

• • • Circles of Mercy has more than a nineteen-year tradition of providing hope, hospitality and empowerment to individuals in the Rensselaer Community, especially women and women with children. • • •



SPONSORED BY
THE SISTERS OF MERCY
NORTHEAST COMMUNITY

Mission Statement

Circles of Mercy honors the dignity of each person, offers hospitality, and provides services to instill hope and empower individuals to reach their full potential.

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Director:

Richard Zazycki

Hours:

M-F, 10 a.m.– 2 p.m.
Tues. only, until 5 pm
or by appointment

Programs:

- Holiday Programs
- Baby Supplies
- Mentoring
- Financial Tutoring
- Computer Training
- Support Group
- Free Tax Return Prep
- Professional Clothing
- Advocacy
- Social Service Referrals
- Catherine's Closet

Connections

A Taste of Mercy Gala

The friends and supporters of Circles of Mercy did it again! The gala and signature fundraising event on Wednesday evening June 14 at Shaker Ridge County Club was an overwhelming success, raising over \$32,000!



2017 Honoree Father Peter G. Young (left) CEO of Peter Young Housing, Industries and Treatment receives the Hope and Hospitality Award from Richard S. Zazycki, Executive Director

This year Circles of Mercy honored Father Peter G. Young, CEO of Peter Young Housing, Industries and Treatment with the annual Hope and Hospitality Award. Father Young has served in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany for over 58 years. He has dedicated his life to the continuation of and building upon a "Mission of Mercy". Mother Catherine McAuley would certainly look down on him as one of her favorite sons, given the works of mercy he performs.

For the better part of 58 years, Father Young has shared his time, talent and treasure, serving people suffering from poverty, the sickness of addiction, lack of education, those recently released from prison, and the socially disenfranchised. There isn't any doubt that Father Young "...loves mercy, lives justly and walks humbly with God".

Circles of Mercy Trustees and the Sisters of Mercy Northeast Community also presented the annual *Sister Gail Rieth, RSM Volunteer Service Award* to senior



Castleton NY resident Joan Meister accepts the Sister Gail A. Rieth, RSM 2017 Volunteer Service Award from Richard S. Zazycki (right), for her 12½ years of volunteer community service in Catherine's Closet.

volunteers Joan Meister and Shirley Hirt, for their service to the organization. They both have volunteered over 1,300 hours assisting in Catherine's Closet at Circles of Mercy for the past 12½ years.

We gratefully acknowledge all of our honorees for their contributions to the community. We offer sincere thanks to the gala's corporate sponsors and honorary donors, those who attended the event, those who donated goods and services, and all who provided support for this important fundraising function. •



Castleton, NY resident Shirley Hirt accepts the Sister Gail A. Rieth, RSM 2017 Volunteer Service Award from Richard S. Zazycki, for her 12½ years of volunteer community service in Catherine's Closet.

Photos by B. Roman, RSM

Connections

A newsletter to promote the mission and values of Circles of Mercy, a program sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy.

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2Shea Catering

Director's Remarks by Richard Zazycki In Memoriam...Agnes Mary "Merry" Donlon

Merry Donlon, the Chair of our board of trustees, would normally have been present at our annual fundraising event to welcome everyone. Unfortunately, Merry was suddenly hospitalized on Saturday, June 10 due to a very serious stroke. Regrettably she did not recover and sadly passed away on Tuesday, June 12, 2017.

Merry was a good and faithful servant in the Lord's vineyard. She was a licensed social worker, retiring as manager of Family and Child Services for CEO. In both administrative and clinical positions, she also worked for Catholic Charities of Columbia and Greene Counties, and for the Center for the Disabled in Albany.

During the past 4½ years Merry had served as a member of the Circles of Mercy's Board of Trustees, initially in the role as Vice Chair, and as Chair of the Board. When she first approached us about becoming a board member, Merry wrote; "...The charism of the Sisters of Mercy is an inspiration to me.

During my professional years as a social worker, I have had many opportunities to witness numerous Sisters of Mercy respond to women and children with warmth, welcome, and encouragement..."



Agnes Mary Donlon

In condolence letters we send to friends and colleagues, one of Catherine McAuley's quotes is always included; "...Each day is a step we make towards eternity and we shall continue thus to step from day to day until we take the last step, which will bring us into the presence of God..."

That is where Merry is now, at peace and in God's loving presence. We will miss our dear friend and colleague. We pray for her, her family, and for her dear friend and partner Barbara Wood. •

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARD – Danica A. Nowosielski, PhD

Dr. Danica Nowosielski recently joined the board of Circles of Mercy as a trustee. She earned her PhD and MS in Chemistry at RPI in Troy, and a BS in Chemistry and Mathematics from Russell Sage College, Troy. Currently Danica works as a Professor of Chemistry at Hudson Valley Community College, where she also is the co-advisor for the HVCC Chemistry Club.



Danica Nowosielski

Danica serves as a musician in her local parish and also with the Mercy Choir of the Sisters of Mercy. As a

result, she has developed a strong commitment to the mission of mercy and became a Mercy Associate. As a professor at the nearby community college, she can help to strengthen and support the mission of Circles of Mercy by establishing and maintaining connections between both organizations.

Involved in Christian outreach in her home parish and also active in music ministry, she will provide a layperson's perspective on services to those in need.

As a board member, her service will develop a deeper relationship with Circles of Mercy, helping to promote the mission of mercy and support the ongoing works of the ministry and the Sisters of Mercy here in the Albany area. We are very pleased and happy that Danica is a part of our community of Mercy here at Circles. •

Honorary Gifts and Memorial Donations

Circles of Mercy gratefully acknowledges the following donations

In Memory of:

- Sister Claire Boissy, RSM; Timothy Edward Sioui; Richard M. Gilooly, Jr. – by Richard Zazycki
- Imelda Ssewawa – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy, Geri Martin, Karen Savicki, and Mary Breig
- Mary Ellen Seward – by Mary Femia
- Clifford M. Hansen – by Maureen and Shane Somerville
- Glenna Belle Snyder – by Maureen and Shane Somerville
- Flavia Sposito – by Maureen and Shane Somerville
- Sheila McVeigh – by Maureen and Shane Somerville
- Agnes Mary “Merry” Donlon – by the Board, Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy, Nancy Flaherty, Jean & Don Grandinett, Cathy & Scott Grasskopf, Lynne Nisoff, Kathleen Schongar, Laureen Fitzgerald, RSM, Mary Fraser, RSM, Denise Hackert-Stoner & Scott Stoner, Deborah Tagliento, Andrea & Timothy Barry, John Cadalso, Gary Becker, Carol Anne DiPaolo, Kathleen Donovan, Lisa Lane, Jean Gustafson, Maribeth Pekrol, Roseann Quinn, Jo Raposarda and Kathy Nardacci
- Sister Joyce Ross, RSM – by Mary Femia, Richard Zazycki, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Sister Marilyn Broderick, RSM – by Mary Femia, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Margarete “Oma” Kriete – by Richard Zazycki and the CA\$H Coalition of the Greater Capital Region
- Brian Howard Harple – Richard Zazycki, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Genevieve (Genowefa) Rudzinski – by East Greenbush PBA, Deborah Myers, M/M Stephen Chenette, James Kieran, Shelia & Lawrence Emminger, and Julie O’Connor
- Sister Mary Vincentia Devine, RSM – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Sister Mary Ignatia Evon, RSM – by Mary Femia, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Francis W. Rodgers – by Anthony Bango, Christina Dzingala, Marilyn T. Hart, Joanne Krchniak, Machine Heart Music, Karen A. Minasian, Antoinette Motta, Joan Muir, Debbis Vargas-Collins, Susan Innes, Michael Kelley, Richard Zazycki, and the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Albert J. Scheibly, Jr. – Richard Zazycki, and the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Elaine M. DeBruyn – by Melissa & Kevin Billetts, Jessica Brearton, Karen M. Clark, Marilyn T. Hart, George Holly, Lise & Robert LaLonde, Anthony LaMonaco, Sandra & Vincent Lorusso, Erica Mortimore, Michele A. Scambelluri, Mary J. Wilkinson, Richard Zazycki, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Edward Gerard Rhatigan – by Richard Zazycki, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Christopher J. Igo – by Penny Hill and Richard Zazycki
- George M. Rhatigan – by Richard Zazycki, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Sister Joan Barina, MMS – by Mary Femia, Richard Zazycki, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Nancy (Pratt) VanDetta – by Margaret Bradley
- Dirk Van Ort – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Sister Marie Matthews, RSM – by Emily M. Jordan, Joan & Chad Finck
- Vera B. Rabe, Mercy Associate – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Benedict John Mattus, Sr. – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Kathryn J. Ravidia – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Dr. James Harry Puleo, MD – by Richard Zazycki and the CA\$H Coalition of the Greater Capital Region
- Deceased Relatives and Friends – by Christine Szczepanek
- Nancy L. LaRow – by Gregory T. Altman, Mary & George Agars, Albany K of C #173 Golf League, Janet & Joseph Allegretti, Rose & James Barba; Michael & Adrienne Bautista, Marian L. Beckette, Dr. & Mrs. Samuel F. Bosco, Robert Carmody-CPA, H. Patricia Conley, Sheila R. Cutler, Rosemary Doyle, John P. Ezzulo, Stephanie J. Gorman, Kathy & John Harrison, Marilyn T. Hart, Marie L. Hass, John Kawola, Carleen & Chris Madden, Patrick Marinello, Rosemary Meister, Sharon & Kevin Morrison, John J. Nigro, Mary Lynne & Les Pembrook, Picotte Management Co., Inc., Honora & Paul Poirier, E. Janet Prwissler, Loretta C. Putman, Janet & Joseph Reedy, Mary & Carl Scarda, Joanne Scheibly, Diane M. Shields, Marie O. Spore, Amanda C. Tashjian, Tyler Adam Tsang, Kristy Wilkinson, Shirley A. Bressler, CHA Consulting, Inc., Mary & Michael Collins, Dr. Vincent Filanova, DDS, Jan & Jerome Kahnke, Mary D. Kerwin, Judith & Andrew Matthews, Judith & Louis Polsinello, Janice & Michael Rayball, Eileen Martino; William Starkey, and Beth LaRow.
- Theodore Joseph Matthews – by Emily M. Jordan
- Sister June (Mary Immaculata) Szumowski, RSM – by Mary Femia, the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- John W. Berry – by Marilyn Berry
- Iona McDade, Mercy Associate – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- John W. “Jack” Hickey – by Janet M. Hickey
- Beverly A. Nead – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Harry M. Murphy – by Penny Hill and Richard Zazycki
- James Barba – the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- John Knapp – by Frances Knapp
- Donald M. Roznowski – by the Albany Council of Catholic Nurses, and Richard Zazycki
- Ann and Ed Newell – by Sister Patricia Newell, RSM
- Josephine DiDomenicantonio – by Mario E. DiDomenicantonio
- Joseph F. Fedele, Sr. – by Richard Zazycki
- Ruth E. Rubino – by the Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Joseph R. Grasso – by Kristin Coyne, Joe Burke, Carol Grasso, Maureen Toohey, and Richard Zazycki

In Honor of:

- Albany’s 2017 New Mercy Associates: Linda Kindlon and Jo Saulsbery – by the Board, Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Reverend Peter G. Young – by the Board, Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy
- Dr. Christopher J. Maestro, DMD, FAGD – by Nancy Gutterman
- Honoring Living Relatives and Friends – by Christine Szczepanek
- Sister M. Kathleen Pritty, RSM – by Marcia and Herbert Dunn
- 2016 Mercy Jubilarians: Sisters Thomasine Boncaldo, Cabrini Nellis, Jane Leach, and Mary Fraser, RSM – by Sister Patricia Mannion, RSM, Mary Femia, Richard Zazycki, the Board, Staff and Volunteers at Circles of Mercy

Partnership with Southern Rensselaer County Rotary

For the past four years we have had an ongoing partnership with Southern Rensselaer County Rotary. Members of this professional organization have as their mission: promoting peace, preventing diseases, providing access to clean water and sanitation, enhancing maternal and child health, improving basic education and literacy and helping communities develop. Many of these areas of focus are similar for both Circles of Mercy and the Sisters of Mercy. The Rotarians have assisted us with drives for baby supplies, clothing and our other holiday programs.

This summer Andy Leyhane, coordinator of this year’s school supplies drive for the Rotary, and his fellow Rotarians completed the collection and dropped off supplies to Circles of Mercy, where they were collated and distributed to needy students in the Rensselaer City School District. The club members did a fantastic job with the school supplies drive. We are grateful to the Rotary Club for its kindness and support in promoting and nurturing this ongoing collaboration. Thanks to everyone who participated this year in helping us to help others. •



Southern Rensselaer County Rotarian Andy Leyhane, making the supply donation delivery for this year’s back to school program in support of Circles of Mercy. (Photo courtesy of the Southern Rensselaer County Rotary Club).

“You should be as shining lamps,
giving light to all around...”

Catherine McAuley

Make a Gift to Circles of Mercy

Is there a loved one whom you would like to remember in a special way for a birthday, anniversary, or even at the time of death? Why not honor him or her with a donation to Circles of Mercy? If you choose, donations will be recognized in future newsletters. We will also send a personal acknowledgement of your gift. Contributions to Circles of Mercy are tax deductible. Please call us at (518) 462-0899 for further information.

I am enclosing my gift of \$ _____

In honor of: (living) _____

In memory of: (deceased) _____

PLEASE SEND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Please mention my loved one (name only) in your newsletter:

Yes No

Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming Activities and Programs at Circles

- We will have our **Irish Night Celebration on October 21** at Blessed Sacrament School, 605 Central Avenue, Albany, from 6 to 10 pm. Think about reserving a table for an evening of great food, gift raffles and entertainment which will feature A Musical Tribute to Frank Jaklitsch by his Friends.
- It is never too early to consider **Cate's Adopt-a-Family Christmas Program**. Begins October 23, finishing December 18.
- Circles of Mercy **Annual Appeal** begins November 20. Think about Circles as one of your "end of year" beneficiaries.
- **"MyFreeTaxes.com"** is a free, safe, secure on-line income tax filing program. Circles is offering access to this service starting January 15 until October 15. The web link is available on our home page located at www.circlesofmercy.org.
- **VITA Free Tax Prep Program** will begin the tax filing season the week of January 22nd. It is a free program that goes until March 24th, with IRS-certified volunteers preparing your federal and state tax return. If you want to help volunteer, please call or visit our website for additional information.
- **Cate's Kids Easter Basket Program** will run from February 1 – March 28. See the Circles' website link for further details.
- **Annual Gala "A Taste of Mercy"** will be held June 13 at 5:30 pm at Shaker Ridge Country Club, hosted by 2Shea's Catering. Details will be mailed and posted on our website.
- **Cate's Kids Back to School Supplies** drive begins July 1st – to August 24th. The collection supports our area high school and pre-k students in need of school supplies.