

Camille D'Arienzo to speak on the power of forgiveness

SUSAN BLOOM
CORRESPONDENT

On Wednesday, Oct. 19, Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer in Watchung will welcome Sister Camille D'Arienzo, RSM, to present on "Stories of Forgiveness in an Unforgiving World" at the complex's Mercy Hall.

The unique perspectives to be shared by the speaker, author, and radio personality are part of an annual speaker series sponsored by the House of Prayer, a spiritual center dedicated to nurturing adult spiritual growth in an atmosphere of hospitality and prayer which is currently celebrating its 40th anniversary.

A native of New York City who received her doctorate in communications from the University of Michigan and taught at Brooklyn College for 20 years, D'Arienzo is a writer, public speaker, community development liaison, and member of the Mid-Atlantic Community of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

She has interviewed members of the Catholic Church about how their faith has affected them for her column in the National Catholic Reporter since 2011. A past president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, D'Arienzo has also been a religion commentator for 1010 WINS radio for 43 years and is the author and narrator of the 'Stories of Forgiveness' audio book.

"One of the hardest things for people to do is to extend forgiveness when they've been hurt or to forgive themselves," D'Arienzo said, "but forgiveness is critical because it enables you to let go of memories that tether you to hurt and take time away from the present and future. While forgiveness is a process that can't be prescribed or ordered, it can be learned from others," she added, "especially those who have come through difficult experiences. During my presentation, I'll be sharing stories of people who have not only survived but thrived following great suffering and, through their process, learned to be more understanding of and helpful to others," she said.



KEITH MUCCILLI

The Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer in Mountainside celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2016. From left, Sister Eileen Smith, RSM, director of the house, Sister Mary Jo Kearns, RSM, and Sister Laura Arvin, OP, co-directors, pose in front of the building on Aug. 24.

"As Pope Francis reminds us, our world is in great need of reconciliation and mercy and Sister Camille's expertise and experience is so appropriate and timely during this Jubilee Year of Mercy," said Sister Eileen Smith, director of the House of Prayer. "She's an engaging speaker who has the gift of story-telling, making her message understandable and relatable to everyone. The topic of forgiveness is universal and we're confident that everyone has life experience that will connect with her message."

"Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer has a long history of helping people to be more merciful through the broad range of spiritual and academic tools they offer," said D'Arienzo, who looks forward to her appearance at the House of Prayer. "I hope my words will help people un-

derstand that God's love is absolute and that the power of forgiveness is liberating."

Tickets to D'Arienzo's appearance on Oct. 19 are \$25.

Smith also invites the community to enjoy the House of Prayer's newly renovated facilities and its ongoing programs, as well as remaining anniversary events through December. These include a special Mass for the Deceased Friends and Benefactors of the House of Prayer on Nov. 6, a Christmas Cocktail and Benefit on Dec. 4, and an Advent/Christmas 'Come to the Stable' Day Prayer Ritual and Tree Lighting/Blessing on Dec. 18.

For more information call 908-753-2091 or go to www.msmhope.org.



"One of the hardest things for people to do is to extend forgiveness when they've been hurt or to forgive themselves."

SISTER CAMILLE D'ARIENZO, RSM