were a number of Sacred Spaces Tours of sites within buildings and outside on the campus. The statue of the Angel Guardian, for example, prominently placed in the recently completed quad, commemorates the arrival of the Sisters in Jamaica Plain from New York in early October, 1873.



Opportunities were provided for those who had participated in service trips to share experiences with “dear neighbors” far from the campus. Toiletries were collected for Bethany Hill Place, a Sponsored Ministry of the CSJs. This week also provided the occasion for cake and refreshments to celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of the Charter for Regis College, which was granted by the Legislature of Massachusetts on February 12, 1927. The Women’s Studies Program, as well as a First-year Seminar course marked studies related to women, both religious and lay. The feast of St. Joseph was celebrated ecumenically in a ceremony on February 20 in the Regis College Chapel with readings about Joseph in the Book of Genesis, from the Gospel of Matthew and from the Koran. The two Josephs were commemorated as people who heeded their dreams, and acted on them to provide for those in their care.

The weeklong celebration culminated in lunch and discussion with representatives of the Congregation Ministries of Casserly House in Roslindale, The Women’s Table and The Literacy Connection in Brighton, and a representative from Bakhita House, established by the Boston Unit of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious to provide housing for women who have been trafficked.



PHOTOS: Angel Guardian Statue, Congregation Ministries

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Mission Statement:

The Bridge is the official communication of the Office of Sponsored Ministries to inform, educate and inspire the community linked to CSJ Sponsored Ministries.

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Extending a Welcome by Courtney McSparron, Program Director, Bethany Hill Place

Reading Club is a staple of the children's programming at Bethany Hill Place. Once a week our children meet with their reading buddies – volunteers from Framingham State University, board members, other residents – and read together. The program is meant to instill a love of reading. It wasn't until a new child arrived unannounced that I realized it is also a place for newcomers to be welcomed into the community.

One Wednesday afternoon, a small girl appeared at the door to the children's room half-way through reading club. She was breaking a cardinal rule of the children's room – she wasn't wearing shoes! I told her she broke the rule and said she could go upstairs, put on shoes, and return to the event. She said, as she quickly ran up the stairs, "the reading club better still be going on when I get back!" To her delight it was and she was paired with a longer-term Bethany Hill resident and a reading buddy. The trio read a book about the relationship between Eleanor Roosevelt and Amelia Earhart. When the book ended our newest reading club member asked about the club. Our veteran child filled her in on the logistics of the club, other children's programs, the hours of the downstairs offices, and how great our prize box is. They discussed the holiday party, arts and craft events, and Parents' Café. Throughout her explanations, our veteran child assured the newcomer that she was welcome and that she would love all the goings-on of Bethany Hill Place. When reading club was over she took her on a tour of the building. Since their first meeting, these two children have continued to spend time together and have facilitated their parents becoming friends.

While I am sure any staff member of Bethany Hill Place would have been able to explain our programming to this new child, it could never have been as powerful as the welcome she received at Reading Club that day. There is no better measure of gracious hospitality than how it spontaneously emerges from the community itself. Our veteran child felt welcomed and loved by her community and therefore she could offer community with the same gracious hospitality.



PHOTOS: BHP Reading Club with volunteer buddies from Framingham State University

“Being Human Is a Guest House” by Marilyn McGoldrick, CSJ, Director of Mission Integration, Saint Joseph Preparatory High School

Over the years the concept of what constitutes family differs across generations and cultures. From Norman Rockwell’s artistic rendition of a family Thanksgiving dinner to the often controversial Archie Bunker of ‘All in the Family’ to a picture of the ‘Modern Family, we as a society proclaim in one breath that ‘We are Family’ while simultaneously establishing policy that separates children from their parents in the name of protecting our borders. Pope Francis has called us to recognize that “the family is the primary setting for socialization, since it is where we first learn to relate to others, to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another and live as one... the destruction of the human environment is extremely serious, not only because God has entrusted the world to us men and women, but because human life itself is a gift which must be defended from various forms of debasement.” (Laudato Si)

As violence continues to shatter families, nations and dreams, the community of Saint Joseph Prep witnesses against those values of our culture which suppress the dignity and worth of persons. Words used by students and adults to describe the culture of the school always include...community, second family, accepted, known and loved. Within this environment life lessons are learned because it is okay to make a mistake as long as one learns from and grows through it; differences are recognized and accepted; development of gifts is encouraged and supported; conflict is resolved non-violently; and each one begins to learn not just to respect but also to reverence the other. This experience of creating family or community happens on the stage,



ABOVE: Servers at Congregational Church

RIGHT: Volunteers at Camden, New Jersey Food Bank

the athletic fields/courts, building a robot, eating lunch, discussing a book, or just sharing in the life of the school.

Recognition of the human community as family, however, demands that we move out of the narrowness of ourselves, of our small milieu and be present to new ideas, cultures, insights and people. It is to develop this sense of global awareness that Saint Joseph Prep strives to deepen a sense of a culture of service to the dear neighbor both near and far. Adults and students participate in the Servants to the Dear Neighbor program, ministering locally to the elderly, children and the sick; serving our brothers and sisters in Camden, New Jersey; and traveling to Haiti in April to assist as needed.

“This being human is a guest house. Every morning is a new arrival... some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor. Welcome and entertain them all!” These words of Rumi describe for us that place where hospitality dwells and reminds us of the hospitality of God who welcomes the stranger, the new idea and the new insight. The charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph is rooted in gracious hospitality, in the inclusive love of God Who embraces all without distinction and Who “no longer calls us strangers but friends.” This hospitality culminates in Jesus Who welcomed the unwelcomed, the alienated and the outcast. What we are growing toward at Saint Joseph Prep through our living, our learning and our reaching out is to widen our circle so there is no stranger, celebrate diversity, cross boundaries, and break barriers. What we are trying to do is look deeper into ourselves, into what and who we value and ask: **HOW CAN WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**



Caring for Others at Jackson School by Kathleen Berube, CSJ and Jean Behenna, Mission Effectiveness Facilitators

There have been many exciting and productive service projects at Jackson School reaching out to those in need. In December, grade six organized a very successful winter clothing drive donating much needed items to Cradles to Crayons. The Jackson and Walnut Park Schools' community participated in our annual Giving Trees to benefit The Literacy Connection, The Women's Table, and Bethany Hill Place, ministries of the Sisters of Saint Joseph..

Jackson School celebrated Catholic Schools Week the last week in January. The activities centered around the theme: "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service". A Friday evening Pasta Night began the celebration. Parents, students, and teachers enjoyed a delicious dinner, participated in many craft activities, and danced the night away with a DJ. It was a wonderful evening celebrating community and hospitality. Throughout the week, activities included a special liturgy at Our Lady Help of Christians Church for the Jackson School community. An afternoon skating party at the Daly Rink in Newton was great fun for students, faculty, and friends.

A special "pajama day" activity was organized by a group of Grade Six students. All students were asked to write on an index card what makes Jackson School a community of faith, knowledge, and service. Their inspiring words were posted on a bulletin board entitled Community Building. The reward for participation was a ticket allowing the student to wear pajamas to school. Pajama Day was fun for all. Grade Five organized a fundraiser for Children's Hospital, "Cookies for Cancer". Baked goods were sold before and after school and over \$300 was donated to Children's Hospital.

As part of the 50th Anniversary, a group of parents organized a service project to support Birthday Wishes, an organization which provides birthday party supplies for homeless children. Each grade level was assigned certain birthday party items to donate. The items ranged from cake mix to wrapping paper—everything you need for a birthday celebration. Volunteers included parents, students and teachers who met after school and created the

birthday boxes. It was a wonderful learning experience for children to realize that there are those less fortunate. It was rewarding for them to know that they could help in a specific and meaningful way.



In Physical Education class, students participated in the Jump Rope for Heart challenge. This event is sponsored by the American Heart Association. Its goal is to teach children the importance of heart health and how they can make a difference in the lives of others by raising money for heart research., Students attended additional health classes to learn about the heart and how it works and the importance of diet and exercise. Jump Rope for Heart raised \$12,991 for heart research and educational initiatives of the American Heart Association. This challenge was an enriching experience for everyone. Students learned so much about the importance of taking care of one's health, the satisfaction of helping others and making a difference.

Looking forward there will be the 2nd Annual STEAM Fair, the Auction Gala at Fenway Park, the Spring concert at Regis College, the JWP faculty retreat, and many special events to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Jackson Walnut Park Schools. There have been many rewarding opportunities for community building. The Jackson School community certainly has been living the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph to work together and to care for our neighbors near and far without distinction.

ABOVE: LEFT TO RIGHT: Lily Waters, Sylvia Tejada, Matthew O'Connor, and Catalina Long

Walnut Park: Bridging Home, Classroom and the Wider World by Hannah Gilbert, Fourth Year Primary Parent

At the far end of one of the shelves in our daughter's classroom is a beautiful wooden nesting box. At the very heart of the set lies a tiny cube with an embossed image of the atom to represent the vital energy within the child. The next largest bears an image of the child seated peacefully cross-legged. That child nestles into the next larger box with an image of Walnut Park Montessori School. From there, the boxes extend outward to the town, the state, and eventually our country, our world, our solar system.

When we tell our daughter, Millie, the story of her birth, her favorite part is hearing about the ever-expanding circles of family that were present to greet her: mom and dad, loving grandparents, and also aunts and uncles, cousins and friends. In those first years, this immediate circle made up her world holding her in their arms and marveling at her beautiful energy and vitality. Attending Walnut Park Montessori School marked the first time that Millie ventured outside of that immediate circle of the family. Walnut Park became the next larger box to her own life story. It fit perfectly.

On her first day of school, through a stream of tears, an older boy took her hand, helped her to take off her new sneakers, and slid her school slippers on her tiny feet. This gesture grew into a little ritual for them and made all the difference in helping Millie understand that this new place was an extension of the trust and care that she knew at home.



For four years her teachers have been the embodiment of that trust and care. They provided warmth and comfort. Slowly they helped her to venture further into the classroom. It was filled with such wonderful things! There were tiny beads for sorting, pitchers for pouring, pencils and shapes for tracing and rubbing, and chairs, tables and trays just her size. The care and attention given to the classroom reinforced the message that this was a community where she and every child could belong.

Each day Millie's teachers bring this space to life. They model respect and care for others through their own thoughtful interactions with the children. They invite playfulness into the classroom. Importantly, they make the classroom a space for exploring and learning about the wider world. They teach the children about the cycles of life by setting up an incubator with fertilized eggs in the classroom. They help children conceptualize diverse ways of living by constructing adobe homes entirely out of empty milk boxes. They discuss the challenges facing other children in our own communities and invite them to acknowledge our neighbors by participating in the giving tree and other mission effectiveness projects. Millie's teachers are genuinely curious about the world around them and they build bridges to that larger world by bringing it into the classroom in ways that are approachable and engaging.

As our daughter's time at Walnut Park draws to a close, we marvel at how her world has expanded during the last four years. We are so grateful for the ways that Walnut Park has nurtured her and helped her to see how she and all children are connected to the wider world. We know that she has internalized the lessons of respect, peace and unending curiosity that she learned at Walnut Park. We are confident that she will carry them forward as she and the other seniors open the next box of their ever-expanding world.

LEFT: Hannah Gilbert and Amelia "Millie" Pina giving an Amish life demonstration

Building a Relationship by Mary Nagle, CSJ, Mission Effectiveness Coordinator, and Jamie Medeiros, Pastoral Care at Bethany Health Care Center

Bethany Health Care Center is dedicated to serving the “dear neighbor without distinction” in any and all circumstances. Its mission is to provide quality care for our residents and help them to be connected with God, other people and the world in which they live.

The mission of Bethany is greatly enhanced by our Spiritual/Pastoral Care Department. Anne Marie Willhite and Jamie Medeiros plan, coordinate and execute the ways that our residents are serviced spiritually. The latest endeavor was a Mass of Anointing. The sacrament of anointing was administered by Bishop Robert Reed. He anointed every resident in the building going from the chapel to all six floors. Needless to say, the residents were delighted to be anointed by Bishop Reed.



Jamie comes to Bethany with a rich background in spirituality and empathy for the person. I've asked her to share with you about her Bethany experience.

It is an interesting thing stepping into a place where everyone approaches you again and again to tell you how special it is. I come to Bethany as a spiritual director and an artist, so listening to the presence of a person is something I pay a great deal of attention to. I was quick to become familiar with the statement “serving the dear neighbor without distinction.” Looking around Bethany, it doesn't take long to see what this means. It means that for God, no one is unworthy, and we treat each person as the valued person they are. The actions we take, the improvements we make, the things we struggle with and work on, the goals of our day are centered around how best we can care for and love God's Beloved. With the challenges presented by aging and health that face people here at Bethany, what we do is make adjustments and accommodations so that everyone knows and feels that they are valued. It is Bethany living Jesus's question to Bartimeus, “What can I do for you?” The Sisters of Saint Joseph have said simply, “YES” to doing God's will by caring for all people.



Everyone who gets hired at Bethany provides services for the residents. And for that, I feel privileged. Every day is full of very real ups and downs, calm or chaos, joys and pains, struggles and peace, questions and clarity. My position as Spiritual Care Minister takes care of many behind-the-scene needs to ensure that Mass runs smoothly, to listen for and attend to the spiritual needs of residents and staff, and to be a representative of our faith, standing firm in the unconditional Love of God.

God prepared me long before my first day, including after my own “yes.” In Hope Valley, Rhode Island following Mass one week before my start at Bethany, a Sister sitting behind me was visiting from out of town. We began to chat. She said, “Actually I just retired. I was the CEO of a Health Care Center in Pennsylvania.” “Well then,” I said, “You are the perfect person to pray for me.” I explained about my new position and her whole countenance seemed to take a sacred pause. She spoke. “May you be blessed by every person you encounter, and may they be blessed by you.”

A few days later I realized that this took place in the Church of Saint Joseph. An exchange of blessing is the perfect way to describe my Bethany experience. Like everyone says, Bethany is special.

PHOTOS: ABOVE RIGHT: Bishop Robert Reed laying on of hands in blessing; **LOWER LEFT:** Bishop Reed the anointing hands of resident

Reflection on a Storm Day by Ann Marie Ghiloni, CSJ, Director of Mission Effectiveness

My office computer is by the window and I look out and see the earth fringed with snow from a previous storm. The sun is shining and warming the earth on a very cold day. It is hard to believe that the weather prediction for tomorrow is a nor'easter which has the potential of 12 to 18 inches of snow accumulating across the state. What does this mean for families with school age children who have no school, people who know the day before the storm that their offices will be closed, for essential personnel who must report to work, or the college students who are commuters or residents on campus?

This issue of *The Bridge* focuses on the following quote from Pope Francis Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*
The Joy of Love:

The family is the primary setting for socialization, since it is where we first learn to relate to others, to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another and live as one. (paragraph 276)

The day at home may be a treasure for some parents/grandparents/guardians to spend some time using creative skills to enjoy each other without having electronics be the entertainment. Folks who are always on the go in a frenzied world may treasure a bonus of quiet time to read, relax and be re-created. They may use the telephone to chat and hear a human voice of friend or family member rather than text messaging with cryptic words to connect with them. College students may be ecstatic not to run to the early morning class but use the extra time to work on a group project or paper that is due within 24 hours. These scenarios help to build community by relating with one another, listening with ear and heart, and sharing gifts and talents with people near and far.

Our Sponsored Ministries make a special effort to embrace the values of respect and reverence for all God's creation and serve our dear neighbors without distinction. By their activities and programs, the ministries strive to be more conscious of the needs people have in their geographical neighborhood and beyond. They use technology to make contact with others around the world and learn from each other what makes us a living community. We are a community of many different cultures, races, ages, and ethnic backgrounds, written and spoken languages but have a common language to express our desire for peace and love for one another.

A storm day at home may be a precious time to learn how our family, school, work, resident communities welcome the opportunity to build a community where all may be one. This is the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and as members of a Sponsored Ministry we carry it with us into the future. Every day you make the world a better place when you smile, extend a hand in welcome or share a kind word.



PRAYER TO THE HOLY FAMILY

*Holy Family of Nazareth,
 May families never again experience
 violence, rejection, and division;
 May all who have been hurt
 and scandalized find
 ready comfort and healing.*

Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*