connecting and soundings have become…

Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston

SPRING / SUMMER 2016 ♦ VOL. 1 ♦ NO. 2

Features:

Laudato Si’: A Journey to Newness
A Journey of Accompaniment, Solidarity, and Hope
Pilgrimage: So Dependent on God, and So Free
Be Leaders from Where You Stand

...Can we welcome the new the unexpected the challenging?
enflamed

with the compassion of God,
we, Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston,
women of the Church, rooted in the Gospel,
together with our Associates
are impelled by the active, inclusive love of God to:
deepen our relationship with God
and the dear neighbor without distinction;
foster prophetic communion;
and journey into the future
with Sisters of St. Joseph and Associates,
throughout the world
and with all God’s Creation.

We, Sisters of St. Joseph, are women receptive to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit of Love. Together with our associates we are called to live in right relationship with all creation. We are a community of women whose mission is to realize the prayer of Christ that all may be one. In community and prayerful contemplation, we listen to this Spirit and move always toward profound love of God and love of neighbor without distinction.

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You show me the road to life: boundless joy at your side forever!" Psalm 16 alludes to the fact that life is a journey, one of exploring, moving on and re-settling but always with the assurance of God’s presence by our side.

As someone who enjoys traveling, I have come to appreciate there are phases to the planning of any journey. Initially curiosity and wonderment help to widen the prospective possibilities, research and inquiry broadens and educates about the choices and anticipation holds the adventuresome spirit until departure. On occasion, a healthy dose of doubt emerges to challenge expectations and encourage perspective on the scope of the journey to be taken.

For the past two years we, the Sisters of St. Joseph, have been engaged in the journey of Congregation planning. This has led us to contemplate and value the present, commit ourselves to the continuing task of Choosing Life as we realistically and hopefully plan for our future.

We began our planning in the Year of Consecrated Life when Pope Francis passionately encouraged us to continue on our journey, with rapid and joyful steps: “led by the Spirit never unyielding, never closed, always open to the voice of God that speaks, that opens, that leads us and invites us to go toward the horizon.”

Now we are implementing our chosen Directions and Pathways on Mission, Membership and Relationships as well as Community Life in the Year of Mercy. During this jubilee year, Pope Francis encourages the Church to “echo the word of God that resounds strong and clear as a message and sign of pardon, strength, aid, and love. May she never tire of extending mercy, and be ever patient in offering compassion and comfort.”

Though many of our personal and Congregation journeys take place and are lived out in the wider external circles of life, Thomas Merton reminds us that, “Our real journey is interior: it is a matter of growth, deepening, and of even greater surrender to the creative action of love and grace in our own hearts.”

As Sisters of St. Joseph, our hope is always to be curious about our potential possibilities, while researching well our choices as we cultivate our enthusiasm and anticipate the next journey. We do this as we continue toward the horizon to which God is inviting us while extending God’s mercy to the dear neighbor along the way.

― Pope Francis, Homily at St. Peter’s Basilica

1 Pope Francis, Homily at St. Peter’s Basilica, 18th World Day for Consecrated Life, 2/2/14
2 Pope Francis, Misericordiae Vultus, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Year of Mercy, 4/11/2015, para. 25
Journey is a fitting theme for our second issue of the MORE…. The word dates from the 12th century and is described both as traveling one's path in life as well as a day's work. Journey, therefore, is much more than the act of getting from one place to another. It spans the sacred and the mundane; our life-long quest and the day-to-day happenings of our lives. Most importantly, all journey is about both inner and outer exploration.

From Adam and Eve to the Emmaus story, our Hebrew and Christian Scriptures are replete with journeys – all rich stories of inner transformation and travel to uncharted places. From our humble beginnings in Le Puy, France, to the cultural and spiritual shift in consciousness that now calls us to embrace an unknown future, our CSSJ journey has been rooted in the profound love of God while open to all the works of which women are capable – open to the More… of being and acting as the Community of the Great Love of God.

In a recent book about the journey within, Christine Valters Painter asks, “Is there a greater adventure than plunging into our own depths and uncovering what the mystics have told us for centuries: the heart of God beating within our own?” She then comments, “Journeys call us across borders. …The ancient Celts called these ‘thin places’ where heaven and earth came close.”

All journeys hold the potential of being life-changing experiences. From a pilgrimage, an immersion retreat, a trip to ancestral roots, the move to a new home, or a change of ministry, to the seemingly ordinary moments of daily work, time with family and friends, retreats, vacations, medical appointments, and even errands, the journey within continually calls us to the More…. This is not about doing more but of continually opening ourselves and being more wherever we find ourselves.

May the stories in this issue of the MORE… invite you to reflect on your own journey. May your journey be an ever-widening call to the MORE… to the center of your soul and outward once again.

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2 Règlements of the Daughters of St. Joseph, circa 1650, edition printed at Villa Maria College, Erie, PA, 1977, pg. 6
3 Christine Valters Painter, The Soul of a Pilgrim: Eight Practices for the Journey Within, Sorin Books, Notre Dame, IN, 2015, pg. 4
Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring edition of the MORE…. Our theme this Spring is “Journey.”

I welcome this opportunity to thank you for linking your life journey with those of the Sisters of St. Joseph through your generous support! The roadmaps for our sisters’ journeys have taken them through schools, detention centers, prisons, shelters for abused women, hospitals, nursing homes, literacy programs, retreat centers, parishes, diocesan offices, and many more places around the country and the world, always led by the call to serve the “dear neighbor without distinction” wherever there is need. The path may take several turns during a sister’s lifetime but it continues well into ordinary retirement years and beyond because, even as a sister’s body may slow down, she continues to do God’s work through a ministry of prayer. Your support makes these journeys possible. Thank you!

I am also grateful to you for remembering the journeys of your friends and families – their birthdays and anniversaries, their health and wellness and other milestones, through our card program. I am particularly touched by the number of you who remember the final journey of your loved ones with memorial cards and in lieu of flowers gifts. Thank you!

As is our custom each spring, we list all those who have been honored or remembered by you. You will find the list of tributes sent between January 1, 2015, and December 31, 2015, on our website www.csjboston.org.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Robert (Bob) Tamulis. Bob has joined our team as Mission Advancement Coordinator and is looking forward to getting to know you, our donors, and our friends.

Thank you and Happy Spring,
Carol Mack

Robert (Bob) Tamulis

Visit www.csjboston.org to view more photos and a video from our annual “Living the Dream Dinner 2016.” You can always find the latest news about the sisters, digital versions of our publications, inspiration, and, of course, make an online gift if you should choose.
Like all stages of our lives, childhood is a journey. In fact, it is the most important journey of our lives, setting in place how each of us comes to view the bigger, broader world of adulthood. It is on this journey that we first experience wonder, anticipation and friendship. And for too many children, it is on this journey that they will first experience danger, fear, and harsh realities. They will be forced to make hard choices where roads diverge.

In June 2015, Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy received a Unity and Non-Violence grant from Sisters of St. Joseph, Boston. That grant was used for financial assistance for families who wanted to enroll their children in our summer program. In plainer terms, the generosity of the Sisters of St. Joseph made a direct and personal impact on the lives of seven children from Mattapan.

Our summer program provides educational, cultural and athletic opportunities for more than 100 children from Boston’s poorest neighborhoods. During the eight-week program, they are sheltered from the frequent violence found on the streets of their neighborhoods.

Perhaps a more important reality is that through the program, these children learn about music, art, history, science as well as the more traditional activities of summer camp where they learn the value of collaboration and competition. During the summer, these children also have opportunities to see broader horizons and to draw their own maps for future journeys that might include college, careers, and aspirations.

The seven children who attended the program last summer thanks to the Sisters of St. Joseph ranged in age from 7 to 14. All were from single-mother households. As is true of most of the families in Mattapan, these families are of Haitian descent and some are first-generation American citizens. They have already experienced strenuous journeys in their lives. We are deeply grateful to the Sisters of St. Joseph for helping us to provide safe havens and nourishments – for the body, mind, and soul – to take them on their way again.

I took the one less traveled by...And that has made all the difference.

— Robert Frost
I have to say at the outset that I remember no encyclical that has gotten such a hold on me, on our Sisters and Associates and all God’s people. No other encyclical has caught fire as this one addressing our COMMON HOME. My hope in this brief article is merely to whet your appetite and entice you to read and reflect on the challenges offered.

Beginning with the Introduction and throughout the six chapters there is the claim that this is a “climate change” document aimed at the heart. This is a document that speaks to all of us who claim relationship is at the heart of mission – a mission intended for every dear neighbor, without distinction. Francis is speaking of all Creation as one. You can’t miss it when he calls for an end of dualism, no us and them. “Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a setting in which we live. We are part of nature…” Compelling words indeed!

The central question that Pope Francis poses is, “What is happening to our Common Home?” There is passion in his words when he lists the critical issues that threaten the depleting of nature and the survival of our race. As he breaks open his focus on choosing for the Common Good, his stretch extends beyond isolated issues or piecemeal solutions. Instead he encourages us to struggle with deeper issues, many of which we struggled with in philosophy class. He repeats them for our further reflection but with a new lens and a large heart.

In his questions, Francis is getting at the meaning of our earthly journey and our accountability for the present imbalance. Like the best of teachers, in the last two chapters he offers us multiple and diverse responses.

Toward the end of the encyclical, Francis brings us back to center, to our hearts and the call to conversion. He writes about developing attitudes and practices that foster a new lens and sees the Sacred in the whole, everywhere and in everyone. He connects concern for creation with growing faith in the mystery within it.

Recently, I read similar but slightly different words credited to Marcel Proust: “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes but in having new eyes.” His words started me on this journey to newness. Each morning, upon awakening, I pause before putting on my glasses and make the intention to see differently, to be different, to live differently in this wondrous place we call our Common Home.

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1 Pope Francis, Laudato Si’, On Care for Earth Our Common Home, #139, May 24, 2015
2 Based on Marcel Proust, In Search of Lost Time, Chapter 2, The Prisoner, “The only true voyage of discovery, the only fountain of Eternal Youth, would be not to visit strange lands but to possess other eyes, to behold the universe through the eyes of another…” 1923

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Laudato Si’: A Journey to Newness

By Maryann Enright, CSJ

Ten Things You Want to Know About Laudato Si’

♦ It is written in a language of faith.
♦ There is a disproportionate impact of climate change on the poor.
♦ The Encyclical opposes reliance only on technology before thinking of impact.
♦ Laudato Si’ is now added to the Church’s social teaching.
♦ It is grounded in Scripture – especially Chapter 2.
♦ Everything is connected. We are part of nature.
♦ It builds on Church teaching and contemporary science.
♦ It critiques those who ignore the effects of climate change.
♦ The Encyclical calls everyone into dialogue about our common home.
♦ It calls everyone to a new way of looking at nature (as a subject rather than an object).
On December 2, 1980, four US missionary women were raped and killed by the Salvadoran National Guard for accompanying the people of El Salvador, especially the poor, and for questioning U.S. military aid and foreign policy. In December 2015, five Boston CSJs and two associates joined a SHARE El Salvador delegation of 116 people who traveled to El Salvador to commemorate this anniversary. The delegation, co-sponsored by the SHARE El Salvador and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, the site of the murders, met with Salvadoran leaders and walked in accompaniment with the people of El Salvador as they cry out for action. In these pages, we share brief reflections on this profound experience.

"The Cathedral in San Salvador, the gravesites of the Salvadoran martyrs, the towns where they ministered, the churches with monuments in their memory, the site of the martyrdom of seven Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter, and the Wall of Memory – these places are sacred." Mary Ellen O’Connell, CSJ

"As we walked up a rocky road to the village, lines of children greeted us singing a welcome and carrying homemade lanterns which they presented to us. Tears of sadness and happiness welled up within us – Sad that these people had been through so much pain, sad for the loss of the Maryknoll sisters whom they dearly loved – and happy at the show of love and welcome they extended to us." Mary Black, CSJ

"I was profoundly moved by the Boston delegates, LCWR, and the SHARE Foundation. As we move forward it is important to ask the Salvadoran government and prosecutors to open this case, so that the masterminds of this crime do not walk free, with impunity." Claire White, daughter of former Ambassador to El Salvador, Robert E. White

"Seeing the graphic pictures of what took place, I wondered how can such evil exist in our world. What happens to people that such atrocities can take place?" Carlotta Gilarde, CSJ

"I was profoundly moved by how the communities we visited were so like the early Christians living out the Gospel. I also want to praise the SHARE Foundation, its mission, leaders, and young staff." Mary Alice Stanton, St. Ignatius Parish, Chestnut Hill

"In El Salvador I witnessed LCWR’s commitment to justice." Vincent Stanton, St. Ignatius Parish, Chestnut Hill

Sister Elena, a Sister of St. Joseph of Orange, CA, in a skit with the youth of Nueva Esperanza
Eight years ago, my Arise group reflected on Ita Ford’s words to her niece. ‘I hope you come to find that which gives life a deep meaning for you. Something worth living for – maybe even worth dying for – something that energizes you, enthuses you, enables you to keep moving ahead’. This whole trip was a journey of transformation – a resurrection. Their spirit lives in the people of El Salvador.**

Kathy Tighe, CSJA

The witness of the Salvadoran youth, the young people of the Communidad de Base in Nueva Esperanza, was deeply moving and hopeful. In spite of the bad press about growing violence, these young people through skits, song, and dance presented a thoughtful, mature, faith-filled portrait of living the Communion of Saints. In this dark time in El Salvador they turn to the women martyrs and all who follow Jesus’ call to love and accompany who suffered, disappeared, and died. They composed a letter to the women martyrs which, in part, reads: ‘In our beloved El Salvador, this very tiny piece of land that you so love, the youth, and single mothers with their babies are migrating to the United States. You can imagine those farewells no less hard than they were in the ’70s… The migrants’ journey is not easy. Do you think God wants that? What are we going to do?’**

Judy Swett, CSJA

Elena, a Sister of St. Joseph of Orange, CA, has lived in the village of Nueva Esperanza over 30 years. Her words were compelling, challenging, thought provoking. She thanked us for making this journey and not giving into fear. If you’re not afraid, she implored, go back and tell others. Tell them not to live in fear. Isn’t this the message of our CSSJ Consensus Statement – to move always toward profound love of God and neighbor without distinction…**

Joanne Gallagher, CSJ

The event that haunts me was a skit by a youth group. Five of them wore names of countries that are presently experiencing or causing violence. They held a deep red cloth and bounced the globe back and forth toward each of these places. They were concerned because ‘Our whole world is bleeding because of war and hunger’. This image of the globe being tossed in the bleeding red cloth challenges me as the whole trip has challenged me to look at my own call once again. What is the yes that God is inviting me to today through the hopeful, passionate, faithful, resurrection people of El Salvador?**

Maryanne Ruzzo, SCH

I left Salvador grounded in the HOPE garnered from the mothers who have confronted the issue of gangs by assuring their sons be educated and have land for gardening. So, when the Boston Globe reported that the MS-13 gang was intimidating vulnerable Salvadoran immigrants in East Boston, I was heartbroken. Our immigrant neighborhoods are filled with fear. Parents are weary from warning their sons about the same issues that forced them from their birth countries. There are no simple solutions, however, we have models in those missionaries that went before us to El Salvador. Like us, these Churchwomen felt the pain of the Salvadorans and witnessed to the courage of Jesus and the hoping, waiting, yearning for full realization of his Kingdom.**

Maryann Enright, CSJ

In concluding these reflections we ask ourselves and you, our readers, to continue to celebrate the lives and ministry of these Churchwomen, to stand in solidarity with the people of El Salvador in whatever way we are able, and to call for an investigation into the deaths of these amazing women as a step toward ending the culture of violence and impunity that plagues El Salvador to this day. In the words of Marty Haugen’s song honoring Archbishop Oscar Romero, “Who will speak if you don’t?”**

Photos Top to Bottom:
Youth group of Nueva Esperanza during one of their skits
Children in San Antonio de los Ranchos
Procession to San Antonio de los Ranchos
A Salvadoran child holds a poster of the women martyrs.

A link to more pictures is available on the 140th Celebration page of our website.

1 Marty Haugen, Who Will Speak, © GIA Publications, Inc., 1993
The Mothers’ Circle: A Soft Place to Land

By Margaret, member of the Mothers’ Circle

Raising a special needs child has been an unexpected journey in my life, another dimension of motherhood that you can’t truly understand until you’ve experienced it.

My first 3 children are typical boys, blessed with great abilities, who have had an easy time in school and with friends. My fourth child is a beautiful 9-year-old girl. She was a more difficult toddler to care for than our sons, and took up most of my energy. I attributed this to my getting older and being more tired, but when she was diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum at age 3, we discovered the real reason.

My husband and I were abruptly faced with the harsh reality of having a child with a lifelong disability. The beginning of this journey was rocky and scary. I soon discovered the world of special needs that was once invisible to me: IEPs, the struggle to get school services, private therapies, special needs advocacy, and the many other families living with special needs children.

As the journey continues, I’ve grown stronger, wiser and more perceptive. My daughter has brought special love and compassion into our family. I’ve developed more strength from within that I didn’t even know I had, especially when advocating for my daughter in our large urban school district. I’ve had to stick to the doctors’ recommendations and my own knowledge of her, to advocate for services she needs to prevent her from falling through the cracks of the system. I now understand how important special education services are, how they give children with disabilities a chance in life.

My sons are part of this journey as well. They’ve grown more in generosity and kindness because of their sister. They’ve learned to be accepting of people who are different. My 19-year-old son enjoys playing the piano with his sister and wears his loving, amused smile as he answers her questions and listens to her opinions.

I was so proud and grateful to my 11-year-old son when he defended his sister from a neighborhood bully. Soon after, he wrote in a school essay, “...As long as I’m here I’m going to protect her. She’s the kindest, most loving person I have ever met. I could’ve gotten hurt, but all that mattered to me was her safety.” I can say that her sweetness and vulnerability has made all of us in the family a little stronger.

Raising a special needs child can be stressful. It has been manageable, but tricky. This is where the Mothers’ Circle has been a wonderful addition to my life. It’s a soft place to land. A circle of mothers of children with special needs, who lend support, listen to your challenges, and offer you theirs. It feels good to relate to mothers in similar situations, and feel the healing power of friendship.

The facilitators of the Mothers’ Circle1, Mary Rita Weschler, CSJA, and Denise Kelly, CSJ, are wonderful, invested leaders who are there for us and weave a caring, understanding grace that all of us feel when we’re in our circle. One friend in the group recently told me how the group makes her feel relaxed and happy for the rest of the day. At our monthly meeting, Mary Rita has tea, coffee, and her homemade cookies and breads. She encourages us to take what’s left over for our kids. My sons look forward to the days I have the group meeting because they know they’ll be getting the “Mother’s group cookies” after school. To them, the Mothers’ Circle is just great! To me, it’s a special time that I look forward to every month. It’s one of the blessings in my life that has unexpectedly come my way.

1 The Women’s Table is a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. Mary Rita Weschler, CSJA, is Director, Denise Kelly, CSJ, is a volunteer and member of the Advisory Board.
Published this year in more than eighty countries, *The Name of God is Mercy* might be described as a book within a book. Two thirds of the volume, written in an easy, conversational style, transcribe the interviews by Andrea Tornielli, a veteran Vatican reporter, with Pope Francis. The remainder of the book, marked The Appendix, is the actual Papal document – *The Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*.

The need for forgiveness and for God’s mercy have been Francis’ dominant theological refrains both before and after he became Pope and so, wanting to reveal the heart of the Pontiff, Tornielli focuses on the theme of mercy and Francis’s reasons for proclaiming a Holy Year of Mercy.

The fruit of countless interviews, the first nine chapters comprise questions and answers, articulated in a very casual, sometime anecdotal style that delves into Francis’ understanding of mercy, its connection with compassion, and the gift of confession. Throughout those pages Francis intersperses his answers to questions posed with references to Scripture and with human stories from his own pastoral experience: for example,

♦ “I recall meeting a girl...she didn’t have a father and to help support her family, she worked as a prostitute…”
♦ “I remember a mother with young children…”
♦ “Every time I go through the gates into a prison…”
♦ “Back when I was...a parish priest in Argentina”

Always stressing the need of God’s forgiveness and grace, he emphasizes that this is especially true today at a time when “humanity is wounded.” Francis calls the Church and each of us to return to the healing ministry of Jesus and chastises “scholars of the law” who live attached to the letter of the law, neglecting love. “Only he who has been touched and caressed by the tenderness of his mercy really knows the Lord.” In a variety of ways he stresses that “the more conscious we are of our wretchedness and sin, the more we experience the love and mercy of God among us and the more capable we are of looking at others with mercy.”

The conversations are packed with wisdom and conclude with a quote from St. John of the Cross, which best summarizes his message – “in the evening of life, we will be judged on love alone.”

*Misericordiae Vultus*, The Bull of Indiction, outlines the strategies for making our pilgrimage through this Year of Mercy. Frequently quoting Scripture and the Second Vatican Council, it gives instructions on how the year will begin and end, practices during Lent, relationship to justice and much more. It offers an invitation to conversion, an “opportune moment to change our lives.”

Whether you read this book from cover to cover or simply open a page randomly, you will be personally challenged to reflect deeply on mercy experienced and shared. ☀

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1 Andrea Tornielli, *The Name of God is Mercy*, Random House; © 2016, pgs. 72, 60, 41, 60
2 Ibid., p.42
3 Ibid., p.63
4 Ibid., p.34
5 Ibid., p.67
6 Ibid., p.99
7 Ibid., p137
The Journey – 33 years of the “More” in Worcester

By Marie Therese Martin, CSJ

My recent reception of the New England Ignatian Volunteer Corps Della Strada Award provides opportunity for reflection on my journey. The Worcester Connection and Abby House, Assumption and Anna Maria College, Project Homes, Worcester Common Ground, St. Mary Health Care, Our Lady of the Angels Ministry to Elders, UMass Memorial, and Holy Trinity Hospice have shaped my interest in homelessness, health care, and education. Woven with volunteer involvement on the Webster Square Day Care and Elder Services of Worcester Area Board, advocacy groups, it is no wonder my mother often questioned, “What can I tell my friends you do?” All my connections and ministries in Worcester have been by invitation. A great journey! I firmly believe that God meets us where we are and invites us continually to “the More.”

My family journey beyond Brighton’s Presentation Hill, as a child of five, brought me to cities of greatly diverse ethnic and socioeconomic cultures – Haverhill, Albany, New Bedford – in the difficult times of World War II. When I first moved to Worcester, at Abby House and the Worcester Connection, political activity around homelessness, peace, weapons, abuse, was so familiar to me. My mother worried that I might be too political, but I reminded her that I learned to care about people, the “polis,” every night at our kitchen table. Conversation was about concern for others as the New Bedford cotton mills closed and families were displaced. Mothers, often pregnant, held their husbands’ jobs in the mills to put food on the table, later the cause of disabilities in some children. Concern for the poor, the homeless, the mentally ill, the new immigrant, the different took shape right in my own home.

I came to Worcester at the invitation of a Sister of St. Joseph of Springfield who had begun Abby House, a temporary emergency shelter for women and children. Homelessness and domestic violence were big issues at the time. Worcester simultaneously wrote the book on deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill at Worcester State Hospital. I still meet these folks at local nursing homes or at the parish door. My first night as volunteer staff at Abby’s, I served tea at the “kitchen table” to a woman whom I realized was a classmate at Regis College! She could not return to her home town because she would not be able to get her meds. A sad reality!

The stories of these early guests incited the dreamers to do “the More” and establish a Spirituality Center, the Worcester Connection, in the spirit of the SSJ program in Holyoke. As program director, besides encouraging local women to look at the roots and causes of injustice in Worcester and our own lives, we connected with national women of faith speaking and writing with the courage of their convictions for a just society and church. These were exciting times!

And my journey moves on – ministering to the sick and elders, being with those on their final journey home. When one door closes, a new invitation calls me on!

1 The Della Strada Award is recognition for my involvement in the Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) of New England. I was invited to be part of the group that began IVC in New England by a friend who knew of my spirituality and connections in Worcester. I am also a Spiritual Reflector for the program.
Pilgrimage: So Dependent on God, and So Free

by Joanne Fantini, CSJA

Victor Turner refers to pilgrimage as exteriorized mysticism. “Pilgrims” he said, “seek to enact rituals that symbolize the movement of their hearts, a transition from one stage to another interiorly and within community.” Upon setting out on pilgrimage to Le Puy and on to Santiago de Compostela, I was aware of wanting to give thanks in deep gratitude to God for all that had been and all that was yet to be in our relationship as I strived to live more authentically into “my whole life’s, yes.”

Early into the journey, the reality of which Martin Buber speaks was revealed: “All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware.” On the morning my walking pilgrimage was to begin Dorothy Pilkington, SSJ, Patty Johnson, CSJ, and Michele Beiter, SSJ, who were visiting the International Centre, surprised me by accompanying me to the Pilgrims’ Mass at Le Puy’s Notre Dame Cathedral – an experience that could not have been more creatively imagined by God! Looking out at their hands extended in blessing brought forth a rush of heartfelt memories, the resonance of meeting CSJs at Sacred Heart in Bradford, being introduced to stories of our first sisters – Françoise, Marguerite, Claudia, and the 3 Anna’s, becoming an Associate, a 2014 pilgrimage to LePuy, a call to live “more” deeply out of the charism of God’s great love and now, this moment.

Clearly now, as then, the journey presented is not about me but about God working in me, working in all of us who seek God wholeheartedly. Brian McDermott, SJ, says it this way: “transformation is an inside job.” My experience as I walked mountains, valleys, plains, rivers, bridges, alone, with others, in conversation, in prayer or in silence was of being moved more so than moving; that God preceded me, journeyed with me, and was the destination ahead. God was present in the daily graces given in the simplicity of living day-to-day with only that which is in one’s backpack and that which is encountered along the way...marinated in beauty, silence, nature, community, Eucharist. Never have I felt so dependent on God, so fully alive, and so free.

2 Quoted in Mercedes Maroto Camino, Practicing Places: Saint Teresa, Lazarillo and the Early Modern City, 2001, Rodopi Bv Editions
4 Homily by Brian McDermott, SJ, during a retreat at Eastern Point, Gloucester, MA
From our earliest writings, Sisters of St. Joseph were called to undertake all the works of which women are capable.¹ In the mid-1960s, more than 300 years later, Vatican II called all Christians to be “leaven in society.”² During the past three years, several distinct but interconnected programs have assisted Sisters of St. Joseph who are under 62 years of age to expand their creative competencies, grow as leaven in their present ministries, and build relationships with CSSJs in the United States and beyond. Leaders as Leaven, the Collaborative Leadership Development Program, and gatherings of newer/younger members of the CSSJ Federation Atlantic Region are three programs in which Sisters Betsy Conway, Anna Edge, Jeanmarie Gribaudo, Barbara McHugh, and Pat Quinn have participated.³

A few weeks ago, they came together to reflect on the journey these opportunities have afforded.

Leaders as leaven entailed a year-long commitment with two intensive five-day sessions at the beginning and end. Before it even started, we participated in what’s called a 360 Leadership Circle Profile.⁴ We asked peers, work associates, and others to complete a comprehensive survey about our creative competencies and reactive tendencies.

It was a bit overwhelming at first. We wondered what we had gotten ourselves into. But when all the information came back, we found we had a helpful tool to enhance our development. Each participant was assigned a mentor and a “table group.” The mentors and table groups met with each other mostly via video conferencing throughout the year.

We found great significance in the fact that this experience was enveloped in our CSSJ charism. For example, Dolores Clerico, SSJ, focused her talk on...
the core values of the Sisters of St. Joseph with an overview of how evolving consciousness has impacted our view of leadership. Mary Dacey, SSJ, helped us see the importance of leadership at this moment in history, in religious life, and the world. It was a gift to experience this with others steeped in our CSSJ charism. It impacted every prayer, every conversation. We were swimming in the same ocean. It was transformational.

We were reminded that every CSSJ is called to leadership wherever she ministers and were challenged to be leaders from where we stand at this moment. Now!

Participants from all walks of life who had not had any formal leadership training found it helpful to find new language by using the 360 evaluation to identify strengths, limits and potential for growth.

The circle widened even more in July 2015 when Pat and Barbara joined with sisters and associates from 28 congregations and seven countries at Xavier University in Chicago. Participants included cohorts from Leadership Development programs offered to various religious congregations across the country. Participants addressed their current realities and emerging futures while creatively exploring possibilities together through facilitated dialogue and contemplative processes. It was humbling to realize all these congregations are dealing with similar realities as CSSJs. We found ourselves listening and sharing ideas on how to move forward in the midst of today’s challenges.

We are living at a time when we need these connections and it’s a gift that we have them. There’s still an energy, a fire within us. Rules may change but the game is still in play. These times call us to journey within to the original fire that attracted us. We didn’t know it was the charism but that’s what it was. That’s “the More.” The call is still there but now it’s a call to go deeper and we are listening. That’s what the future is asking of us. We can only journey forward if we journey deep within.

1. Règlements of the Daughters of St. Joseph, circa 1646-1650
2. See Gaudium et Spes, Dec. 7, 1965 para. 40
3. Sisters Kathy McCluskey, Pat Boyle, Helen Sullivan, and Jacquelyn McCarthy also participated as mentors with Leaders as Leaven. Joanne Fantini, CSJA, participated as an Associate in the third segment of Leaders as Leaven.
The way we travel has certainly evolved in the past 143 years! When our sisters traveled by stagecoach from Flushing, NY, to Jamaica Plain in October 1873, we know the journey took four days. Today, Mapquest tells us, this trip would take 3 hours and 33 minutes.

What is interesting about the sometimes legendary modes of transportation we have used throughout the years, is that very little about how we traveled back and forth to our ministries was ever submitted to our archives. The stories that live on are anecdotal.

Memories of the Black Mariah, circa 1935, driven by, among others, the father of Pat Boyle, CSJ. It seems to have predated “the Mount Bus” that carried sisters to and from schools in the South End and North End. As the story goes, each day the round-trip was reversed to be fair to the sisters in both schools.

A similar arrangement existed in Haverhill where a yellow school bus driven by Russell Halloran arrived each morning at the Westland Terrace Convent to pick up and transport both elementary and high school sisters. The route covered the mile-or-so to the old high school where those sisters were discharged and continued then to the newer, more recently constructed elementary school at a further distance in the city. The bus later delivered a hot lunch for the high school sisters from the elementary school. At the end of the school day, the elementary school teachers were already on the bus when it arrived to pick up the high school teachers for the return trip to the convent.

In the 1950s at St. Agatha’s Milton, the convent was a mile away from the school. An old Navy bus was purchased, painted bright blue, and transported the 20+ sisters to school where the children eagerly vied for the privilege of carrying sisters’ bags as they exited the bus. According to Jean Marie Doherty, CSJ, who was at St. Agatha’s during those years, every sister had to board the bus to arrive at school 30 minutes early and could stay only 30 minutes after school in order to be back on the bus. These were the janitor’s rules. If someone wanted to walk on a beautiful day, he said he would stop driving the bus.

When we first began to travel by plane, dozens of sisters showed up to wave good-bye and welcome us upon return. Imagine that today!

Many of us recall the days when our parents were recruited to transport a sister — always with a companion — to retreat, vacation, a school where she was studying, and elsewhere. As we began to drive ourselves and the parish supplied a car, they were usually large station wagons where the youngest sisters rode looking backwards in the third row of seats.

In the article on the facing page, Jean Mulloy, CSJ, shares the story of our current ride-share program and its possibilities. The times have certainly changed. But our need to travel and our desire to embark on new journeys continues.

1 While a portion of this article is from archival records, most of it is anecdotal, based on sisters’ lived memories.
Journeys take many forms. We’ve come a long way since the era of “Martin Curley” as the official CSJ chauffeur! In the days when sisters could not drive, Martin drove only the Reverend Mother and her assistant. Other sisters were driven to “Saturday school” and community meetings by parishioners or relatives. When I entered in 1953, the sisters were still not driving. When the change did come and we could drive, it was quite a sight to see our sisters on the roads in packed cars, mostly station wagons, with the two youngest riding backwards. The change in the driving policy was the beginning of many changes to come.

Today we find ourselves in a very different situation. More and more sisters are either not driving any longer or are limiting their driving to local trips. This has resulted in many of our sisters needing transportation assistance to enable them to get to appointments and to continue to live a full life.

From this need, in May 2013, the CSJ Transportation Program was begun—initiated by the Area Councilors to service the transportation needs of our sisters. The program is designed for our CSJ family—sisters helping sisters. Immediately, recruitment for volunteers resulted in twenty-one sisters responding. Guidelines were developed and established for the safety of both the driver and the sister requesting assistance. Many sisters expressed their joy at being able to help and the pleasure of giving back to our sisters in community.

Drivers are “the heart and soul” of any transportation service. This says it all for the CSJ Transportation Program! Rain or shine, volunteers are on the road to pick up the sister they are driving. They are so happy to help, and willing to ensure that each sister receives door-to-door service. Sometimes drivers find themselves in other roles such as listener, advocate, or friend. Many have remarked that it is a true example of the adage “it is more blessed to give than receive.”

Twice a year all volunteers meet for a sharing around how are things going, what areas of the program need to be improved, and suggestions for transporting sisters safely, especially those with walkers or oxygen.

The sisters who receive rides have praised the program, the drivers, the service, and the sociability that comes from being together. Currently, 557 sisters have been served since the program was initiated in June, 2013. With the help of our generous volunteers and the prayers of all, we look forward to continuing this service which enables the day-to-day journey through the ordinary moments of life.
Giving is a rich and ingrained tradition in the Ghiloni family! Recently, I spoke with siblings Peter, Elaine, and Sister Ann Marie Ghiloni, CSJ as well as nephew Mark Ghiloni and his wife Susan, and niece Sharyn Ghiloni. (Other supportive siblings not present include Carol, Francis, and Joseph.) They remember their parents/grandparents, Aldo and Donna (Antoinette), as “ordinary” people who always shared what they had with those in need. They recall that, when you came home, “you never knew who would be staying at the house! The door was open to the ‘dear neighbor.’” While never wealthy in dollars, they were rich in love and compassion and believed that even small gifts could help. Their children and grandchildren continue this legacy.

The Ghiloni family grew up with the sisters as they lived across the street from St. Clement Schools (Somerville/Medford) and attended school there. The sisters were part of their daily lives. They also experienced the Sisters at St. Columbkille School, Arlington Catholic High School, Regis College, and Aquinas College.

The current generation carries on the tradition with joy and generosity, through donations of time and treasure to several CSJ ministries including Bethany Hill Place, Fontbonne Academy, and Fontbonne Convent, as well as supporting the ongoing needs of the sisters! I asked, “Why do you support Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston?” The family offered a range of responses: “We can see how our gifts are being used. We want to pay back the sisters for all we have received from them. It’s a way of expressing gratitude for the great education we received. Our support keeps the memory of Aldo and Donna alive.” One also commented with good humor, “We want them to keep Sr. Ann Marie; there’s no room for her at home!”

When asked what the family would like our readers to know about the sisters, Peter commented, “People still think of the sisters as teachers. We want people to know how they have expanded their ministry to other endeavors and continue to respond to today’s needs.” Sharyn thoughtfully replied, “Although the sisters come from different backgrounds with different stories, they all share a passion for service and you don’t see that much anymore.”
Choosing our cards is a generous way of celebrating the lives of relatives and friends. Throughout the year, those you honor with a card are remembered in prayer by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston and Associates.

At the time of a death, we encourage our donors to request that family members and friends remember the Congregation by sending donations “in lieu of flowers.” All donations are acknowledged by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston Office of Mission Advancement. If you wish to make a donation, know someone who would like to, or are in need of cards for a relative or friend, please contact Robert Tamulis, Mission Advancement Coordinator, at 617-746-2114 or email robert.tamulis@csjboston.org.

To make a donation online, visit www.csjboston.org and find the “make a gift” box. The cards here are a representative sample. More designs are available at: www.csjboston.org/join-our-mission/donate-now/memorial-and-all-occasion-card-programs/.

MEMORIAL CARDS

God our Refuge
Morning Rose
Madonna and Child
St. Joseph
Mandala

CARDS FOR OTHER OCCASIONS

Congratulations
Tulips (Blank)
Thinking of You (1)
Get Well (2)
Happy Birthday (3)
Thinking of You (2)
Thinking of You (3)

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Memorial Cards
___ God our Refuge ___ Morning Rose
___ Madonna and Child ___ St. Joseph
___ Mandala

Other Occasions
___ Congratulations ___ Thinking of You (2)
___ Get Well (2) ___ Thinking of You (3)
___ Happy Birthday (3) ___ Tulips (Blank)
___ Thinking of You (1)

Please write the number of cards you desire in the space to the left of the card description. After you have made your choice, clip the form and mail it to:

Robert Tamulis
Mission Advancement Coordinator
Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston
637 Cambridge Street
Brighton, MA 02135

CORRECTION

If you do not wish to receive future mailings of the MORE..., please return your address label to us, and we will remove your name from all of our mailings.

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, God, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. Psalm 84:5

Carefully observe the way your heart draws you and then choose that way with all your strength.
Old Hasidic saying

What yearnings dwell in your heart that beg to be listened to?

What would your relationship with God look like if you fully embraced God’s invitation before you?

What is your heart drawing you to?