

Soundings ^{update}

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Online Update
Volume 36.1.8
February 19, 2014

Furthering Our CSJ Mission in New Mexico — by Mary Ellen O'Connell, CSJ



Yes, it is cold in New Mexico in the winter, but the hearts and welcome that our Sisters and associates always extend is so warm. After reflecting on our beginnings in LePuy, Lyons and St. Louis, associates and sisters shared ways in which they are furthering the mission and spirit of the Sisters of St. Joseph in their everyday lives. Although each associate group in Albuquerque, Santa Rosa and Clovis is different, openness to God's call, zeal for the Gospel message, and commitment to the Sisters of St Joseph bind them all together. We reflected on the shared Vision and Directional Statements that closely join Boston and New Mexico associates.



We prayed in the words of Isaiah (60:1), "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." My trip to New Mexico followed shortly after the celebration of the New Life of the Baptism of Jesus and the New Light that we share because of the Epiphany. Truly, they have received that life and light and strive to share it each day.

Hopefully, you will recognize a couple of these associates who have come to Boston over the past few years. We continue to build relationships with our New Mexico sisters and brothers.



PICTURED TOP TO BOTTOM: Ann Kaufmann, CSJ, pictured with the associates from Santa Rosa; Rose Agnes Urban, CSJ; and several of the associates in Albuquerque during a recent gathering.



Volunteers in Mission June 21-28, 2014

For the past few years our *Volunteers in Mission* experience has been a wonderful opportunity for those who participated.

Volunteers in Mission 2014, is scheduled for the week of June 21-28, 2014.

"Our time together consists of shared prayer, community, and service with people who are poor".

Please consider...more details will be coming..

Accompaniment and Solidarity: Observers at El Salvador's Elections— by Judy Swett, CSJA



The invitation began in October 2012, when I was one of four associates and sisters whose name was drawn to represent the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph at SHARE El Salvador's delegation honoring women religious. In December 2012, Mary Rita Weschler, CSJA, Lois Connors, CSJ, Claire Morrissey, CSJ, and I joined the SHARE delegation and were part of a profound opportunity of solidarity and accompaniment with the people of El Salvador.

But the experience did not end there. In the spring of 2013, several associates and sisters hosted a *Truth and Justice* group touring the country to raise awareness and strengthen solidarity between the United States and El Salvador. We assisted them in visiting local schools, colleges, and churches to share their story. So, when the invitation came to serve as observers at El Salvador's 2014 national election, it was a natural next step. Kathy Tighe, CSJA, who had assisted in hosting the group last spring, also accepted the invitation.

What grew out of this invitation to observe the election was humbling. Kathy and I were privileged to witness the passion and deep desire for growing a democracy that our long-suffering Salvadoran sisters and brothers demonstrated. Our role as international observers was to ensure there was no tampering, so the people could achieve a free, transparent and fair election. Together with over 4,000 International and Salvadoran observers, we were well trained and accredited by the TSE (Supreme Electoral Tribunal) to monitor and document voting irregularities.

Prior to and during the Salvador Civil War elections, were not representative of the people. A turnaround began in 1992 when the UN, along with US Representative Joe Moakley, helped broker Peace Accords between the FMLN (the guerilla group aligned with the disenfranchised) and the far-right wing Arena party that had been running the country. FMLN evolved into a political party aligned with the people; the ARENA party of the wealthy continued to run the country until 2009. Mauricio Funes became the first FMLN leader to be elected as President. Since becoming president, Funes has implanted a number of social reforms.

As fate would have it, Salvador requires a 50%-plus one to elect a president. So a run-off election will take place on March 9th. We are profoundly grateful to the hospitable people of El Salvador, SHARE, the TSE, the neutrality of the US for the transparent election process that we observed. And the story continues. When Eva Arnot, CSJA, heard about the elections, she welcomed the invitation to travel to El Salvador for the run-off election in March. In true CSJ spirit, the circle of solidarity and accompaniment continues to widen.

Dates to Remember

- FEB. 19, WED., 5:30PM – MOTHERHOUSE LITURGY – All welcome
- FEB. 24, MON., 6:30-8:00PM – EVOLVING CONSCIOUSNESS CONVERSATION
– Motherhouse Chapel — All welcome
- FEB. 27, THURS., 5:30PM – MOTHERHOUSE LITURGY – All welcome
- MARCH 2, SUN., 10:00AM – MOTHERHOUSE LITURGY – All welcome
- MARCH 8, SAT., 9:30AM — ASSOCIATE GATHERING — Motherhouse Brighton
[snow date: Sunday, March 9]
- MARCH 8-14 NATIONAL CATHOLIC SISTERS WEEK
- MARCH 9, SUN., 10:00AM – MOTHERHOUSE LITURGY – All welcome
- MARCH 15, SAT., 9:30AM-2:30PM
— CONGREGATION GATHERING — STEWARDSHIP AND FUTURE PLANNING FOR CSJS
– Details to follow.
- MARCH 19, WED., 7:00PM — ST. JOSEPH DAY LITURGY
— Motherhouse — Details to follow
- MARCH 20, THURS., 7:00PM — TAIZÉ PRAYER — Motherhouse — All Welcome
- MARCH 23, SUN., 10:00AM – MOTHERHOUSE LITURGY – All welcome

PICTURED TOP TO BOTTOM: Judy Swett, CSJA, is pictured in an El Salvadoran newspaper while observing the elections; Judy and Kathy Tighe, CSJA, with Madre Guadalupe; El Salvadoran voters at the polls; Judy with Abel Nunez, Executive Director of the Central American Resource Center in Washington, DC, as they were leaving for press conference at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador.