

update Soundings

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Enflaming the Charism . . . the Fire Grows . . . CSSJs of the Future

An engaged spirit and enthusiastic energy was palpable among participants as sisters under the age of 62 from the Atlantic Region of the Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph gathered at Hampton Bay, NY from November 21-23, 2014. Entitled *"Enflaming the Charism . . . the Fire Grows . . . CSSJs of the Future,"* this gathering was a time to renew old friendships and make new acquaintances. It was a time to learn about initiatives around Land Ethics in relation to properties owned by CSSJs; to learn about Philadelphia's Mission Corps programs and their vocation programs, Brentwood's St. Joseph Volunteer program, and to share Boston's VIM program. Each of these programs offers the opportunity for some networking and collaboration.



Mary Johnson, SND, shared data from her sociological study of women religious in the United States and offered great hope to all gathered as she explained the trends in vocations and generational differences between different age cohorts. She spoke of the shifting demographics of Catholics in the country and the challenges that are there for us in light of her results.

"The significance of Mary Johnson's input cannot be overstated," commented Jeanmarie Gribaudo, CSJ, "She called us to own our religious life in deeper ways and pointed out the importance of owning the particularity of that call." Rosemary Brennan, CSJ, who participated as our leadership representative, remarked, "Our day with Mary Johnson, SND was enlightening, clarifying, challenging and hope-filled."

Rosemary Brennan, CSJ, a leadership representative and part of the group who organized this event, explains, "The desire on the part of CSSJ Leadership in the Atlantic Region is to provide those age 62 and under with time, space, opportunity, and encouragement to dream and plan for the religious life of the present and the future."

Comments from other Boston CSJs who participated in this weekend offer a sense of the energy that characterized the gathering:

"I was grateful to gather with other CSSJ's committed to the Gospel and working for justice. The questions linger, but I feel that there is a new road or bridge linking the past and the future of religious life, and I want to be part of this new walkway." – Barbara McHugh, CSJ

"To be surrounded by CSSJ's who are your peers in age is a special blessing..." – Jeanmarie Gribaudo, CSJ

"It was wonderful to reconnect with friends and to have great conversation with new friends. It does not matter what community we are from; here in this place we were all one. Because what we all wanted is to further the mission of the CSJs in the future, the energy level accelerated when we started discussing what can we do together. Our dreams as members of the CSSJ Atlantic Region are the same. Whether we originate in Winslow, Boston, Springfield, West Hartford, Brentwood, Philadelphia, or St. Augustine, widening our circle for the dear neighbor for relationship is the heart of who we are." – Pat Quinn, CSJ

"During our time in the Hamptons we acknowledged that we are dying and rising simultaneously. With God's grace, we are moving together toward HOPE, joining hands and hearts to Wake up the world." – Betsy Conway, CSJ

"It was a time to dream and share around the charism of the CSSJs and to share hopes and dreams. I love this quote which I heard on a radio program: 'We are standing on a threshold where the old has passed away and the new hasn't quite arrived.' We stand hopeful, searching for the light to guide us.' This gathering was one of those threshold moments." — Anna Edge, CSJ

As the weekend drew to a close the group vowed to meet again to reconnect and strengthen our bonds in the CSSJ family 



PICTURED ABOVE: Logos for the congregations in the Atlantic Region of the CSSJ Federation, Left to Right: St. Augustine, Brentwood, Springfield, Chambery-West Hartford, Philadelphia, Boston, Lyon-Winslow; Boston CSJ participants in the weekend: Sisters Anna Edge, Rosemary Brennan, Betsy Conway, Pat Quinn, Barbara McHugh, and Jeanmarie Gribaudo; Barbara and Betsy during a table sharing.

THREE CSJS HONORED WITH CHEVERUS AWARD MEDAL

For Quiet and Often Unrecognized Service

Among the recipients of this year's Cheverus Award Medal were Pat Boyle, CSJ, Mary Joan Lofgren, CSJ, and Peggy Sullivan, CSJ. At the November 23 vespers prayer service at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross to present the awards, Cardinal Seán said, "Without the work of dedicated men and women like this year's 116 Cheverus Award Medal recipients, the mission of the Archdiocese of Boston would grind to a halt." First presented in 2008 at the celebration to mark the conclusion of the archdiocese's bicentennial year, the award is presented each year on the Solemnity of Christ the King to recognize dedicated service to the Church and God's people, with an emphasis on those who serve in a quiet and often otherwise unrecognized fashion. ☞



PICTURED ABOVE Pat Boyle, CSJ, Mary Joan Lofgren, CSJ, Peggy Sullivan, CSJ after receiving the Cheverus Award; At Right: Pat Boyle, CSJ, receives the award from Cardinal Seán

We Remember & Celebrate the Women of El Salvador



On December 2, 2014, well over 100 sisters, associates, and friends from throughout the Boston area gathered once again to honor the memory of the Churchwomen martyred in El Salvador in 1980. During the celebration, Helen Sullivan, CSJ, reminded us that, "This evening we gather here in time and space, but we connect with them regardless of time... No longer are they just those young, brave, inspired holy women; they are something more – the more. And so,

they are with us this evening – a dynamic presence – available to us now, or whenever we think of them and hold them in our hearts. May our prayer this evening be a conscious welcoming of these five women into our midst – here in this chapel – and may we thoroughly enjoy their presence! "

We also gathered to support the ongoing work of SHARE El Salvador through a free will offering from participants. One of the ways SHARE fulfills this mission is by inviting delegations of different groups of people to El Salvador. The delegations have provided a unique opportunity to accompany Salvadorans as they remember their past and confront current struggles. During the past decade, seven Sisters of St. Joseph and four CSJ Associates have been part of these delegations.

In the words of Jon Sobrino, SJ, "Christ is present here in the person of these women. He is Maura, Ita, Carla, Dorothy, and Jean. But He is risen, too, in these same women, and he keeps the hope of liberation alive... Yes, their deaths fill us with sorrow and indignation. And yet, our last word must be: Thank you. In Maura, Ita, Carla, Dorothy, and Jean, God has visited El Salvador." Thirty-four years ago their passing away seemed utter destruction, but they are in peace. Eternal peace. ☞

PICTURED AT LEFT—TOP TO BOTTOM: Ann McNeil, CSJ, leads danced prayer to *Song for Martyrs*; Helen Sullivan, CSJ, leads the assembly in prayer; a view of the assembly with posters of the U.S. Churchwomen martyred in El Salvador in 1980.

Dates to Remember

DEC. 11, THURS., 11:30 AM-1:00PM & 4:00-5:15PM DEAR NEIGHBOR GIFTS CHRISTMAS SALE

DEC. 11, THURS., 5:30PM — Motherhouse Liturgy — all welcome

DEC. 13, SAT. 1:30-3:30PM DEAR NEIGHBOR GIFTS CHRISTMAS SALE

DEC. 13, SAT. 2:00-4:00PM ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

FOLLOWED BY LITURGY FOR THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DEC. 14, SUN., 9:30 AM — SUNDAY LITURGY, Fontbonne Convent, Milton — all welcome

DEC. 17, WED., 5:30PM — MOTHERHOUSE LITURGY — all welcome

DEC. 18, THURS., 7:00PM —TAIZÉ PRAYER — Motherhouse — all welcome

DEC. 21, SUN., 9:30 AM— SUNDAY LITURGY, Fontbonne Convent, Milton — all welcome

DEC. 24, WED., 7:00PM — CHRISTMAS EVE LITURGY, Fontbonne Convent, Milton — all welcome

DEC. 24, TUES., 7:00PM — CHRISTMAS EVE LITURGY, Motherhouse — All welcome

DEC. 28, SUN., 9:30 AM— SUNDAY LITURGY, Fontbonne Convent, Milton — all welcome

JAN 11, SUN., 1:00-2:30PM — PRAYER VIGIL FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY — Motherhouse — all welcome

"Keep an ever free heart..."

Maxims of the Little Institute #53

SISTER MARGARET (MARGO) SHEA, CSJ

Sister Thomas Mary, CSJ

Date of Birth: March 26, 1936

Date of Death: November 25, 2014

In the 61st year of her Religious Life.

MEMBERSHIP: 319