

The Saint Joseph Worker News



An update from our two current St Joseph Workers:

Here is a brief report of what the young women are experiencing in the program, in their own words.

This year the Albany Province has been blessed with two very committed young women, Kerry Ryan and Ashley Park. Ashley was born and raised in Southern California, in the city of La Mirada which is located at the Los Angeles & Orange County border. She graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara majoring in Global Studies. Ashley is doing her ministry experience at SICM (Schenectady Inner City Ministry). Kerry Ryan is from Spring Lake, Michigan. She is a recent graduate of the University of Notre Dame with a degree in biology. Kerry originally was from our area and has family here. Her Aunt, Peg Anderton, is in ministry at St. Luke's in Schenectady. Kerry is ministering at St. Joseph's Provincial House in the Activities Dept.

Ashley shared her "learnings" as a SJW:

People are so different. I learned that everyone grew up differently- from different backgrounds, different cultures and even different areas of the US and not everyone thinks the way I do. Everyone has a story and I learned that I should be conscious of that.

People are the same. Working at the food pantry, I realized that no one is better than anyone else. Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses. Everyone has their struggles and we should not judge others because they sin differently than we do.

Having four distinct seasons is a real thing! Coming from Southern California where it's warm and green all year round, the change of seasons in Northeast have been eye-opening and wonderful! Being so, I can assure you that I will appreciate the upcoming spring weather more than ever before.

God is always with me. I feel so blessed to be a St. Joseph Worker and have this time to reflect and focus on my relationship with Christ. As a SJW, I have been able to participate in multiple retreats, weekly Sharing of the Heart sessions with Sister Linda and spiritual guidance with Sister Bernice. I have ways to go but I know that God is always with me.

The Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet are some of the coolest people that I have ever met. Before the St. Joseph Worker program, I did not know many sisters at all. After being here for 7 months, I have had the chance to get to know many sisters through circles of conversations, prayer groups, leadership sessions and even just visiting the PH. I have particularly enjoyed listening to vocation stories and how many of the sisters became a CSJ. I have truly felt the warmth and love with every sister that I have met.



Ashley Park

As you read the St. Joseph Worker Newsletter, you might want to stop and reflect on your own commitment to service. Here are some questions for your musing...

1. What service project have I participated in these last few years of college (high school)/and/or church work?
2. Was it a good experience for me and for those I served? Would I do it again?
3. What did I learn from this experience?
4. Did I do this service by myself or with others?
5. Is reaching out to others something I want to do regularly in my life?

—Sr. Linda Vendetti

Now accepting women 21-30, for the 2015 - 2016 year who desire to lead, are committed to social change, seek to grow in spirituality, and who will live in community.
For more information and an application please visit our website: www.sjworkers.org
or call to speak to the director, Sr. Lin Neil at: 518-393-0528

FROM A FORMER ST JOSEPH WORKER:

St. Paul's Center is a women and children's shelter in Rensselaer. It is unique in Rensselaer County because it is the only women and children's shelter that is not strictly victims of Domestic Violence. It is also unique because we are the only homeless shelter in the county that has a yearlong after care program. If you were to be placed at St. Paul's Center you can expect to work hard. We are a small not for profit and therefore our employees have to wear many different hats. The work we do is so rewarding, and you truly touch people's lives daily. When I was placed at St. Paul's Center as a SJW, I learned so much about meeting people where they are and empowering them to use skills that they didn't even know that they had to improve their situation. I learned how to help someone with a crisis and I learned how to navigate many systems that the urban poor interact with every day. After my placement I was hired full time and I can honestly say that while the crises that I deal with become more common place - I learn new things every week. This is by far the best job I have ever had.

Sarah Feeney, former SJW

Continued from pg. 1:

Kerry shared this with us:

The importance of finding the right ministry for me was a big step. By being able to dedicate so much of my time for a ministry, I see far more clearly how essential service is in my own life and the best way for me personally to go about it.

I have experienced different prayers in the Catholic tradition. Especially good for me has been Lectio Divina, which has helped me understand passages from Scripture at a deeper level, overcoming my tendency to passively read them. Also, freewriting is a technique that has been very useful, showing my own thoughts and fears, bringing them before God in a direct way rather than letting them remain vague and formless in the back of my mind.

Community living has been an important experience. It's not just having a roommate, but learning to listen and help each other in our ministries and lives. The support I get from being in community has been a blessing for me.

I have learned about all kinds of life experiences from Sisters and those who work at St. Joseph's Provincial House. Just being in the presence of them inspires me, seeing how they are kind and content even when many face sicknesses or other hardships. I want to conduct myself this same way.

Adjusting to a new way of living has been interesting! Going from a small town in Michigan to New York in a new program was a little overwhelming for me. However, this year has turned out to be so wonderful, proving that it isn't better for my life to be static and comfortable. Also, I am starting to go from feeling excessive worry about my future to a place of more optimism.



Kerry Ryan

We as Sisters of St. Joseph have been very blessed to have these two young women with us this year. Sharing our charism of unifying love, enjoying sharing of the heart, conversation circles, justice events and social times together has been very enriching for all of us!



Affiliated with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Albany Province.

From the Director's desk: Sr. Lin Neil

It's Spring, although you would hardly know it by the weather and the promise of snow for the first full day of Spring! The year has really jettied by filled with so many experiences and events. We comment each Monday as we meet for calendaring and Sharing of the Heart, "Wow, where is the year going?" The year has been going in many positive directions: ministries that are serving the dear neighbor, reflection experiences that have helped us to grow our "spiritual toolboxes", personal sharing that has helped relationships take root and flourish, social justice events and sessions that have deepened our consciousness about Earth and the plight of the marginalized. Yes, this has been a full year and certainly one we will hold dearly as a year of growth and becoming who God is call-

www.sjworkers.org

This newsletter is published three times/year by The St. Joseph Worker Program located in Albany, NY. Send comments or information to: eileen davenport at: edaveport04@gmail.com