RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART OF MARY

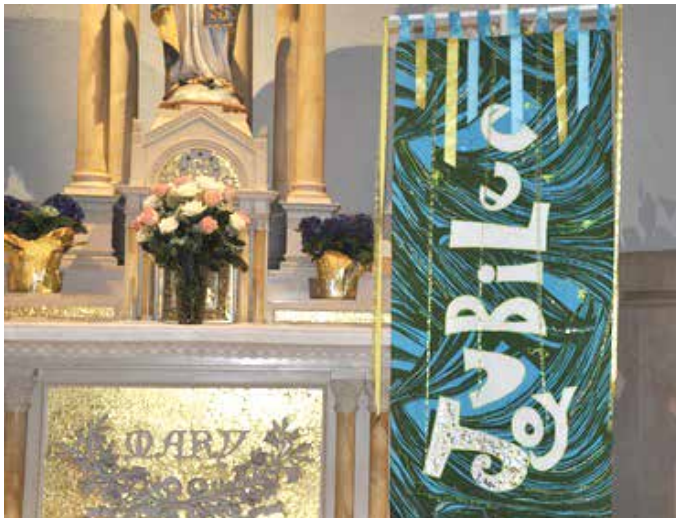
UT VITAM HABEANT

Highlights

Eastern American Area

Spring 2026

On Saturday, April 25th, we celebrated the Diamond, Platinum, and Golden Jubilees of six of our RSHM Sisters. Following is an "Expression of Gratitude" on behalf of this year's Jubilarians written by Sister Catherine Vincie, celebrating her 50th Jubilee.



It's all about grace – the invitation to follow Jesus Christ and this actual journey to grow into union with God through membership in a religious community, particularly for us, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. *It's all about the grace* each of us has received through connections with the RSHM either in schools, parishes or other social ministries, where someone personified for us what a response to God's call could possibly look like. *It's all about the grace* each of us has received as we lived through 75, 70 or 50 years of ministry in hospitals, social services agencies, and schools with students from toddlers through graduate school, either in our own institutions or in other settings.

So it is with enormous gratitude that we first thank our God for the gift of this life. It is with gratitude also that we thank the sisters of this Institute for the support, challenge and joy that they have shared with us on our journey. In our vow formula we say that "we rely on God's fidelity and the support of our sisters to be faithful to our commitment in this Institute." We have relied on that fidelity and support, and it has brought us to today.

And so, we express our gratitude to all of you – Sisters, friends and family - and pray that our lives may also witness to you the many graces we have each received.

L to R: Sisters Catherine Vincie (50 yrs.), Margarita Cardenas, Ethna Egan, Bridget Mary Lyng and Gerri McGinn (70 yrs) and Francisca Grace (75 yrs)

NOTES OF FOND FAREWELL

ANDREA FORZONI, Head of Istituto Marymount, will be retiring at the end of July 2026.
Following are words of gratitude from Sister Rosamond Blanchet, RSHM, and Sarah Gallagher, Head of Marymount Rome.

From SISTER ROSAMOND BLANCHET, RSHM, former Superior General of the RSHM Institute

In 2015, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary formalized a Global Network of RSHM Schools, developed from earlier networking initiatives, to foster effective collaboration in the education of the young people they serve. The Network's mission echoes our RSHM Mission as proclaimed by Jesus Christ in John's Gospel (10:10): "I have come that all may have life and have it to the full." The Network's schools seek to develop the work of education initiated by the RSHM ... in a "common purpose to foster the gift of internationality and to promote and deepen the commitment to the transformation of the world."

As a member of the committees that established and developed the Global Network, Andrea Forzoni, Head of Istituto Marymount since 2012, made considerable contributions to its vitality.

Professor Forzoni has made the decision to complete his ministry at Marymount on July 31, 2026. He will be greatly missed. Although we are saddened by his leaving, I have the distinct privilege to express, on behalf of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, our deepest gratitude to Andrea for his exemplary commitment and dedication to the Marymount School community for the past 14 years.

As General Superior of the RSHM living in Rome from 2013-2019, I came to know Andrea personally, and I applaud his many gifts as a respected educator and administrator. In our congregation we speak of and aspire to acquire the virtue of "zeal," the enthusiasm, energy and passionate dedication in our ministry to others. I have experienced this zeal in Andrea at Marymount.

In reflecting on Andrea's ministry, my thoughts turn to the metaphor of "The Potter" in the Old Testament where God informs the prophet Jeremiah that He molds His people as a potter skillfully works with clay. In his years at Marymount, through his vision, dedication, compassion, and example, Andrea has formed and skillfully molded a school community united in its mission promoting life for all, marked by many accomplishments.

Marymount was the first school in Rome, over two decades ago, to initiate bilingual education, Italian and English, in its youngest classes. Andrea implemented and enriched the growth of this program that now extends from kindergarten through high school. For years, parents requested Istituto Marymount to continue through high school, and Andrea opened a high school that was officially recognized in 2017 offering the choice of two diplomas: Classical and Scientific. Throughout his administration, Andrea enhanced the campus at Via Nomentana. He built an attractive glass multi- purpose pavilion to meet the needs of the growing student enrollment. Most recently, in February 2026, a new student dining room was completed that is bright, spacious and deeply appreciated by all. In 2015, following the restructure of Istituto Marymount, the Istituto Marymount Foundation was established. This made clear Marymount's inclusion within the Ministry of Education of Rome for legal purposes and separated the school from the property that is owned by the RSHM.

In addition to Andrea's accomplishments, I want to express, on behalf of the RSHM, how we have valued his personal relationship with our sisters. His kindness and deep thoughtfulness towards our sisters have been a great grace for us. Throughout his years, Andrea was available to us and offered gracious hospitality for many joyful and prayerful celebrations - fond memories for which we are deeply grateful.

In closing this farewell, I share a quote from Father Gailhac, "Let your presence transform the community around you." Thank you, Andrea, for sharing your life with the Istituto Marymount School community. Your presence has been transformative. May God's love and grace continue to sustain you, and the RSHM will continue to hold you in their prayers.

From SARAH GALLAGHER, Head of School, Marymount Rome

There exists, in almost every school setting, a small number of individuals whose contribution resists easy summary: those whose influence is felt not merely in the initiatives they champion or the structures they help to build, but in the quality of presence they bring to every encounter. Andrea Forzoni is, without question, such a person. After fourteen years at Istituto Marymount, his departure invites not only our gratitude but also a genuine appreciation of what it means to serve a community with both intellectual distinction and an uncommon generosity of spirit.

Within the Eastern American Area Network, Andrea's commitment to the nucleus of school heads who formed the heart of our shared endeavor was both steadfast and transformative. The breadth of experience now available to students across our schools - the Middle School Model United Nations, the Performing Arts Festival, the renewed Béziers Experience - bears the unmistakable imprint of a mind that was perpetually alive to possibility and possessed of the patience and determination to translate vision into reality.

It is, however, his contribution to the founding of the Global Network of RSHM Schools that may prove his most enduring legacy. When, in 2015, a small committee was convened to give form and substance to what was then little more than a compelling aspiration, Andrea was the self-evident choice. A consummate architect of consensus, his counsel was seminal to the success of the Network's inaugural gathering, which he hosted with characteristic grace and hospitality at Istituto Marymount in 2016. With equal dedication, he gave freely of his time and considerable expertise to construct

the Network's first digital platform, not at the behest of any formal mandate, but because such is the nature of the man. He served on the Coordinating Committee for four years. And it is, finally, the man whom we celebrate. Generous in the truest sense - of time, of thought, of encouragement - Andrea has approached every challenge with intellectual courage and a warmth that made collaboration not merely productive but genuinely joyful. He has been, to turn the words of Seneca, "non scholae sed vitae" - not for the school alone, but for life itself.

We give thanks for all that he has given, and we wish him every grace in the chapter that follows.

Best Wishes

REFLECTING UPON *DILEXI TE*

"I have loved you" (Rev. 3-9)

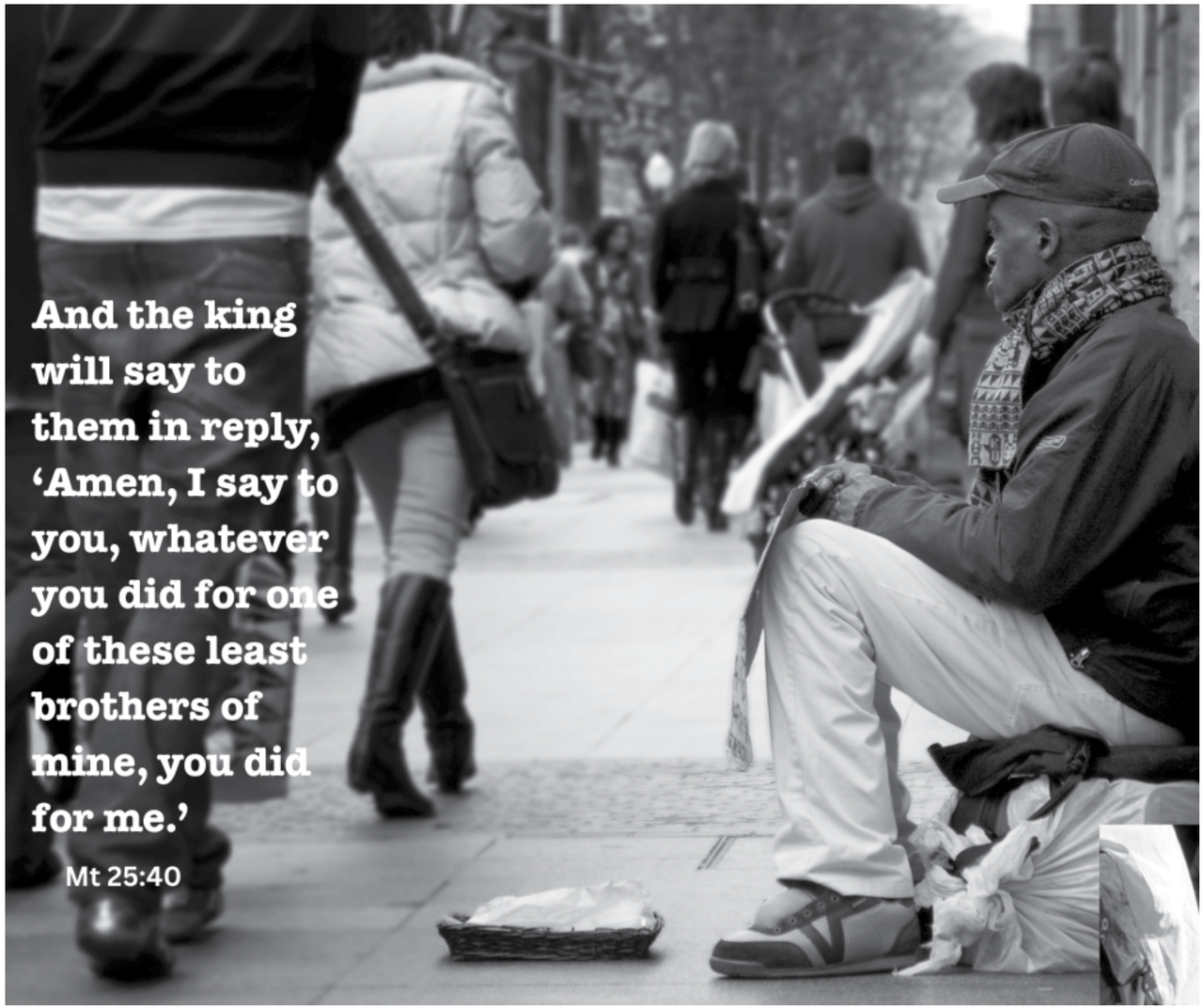
These startling words of the Lord introduce the first major Exhortation of Pope Leo XIV. They draw their force from the symbol of the loving Heart of Christ that Francis had presented in *Dilexit Nos*, the encyclical that he was working on before his death. Leo celebrates and completes that work, using it as a foundation on which to elaborate the embodiment of the symbol in our history and tradition.

Like Francis, Leo notes an inextricable element within the unfolding of scripture, tradition, and ministries within the church: a preference for the poor and for those who have no voice. The search for self-aggrandizement and domination in our world has left many behind and suffering. It devalues respect for the human person and for the common good. It has left many, like the early disciples, feeling dejected by what seems to be a lack of power and resources.

Yet the biblical passage with which Leo begins opens space for deeper hope: "You are powerless," says the Lord, "yet I have loved you." It is a message to each person, including all those whom we encounter, especially the poor. This article can encourage individuals and communities to ponder the texts of Leo and Francis, keeping in mind a purpose expressed in our RSHM tradition. We have been called "To know God and to make God known; to love God and to make God loved." How do we continue to live out that mission, to be effectively faithful today?

The question resonates with a question from the Augustinian tradition of Leo. "Who do I love when I love my God?" Augustine asks (*Confessions*, Ch.10). The question endures. Leo first explores it through scripture and follows with a thought-provoking history of its embodiment in our tradition. We offer a few selections that may be of interest, with confidence that you, our readers, might be nourished by a contemplative reading of the full text.

Leo begins his exploration with stories from scripture, setting aside the abstractions of dogma, emphasizing care and preference for the poor. They are set in the ordinary world of encounters and relationships, often, as in this one, in a gathering of disciples around a meal. "Why this waste?" call out the disciples as a woman anoints the head of Jesus with costly oil (Mt 26:6-13). Yet her extravagance draws no reprimand from Jesus. What matters is her way of seeing and the care that instinctively flows from it. "That woman saw in Jesus the lowly and suffering Messiah on whom she could pour out her love," he notes. "It was a small gesture, of course, but those who suffer know how great even a small gesture can be."



DILEXI TE

"I have loved you"

Instead of the "mighty acts" of recorded history, scripture points out the significance of little things. It looks at actions that might not catch all eyes but have a lasting impact. The encounter of this woman with Jesus grew out of their hearts. We need to be attentive to what Jesus and the woman see, but that others may not recognize. Each encounters the other from the perspective of the poor. It is that woman who perceives the coming humiliation that Jesus will suffer. Jesus, aware also of what is to come, graciously accepts her gesture. The encounter has a saving power that the disciples have failed to see. The woman grows in her knowledge of "Who" is her God and her story will be told in history again and again.

The "preferential option for the poor" serves as a touchstone for the faith and cannot be separated from it. The love expressed in the opening words of *Dilexi Te* explains its grounds for those who in their emptiness and poverty feel its need. "You are powerless yet I have loved you." That foundation inspires Leo's hope for renewal, a hope sustained even in awareness of a world wracked by violence and division. The suffering of the poor, in many and global forms, cannot be relativized. Yet seeing from the perspective of the poor opens a "path to holiness" that is open to all. That love "can never discriminate or exclude other groups, which would be impossible with God," Leo insists. It is meant to emphasize God's actions, which are moved by compassion for all humanity. Subsequent chapters of *Dilexi Te* concretize the relevance of this mission, not only within history and tradition but especially in dealing with contemporary issues. We hope that that they can be pondered, individually and communally, advancing that mission of knowing and loving God and of journeying together that has already begun.

Jacquelyn Porter, RSHM

100 YEARS! MARYMOUNT NEW YORK CELEBRATIONS

In this centennial year, Marymount New York celebrates not only the passage of time, but also the enduring spirit that has defined the school for 100 years. Rooted in the mission of the RSHM, the Marymount community has embraced this milestone as an opportunity to reflect on where it has come from, who it is today, and the path it is charting for the future. Throughout the year, a vibrant and multifaceted series of initiatives has brought this vision to life, engaging students, alumnae, families, faculty, and friends in meaningful and joyful ways.

A cornerstone of the celebration has been storytelling: honoring the people, traditions, and moments that have shaped Marymount across generations. On social media, the school has invited its community into a shared historical journey through features such as "On This Day in Marymount History" and then-and-now comparisons of beloved traditions. These glimpses into the past have not only sparked nostalgia but have also deepened appreciation for the continuity of the school's mission. Marymount's alumnae platforms have highlighted graduates who carry that mission into the world, demonstrating the profound and lasting impact of a Marymount education.

This spirit of reflection is also captured in this year's Legacy Magazine, aptly titled *Icons of a Century: 100 People, Places, and Objects That Define Marymount.* Drawing on the voices of the community, the publication highlights 100 defining elements of the Marymount experience, weaving together personal stories and historical insights. Complementing these written reflections, a four-part video series has explored the essential pillars of a Marymount education: heritage and mission, community and belonging, academics, and extracurricular life. The result is both a tribute to the past and a testament to the shared values that continue to unite the community.

At the heart of the centennial celebrations was a deeply meaningful Founder's Day Mass, held on February 2 at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Nearly 2,000 members of the Marymount community gathered in this sacred space to honor the school's Catholic identity and its commitment to educating young women of purpose, faith, and compassion. During the liturgy, the school unveiled a new centennial banner, beautifully designed to reflect the global reach of the RSHM network through the inclusion of flowers representing each country in which RSHM schools are found.

Sister Clevie Youngblood, RSHM, blesses the senior class

Following the Mass, the celebration continued on campus as students gathered to create birthday cards for Marymount and to contribute to a collaborative mural celebrating "100 Things We Love About Marymount." The day culminated in a spirited pep rally, where each grade presented a symbolic item for inclusion in a time capsule to be opened at the school's 125th anniversary in 2051. In a moment that bridged past and present, the community also opened a time capsule from its 75th anniversary, offering a tangible link to earlier generations of Marymount students.

The year reached a festive high point on April 17 at the Centennial Benefit Gala, held at the iconic Waldorf Astoria New York. Nearly 1,000 members of the Marymount community gathered for an evening inspired by the "Roaring Twenties," complete with dinner, dancing, and both silent and live auctions. The Gala not only celebrated the school's rich history but also looked ahead, raising vital funds to support renovations and enhancements of their historic Fifth Avenue home, ensuring that future generations of students continue to learn and grow in spaces that reflect the excellence of a Marymount education.

Together, these centennial initiatives form a tapestry of gratitude, pride, and hope. They honor the legacy of the RSHM and all who have shaped Marymount over the past century, while affirming a shared commitment to the future. As the school embarks on its second century, it does so with a deep sense of purpose - guided by its mission, strengthened by its community, and inspired by the countless lives it will continue to transform.

Jennifer Cyranski
Director of Communications & Events
Marymount School of New York

IN HARMONY WITH THE SISTERS

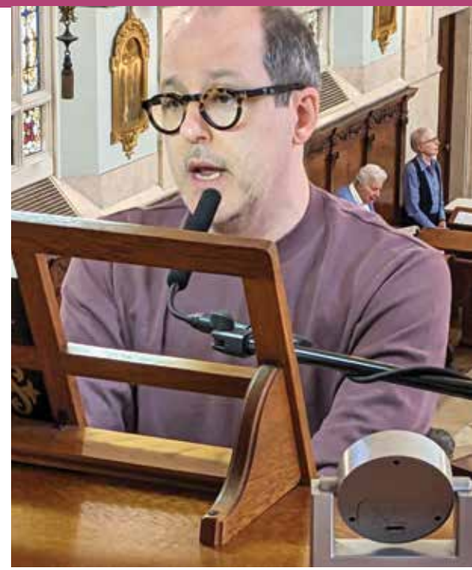
For the sisters at Marymount Convent in Tarrytown, Vince Peterson is not only the musician who enhances our liturgies through carefully selected music, but one who creates a deeply spiritual shared experience. However, it is perhaps only when you learn about the scope of Vince's work as pianist, organist, conductor, and composer that you realize what a blessing it is for us to have him in our lives.

Vince's passion for music began at age 6 in San Francisco when he took piano lessons from BVM Sister Gladys Richmond. In kindergarten, he loved watching her hands and asked her to teach him, which she did three times a week once he was in first grade. In 4th grade, Vince taught himself to play the Joe Wise song "You Fill the Day." When he was in 6th grade, Sister Gladys asked him to meet her at the organ loft of the parish church, beginning his career as an organist, even though he could not reach the pedals. And then one day she told him, "You will play for first Friday Mass next week." After Sister Gladys retired, Vince stayed in touch with her until her death in 2004.

In successive years, Vince became the music director of his parish at age 14 and played the organ in the Vatican and sang at an audience for Pope John Paul II at age 15. He received his Bachelor in Music (BMus) degree in composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and completed two master's degrees in composition and choral conducting at Mannes College of Music in New York City. At age 27, he founded Choral Chameleon which began as a small group in his kitchen and is now a nationally recognized NYC vocal ensemble. Vince has also been engaged in teaching at the high school and college levels.

If you research Vince Peterson, you will also learn that over the years, he has been responsible for presenting over 400 premieres of new choral and theater music, and has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The San Francisco Classical Voice*, and *The New York Concert Review*, among other publications. He is a recipient of the ASCAP/ Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming and the Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal by Chorus America, an award he shares with only 20 other choral musicians in the United States. An extraordinary arranger, Vince has also received commissions from the Grammy Award-winning ensemble Chanticleer, with over half a million views of his work on YouTube.

In the years following 2019, a variety of circumstances, coupled with the pandemic, brought new dimensions to Vince's life and career. He began substituting for our previous organist, Chris Reilly, and when Chris left for another position, Vince became full-time, feeling very strongly that



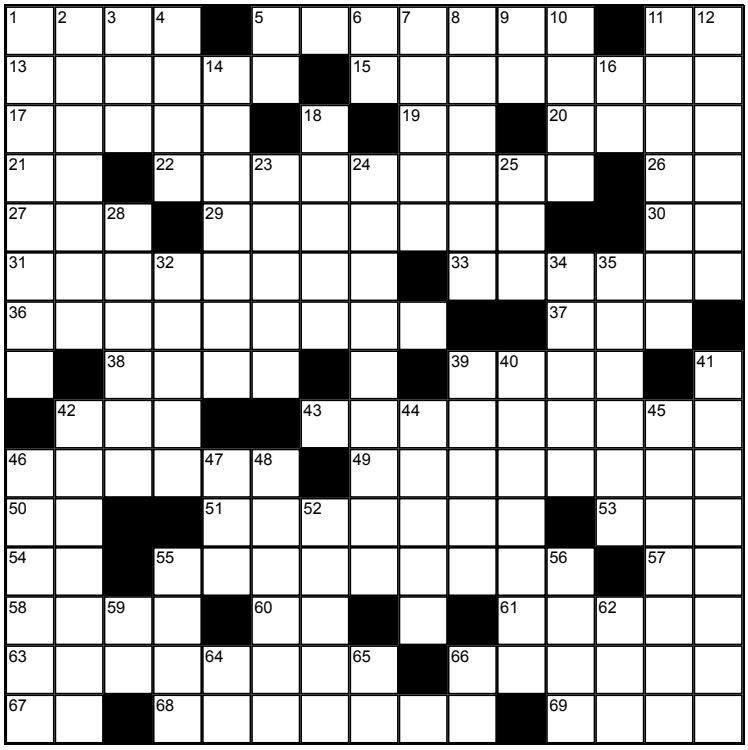
God was calling him to us. He also received a call from Maryknoll, and now provides music for their liturgies, managing to juggle it all, even during busy days such as the Paschal Triduum. On the professional level, he completed his Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in choral music from Shenandoah University in Virginia, writing his dissertation on Conrad Susa who was his composition teacher in San Francisco, and another of his mentors.

Vince is a musician par excellence, but to him, "Music is the vehicle of how I minister. Even in the secular world, I view everything I do as ministry." Not surprisingly, *The Brooklyn Eagle* has called Vince's music "a stunning symphony of the spiritual and secular." And from his first day with us in January 2020, Vince found it natural to develop personal relationships with the sisters, even accompanying them on their journey towards death. And each Sunday, "It feels like I'm going to visit family, to all my aunts to check on them." Vince had the piano in our chapel moved to its current place because "Mass is conversational between me and the sisters." And we are so grateful to be part of that conversation!

Joanne Safian, RSHM

HIGHLIGHTS PUZZLE: BIBLICAL SOUNDALIKES

* Themed clues sound like biblical figures. Answers are posted at: **www.rshm-east.org/category/newsletter**



Across

1 *Useful for walking with a wounded leg
5 Foolish
11 Capone or Gore
13 Mysterious
15 True
17 Collection
19 High train
20 "All roads lead to_____"
21 Artificial Intelligence, abbr.
22 Necessary
26 Emergency Rm.
27 Private first-class?
29 Place to enjoy margarita go-withs
30 Concerning
31 United Airlines flight, briefly
33 Agreement
36 Low-life canned slippery fish, briefly
37 "Once in love with____"
38 They take more than their share
39 Downright no good, abbr.
42 Lions gather in one
43 One who scans social security numbers
46 Is aware of
49 Daylight plants
50 Where _____?
51 One who avoids kissing on the lips
53 *_____Bon Jovi
54 Long Island, abbr.
55 New wristband for swimming
57 Touchdown, abbr.
58 Part of one's foot
60 Alcoholics Anonymous, abbr.
61 Region of ancient Greece located on the western shore of what is modern-day Turkey
63 Promise of loyalty to American Express, briefly
66 United Nations Artificial Intelligence Compact Disc, abbr.
67 Multiple Sclerosis, abbr.
68 Caught on to
69 Aunts in Madrid

Down

1 Slingshot
2 Getting there
3 Non-commissioned officer, abbr.
4 *Icicles are hanging from the ____
5 Opposite direction from SW
6 Tennessee, abbr.
7 Wives on East Timor Bases, abbr.
8 In Long Island Alcoholics Anonymous, briefly
9 South Ferry, abbr.
10 British noble
11 Equally jolly
12 Gave an evil look
14 Making a cozy home
16 _____ and behold!
18 Cafe de _____
23 Wise ones
24 Greater
25 *Shape of a rainbow
28 Pair of conditional prepositions
32 Daniel stood bravely in their den
34 Suez, for one
35 Oh my goodness, Dept. of Justice, briefly
39 Web of physicians, briefly
40 Repeated verse of a song
41 Advertisements for labeled products, briefly
42 Longs for
44 Heated in the microwave
45 Sexually arousing materials
46 Arabic word for peace
47 __ friendly, or good for the environment
48 Schools of fish on the move
52 Delight
55 Just made it!
56 One like Tom Brady, briefly
59 _ _ O, chief financial officer
62 Nero the Second, briefly
64 In cardiology, aortic insufficiency, abbr.
65 Three ft.
66 Out of bed

Bea McMahon, RSHM

RSHM Highlights is a production of the Communications and Advancement Office of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Eastern America.
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