



# Messages from Metuchen

Office for Religious

February 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you know, I have been appointed as the Delegate for Religious for the diocese replacing Sister Elizabeth O'Hara who retired at the end of December. We extend our sincere heartfelt thanks to Sister Elizabeth for her dedicated service to us religious and to the diocese these past years. We offer her our prayerful remembrance.

As a Felician Sister, I recently served in the Metuchen Tribunal and am a member of the Education Commission in the diocese. I worked at Bishop Ahr High School in its early years. As a participant in the First Synod of the Diocese of Metuchen, I met a number of members of the diocese. And I have met a number of you these past few years at various gatherings especially as we celebrated the Year of Consecrated Life in the diocese. I look forward to meeting more of you.

One of the tasks of the delegate for religious (see Appendix, Handbook for Religious) is to be a "bridge builder" between the Bishop of the Diocese of Metuchen and members of religious communities. I also see myself accompanying the women and men religious on our common Journey as we carry out the Mission of Christ.

We religious, priests, brothers and sisters in the diocese number close to 300. Women religious from 30 orders are serving in the diocese. Some areas of the diocese where we minister include parishes, schools, campus ministry, and hospitals. Retreat work, social service, volunteer work, health care and forms of a life dedicated primarily to prayer are other ways in which we serve the people of God in the diocese.

Pope Francis, in his remarks on World Day of Consecrated Life, February 2, 2016 said that consecrated men and women are called first and foremost to be men and women of encounter...to live the gratitude for the encounter with Jesus and for the gift of a vocation to consecrated life. Encounter is something all of us can be about, whatever our specific ministry.

From time to time, it is good to come aside and rest awhile as Jesus said. The season of Lent will soon be upon us. You are invited to come and rest at an Afternoon of Reflection at the Saint John Neumann Pastoral Center on **SATURDAY, MARCH 18**. Registration to follow later this month. Mark your calendar and save the date.

In this technological age, I will use email and the diocesan website to communicate with you rather than mailing a hard copy for most business. However, anyone needing to be contacted by US mail is asked to let me know that, by mail or a message on my voice mail. I am in the office 2 days/week.

In every encounter we have, let us strive to love God above all and our neighbor as ourselves.

Peace and All Good,

*Sister Aquinas Szott, CSSF*

Sister Aquinas Szott, CSSF  
Delegate for Religious

## AFTERNOON OF REFLECTION

Mark your calendar for Saturday, March 18, 2017 for an Afternoon of Reflection for Religious this Lent to be held at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center in Piscataway. The day will begin at 12:30pm with light refreshments and end with Mass for the Third Sunday of Lent at 4pm.

Conferences, Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, quiet prayer and Mass will be in the chapel and foyer area to minimize the need for much walking as well as use of stairs.

You are welcome to join us for the 4pm Mass if you are unable to attend the earlier part of the program. Coming together as a diocesan community of religious strengthens our identity and bondedness within the local church and provides support to one another.

## NATIONAL CATHOLIC SISTERS WEEK

NCSW is an annual celebration created to honor women religious. It began in 2014 and is held March 8-14 in conjunction with National Women's History Month. It is a series of events that bring greater focus to the lives of women religious. The hope is that as young women learn about the lives of women religious, more of them will choose to follow their example. Past events and information can be found on the website at:

[nationalcatholicsistersweek.org](http://nationalcatholicsistersweek.org)

Let me know if an event is planned in your area.

## GLOBAL SISTERS REPORT

This site is a source of news and information about Catholic sisters and the critical issues facing people they serve. It is online at

[globalsistersreport.org](http://globalsistersreport.org)

This project and National Catholic Sisters Week are both funded by a 3 year grant from the Hilton Foundation.

## DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

Workshops, events, etc., sponsored by our own diocese and its many ministries and agencies can be found on the diocesan website and in our paper *The Catholic Spirit*. Our religious communities, retreat centers, local parishes also conduct sources of education and enrichment. Maybe there is one program out there for you to enjoy!

## CMSM

While membership in the Conference of Major Superiors of Men is for leadership, information and resources for members can be found on the website

[cmsm.org](http://cmsm.org)

*If anyone has news to share, contact me and I can circulate it. I hope to communicate primarily by email beginning with the details and registration for the Lenten Day of Reflection. Let me know if you prefer a hard copy in the mail.*

## CONTACTING THE DELEGATE

### FOR RELIGIOUS

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**“There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope that belongs to your call....to equip the saints for the building up of the body of Christ...”**

Ephesians 4