



No. 332 July 7, 2017

# “Just Us”

News & Notes from Sisters of St. Joseph  
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## "New York is Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Right to Vote— Rochester is Celebrating with a VoteTilla Parade on July 22

Many activities will highlight the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Womens' right to Vote in NYS. The Susan B. Anthony House is sponsoring a week-long series of events that include a flotilla of packet boats down the Erie Canal traveling from Seneca Falls the week of July 16—21 which will commemorate Susan B.'s arrival to Rochester by packet boat .

On Saturday July 22 there will be a parade sponsored by the Susan B. Anthony House commemorating "**Women Like Her...**" who had the courage to press for women's right to vote. The Suffragist movement found its roots in Central New York through Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others who worked tirelessly for women's rights. To see more about the events planned, read the D & C article: <http://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/lifestyle/2017/06/16/joan-osborne-headlines-rochester-womens-suffrage-festival-parcel-5/403>

As Sisters of St. Joseph our participation in the Voting Rights movement began in Selma, Alabama where African American Voters were routinely denied voting privileges and were forced to take difficult tests to prove they were knowledgeable about the workings of the government and US Constitution.

The Sisters were subject to the same questions as African Americans because they taught them in school and nursed them at Good Samaritan Hospital.

Friday, July 7, 2017

**"Love is what we were born with. Fear is what we learned here."** - —[Erich Fromm](#)

## Voter Registration in Selma, Alabama 1964

Selma, Alabama 1964: Voter registration in Dallas County took place on the first and third Mondays of each month, between 8 am and 4 pm. Two Sisters (SSJs) went to register at 9 am in the morning. There were 20 people in line. Three of them were African-American. Another African-American woman who worked as a secretary at the hospital accompanied them. It was the fourth time she had tried to register. The line moved slowly. At noon time the registrar said that the office was closed until 2pm for lunch. Those in line were not given numbers according to where they were so they all waited in line until the office re-opened. When the Sisters finally got into the office they were asked to fill in a form with 22 questions regarding name, occupation, residence and loyalty to the Constitution of the United States and Alabama, etc. Individually they were asked how many Representatives from Alabama served in the House of Representatives. Another question asked about the willingness to bear arms for the country, and the Sister replied that as a religious she would not.

As they left at 3 pm that afternoon, the Sisters were told that they would hear in three weeks if they had passed the test.

## ***Taken from the Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph, April 6, 1964***

Postscript: Sister Mary Paul Gek, was the Principal of the School in Selma. She discovered the Sisters had only been given permission to vote in federal elections. She went back to the registrar and demanded the form that would give the Sisters the right to vote in local elections as well.

Barbara Lum. SSJ

**Voting Rights Issues Today—taken from the ACLU website:** <https://www.aclu.org/issues/voting-rights>

Voting continues to be a subject of interest. Since 1965, the Voting Rights Act (VRA) has protected minority voters at the polls. In June 2013, in a huge blow to democracy, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the coverage formula used for Section 5 of the VRA, which required jurisdictions with significant histories of voter discrimination to "pre-clear" any new voting practices or procedures, i.e., get federal approval from the Department of Justice, and show that they do not have a discriminatory purpose or effect. This 5-4 decision did not strike down section 5 of the Voting Rights Act but instead gave Congress the responsibility to devise a new formula.

The bipartisan Voting Rights Advancement Act (Advancement Act) has been introduced in the both the Senate (S. 1659) and the House (H.R. 2867). The Advancement Act responds to the Court's directive and provides key protections against voting discrimination to compensate for the loss of the formula under which states are covered by the preclearance requirement.

Another issue which continues to plague elections is the gerrymandering of districts which allows one political party to have preference over another or one district to limit representation by a particular group, e.g. African Americans.

States have different rules re. voter registration which also complicate how and when citizens are allowed to register.

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**Attachment with this Just Us:**

Beyond 100 Days of Prayer is created by the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Interest Group of the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph. Designed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange. Flyer and social media posts are available for download at [csjorange.org/ministries/justice-center/resources](http://csjorange.org/ministries/justice-center/resources).

**SSJ Website** [www.ssjrochester.org/](http://www.ssjrochester.org/)  
and links to Facebook!



**Find us on Facebook:** [facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester](https://www.facebook.com/SistersofSaintJosephofRochester)  
(CTRL & Click)

**Brazil link: Copy & Paste:**  
<http://www.isjrochester.com.br>

## **Securing Our Future in the Midst of Climate Change**

The Catholic Climate Covenant recently hosted a webinar that addressed the impact of climate change on national security with two speakers: a representative from CRS (Catholic Relief Services), Eric Garduno, Senior Policy and Legislative Specialist who spoke about the work of the agency in third world countries with farmers to mitigate the effects of climate change by teaching farmers new methods to use in growing crops, and US General Brigadier General Gerald Galloway, USA (Ret) and Advisory Board member of the Climate and Security Institute who spoke about the military's concerns regarding climate change and its impact on training of troops to work under new climate conditions. Changing climate conditions influence the health and well-being of persons around the world; their ability to grow food, to have access to clean water, and to stay in their own environment. Climate change challenges the military in developing security measures in the various countries around the world where the US provides a military presence. Poverty and political instability are affected by climate change.

<http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/securing-our-future-in-the-midst-of-climate-change> (Copy and Paste into Browser)

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**Gandhi Institute Happening  
A Family –Friendly Event  
Art Shakedown**

This is interactive art event involving music, mural painting, and meditation.

Fri. July 14: 3:00-7:00PM  
Tay House Lodge at Cobb's Hill Park