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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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Our magazine title, the MORE..., comes from a spiritual cornerstone of our charism, spirit, and spirituality dating back to the 17th century roots of the world-wide family of Sisters of St. Joseph. The Consensus Statement, drawn from the central ideas of our founding spirituality states, in part, that we approach life “with an orientation towards excellence (le plus) tempered by gentleness, peace, joy.” The French “le plus” translates into English as the MORE...
In my remarks on the day of Celebration of Leadership, I noted that much has unfolded in our congregational history since Vatican II. (See page 12)

As we have continued to read the signs of the times, new needs have emerged in society which have given rise to new dimensions of response on the part of our sisters and ministry partners.

Each response is a part of the continual unfolding of God’s invitation to us to share in the call of the Gospel to build the Kingdom of God. We do this through a wide range of ministries focused on serving the “dear neighbor.”

In looking at these signs of the times and in determining responses, both our congregational history and our own personal histories have unfolded. We know our past and present. We are now living into and participating in the evolution of the future by our responses to the signs we see today. These are signs of opportunity, challenge, and new ideas. The ways in which we are responding and will respond will carry us into the future, that unknown place to which our God calls us.

In our recent Chapter of Affairs we set the directional statements for the congregation for the coming five years. The Leadership Team is now tasked with developing and encouraging ways in which we live into these directions. They are, for this time, how we will respond to the signs of the times. Just as our CSJ story up to now tells of prior directions and decisions, so now we are committed to strengthen our sense of mission and our relationships for mission; strengthen the spiritual; and continue to tell our story in these times. Within the following pages of this issue of the MORE… you will find articles relating to some ideas and/or activities developing at this time.

These directional statements will guide our evolving responses to the opportunities, challenges, and new ideas that today’s world presents to us. As we do so, as we live the call of the Gospel, we participate in the unfolding of the future to which we are called by our God and by our CSJ commitment as “women of the Church, rooted in the Gospel.”
So much is unfolding. At the time of our spring issue of the MORE..., we had just completed our year-long series of meetings called Chapter, elected a new leadership team, and bid farewell to our previous leadership team who had offered their ministry of leadership for the past six years.

Now, with our new team well into its fifth month, so much is unfolding in the life of our congregation, in the ongoing life of our ministries, and in our relationships not only among those we name as partners in ministry but also with many in the wider circle of church, society, and world.

In this issue of the MORE... we learn about some of our partners in ministry who are participants in Spirits on Fire, an integrated formation program that consists of opportunities for lay leaders to engage in a transformative process of growing into and leading from our CSSJ charism. We also read about a growing national movement referred to as Nuns & Nones, a collaboration with millennials and vowed members of religious congregations of sisters.

On other pages, an alumna, a donor, and Wisdom’s Way Grant recipients share stories of how their lives have been touched by God’s inclusive love in surprising ways. On a more somber note, our Justice Promoter calls us to confront the escalating violence we experience in today’s world, and embrace active nonviolence as a way of life that unfolds as a vital choice for the survival of humans, all creatures, and for Earth itself. All this is a part of our unfolding.

In a reflection on Unfolding we are called to go further with all of this and ask, “What does this unfolding ask of you/us?” As you ponder these pages, may you add your own insights, tell your own story, and contribute to the unfolding among us.
From the Director of Mission Advancement

Your life will be a great and continuous unfolding.

The theme of this issue, unfolding, brought to mind a delightful brunch I had with seven members of the party of 1961. We were gathered at the Motherhouse to celebrate Donor Appreciation Day 2018. I was searching for an empty seat when I was invited to join a very lively table. I soon found out that these women were all members of the CSJ Party of 1961. The conversation about hijinks, habits, and “do you remember” was fun and enlightening. I was struck by how life unfolded so differently for each. All joined the party of 1961 with the expectation of living their lives as Sisters of St. Joseph. While three are still sisters, the lives of the other four unfolded differently yet all are still connected by the same charism.

The way life unfolds can be surprising! Can you imagine life today without the internet or your cell phone? Could you have imagined this technology 20 years ago? We are adapting here in the Mission Advancement office too. We have started to connect with those of you who use email with a monthly ConstantContact® newsletter to bring news about our sisters right to your inbox. We are also offering you the option to receive thank you letters via email should you prefer. To receive our newsletter or to request your thank you letter via email please contact Bob at Robert.Tamulis@csjboston.org.

I want to thank you all for the tremendous success of our 2017-18 fiscal year. Because you opened your hearts, we were able to raise almost $2,000,000. Wow!!! Those of you who supported our appeals, used our card program, attended or sponsored our events – YOU are our partners in ongoing ministry and YOUR generosity helped to support our retired Sisters and our Congregation Ministries: The Literacy Connection, The Women’s Table, Casserly House and the new St. Joseph Spiritual Ministries.

I would like to give special recognition to those who remembered us in their estate plans. They have truly left a legacy of love.

Thank you!
God bless!

Carol Mack, Director of Mission Advancement

1 Cheryl Strayed, Tiny Beautiful Things: Advice on Love and Life from Dear Sugar © 2012 Vintage
Numerous issues are unfolding within the area of Social Justice. Some are truly unfolding, such as the separation of families at the border; others have been with us for a long time, yet may be seen to “unfold” in new or different ways, such as racism.

Two areas in this second category appear to be calling for us to review and refocus. These are nonviolence/peacemaking and care for the earth. Both were addressed by our Congregation a number of years ago through corporate stances: nonviolence and peacemaking in 1984 and care for the earth in 1992.

The Corporate Stance on Nuclear Arms begins: “We lament the reality of nuclear weapons,” and then catalogues various effects beyond the threat of war itself, such as hunger, anxiety leading to hopelessness and despair, and deprivation of beauty that lifts the human spirit to supreme Beauty. A second section pledges action to confront conditions connected to the nuclear threat, such as hunger and a prodigality that denies justice to the poor, and the need for systemic change, peace studies, inner conversion, and fidelity to reconciliation and nonviolence. Thus the framers of the corporate stance looked beyond the imminent danger of nuclear conflict to the threats to humans and the planet inherent in priorities of violence rather than peace-making. In a deliberate way since taking this corporate stance, we CSJs have considered peaceful resolution of conflict one of our core values.

The death this summer of Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, practitioner of Christian pacifism, whom Jim Douglass called “a holy prophet of nonviolence in the nuclear age,” brings a reminder that active nonviolence is still needed in our Church and our world, to address the violence of nuclear threat, guns, trafficking, racism and other assaults on human dignity.

So what is currently unfolding in the search for nonviolence? In May 2016, a conference in Rome sponsored by Pax Christi International and the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, and attended by “practitioners of peace” from all over the world, launched...
a new peace initiative. Entitled the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, it immediately issued “An Appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence.”

Like our corporate stance, the document goes beyond a narrow concept of violence and identifies what it calls “normalized and systemic violence,” including climate change and economic injustice.

The Appeal uses the words and example of Jesus to illustrate that the Church needs a “new framework,” a “different path” consistent with Gospel nonviolence in order to move toward a “Just Peace approach”; this framework or path is active nonviolence.

At the conclusion of the Appeal, people of faith and the Church itself are asked to commit themselves to practice this active nonviolence, in keeping with Catholic Social Teaching and Gospel nonviolence. One particularly strong call is that we no longer use or teach “just war theory.” An impressive number of individuals and faith groups have signed on to this appeal since its inception in 2016.

What is unfolding in this Appeal and similar movements is a recognition that violence comes in many forms, and produces a variety of effects on humans and on the planet. This November, we observe the 100th Anniversary of the end of conflict in World War I. Aware of the escalating violence in our world today, active non-violence as a way of life unfolds as a vital choice for the survival of humans and all creatures, and for Earth itself.

In Diarmuid Ó Murchú’s book *Reclaiming Spirituality*, prophetically written 20 years ago, the social psychologist and member of the Sacred Heart Missionary Congregation explores the spiritual hunger of our time happening outside of religious institutions. For Ó Murchú, it is increasingly urgent to provide “alternative sacred spaces for the spiritual seekers of our time,” spaces of “accompaniment and discernment” that do not support answers to questions but rather support the nurturing and deepening of those questions. As I read his incisive wisdom about the current moment in which we find ourselves, here at the intersection of traditional religion and emerging spirituality, I think of the growing movement I have been a part of for the last year and a half: Nuns & Nones.

Through our conversations between Catholic Sisters and millennial “Nones,” we see an alternative sacred space where our questions come together to gain the insight and scope earned within intergenerational dialogue. Since we started hosting gatherings in December 2016 – in cities across the country – the particular wisdom about the future unfolding before us, at this coming together of religious and spiritual life, is the greatest gift of such dialogue. As Sister of St. Joseph Pat Bergen said at one of the earlier Nuns & Nones gatherings, we all stand at the “prophetic edge” from which we are collectively able to see the newness emerging.

What is this newness emerging? And what does the future that is unfolding before us hold? While we do not know the answers yet, I believe it is in these alternative sacred spaces, through intergenerational accompaniment and
discernment and holding big questions together in community, that answers might one day emerge.

As I have spent time with the Sisters of St. Joseph in Boston, especially through our own recent Nuns & Nones gatherings, I have increasingly seen women religious embracing and exploring what the challenges and opportunities of religious life today are. With each new conversation, I hear resonance to the same challenges and opportunities of the needs of contemporary spiritual seekers. It causes me to think that we might not just enjoy one another’s company, but, more aptly, I think we actually deeply need one another as we embark on this future together.

In *Reclaiming Spirituality*, Ó Murchú suggests that our evolutionary unfolding “is about transcending what existed previously in order to grow into the future that beckons us forth.” While we might not know exactly what this future looks like, efforts like Nuns & Nones can model the open dialogue and deep collaboration beyond affiliation and across generation that can allow our future to unfold in such a way that imagines us all having a place. In the midst of the decreasing number of vocations entering religious life, and increasing disaffiliation of young people, I can imagine no better adventure to embark on together: to find where at the edges of religious tradition and spiritual practice we can join together and create the ground on which future life can be rooted and grow.


Nuns & Nones is an unlikely alliance across communities of spirit. Bringing together Catholic Sisters and Millennial “Nones” (a term meant to include all those who check “none of the above” in terms of religious affiliation), this intergenerational dialogue and collaboration explores the common ground from which our communities can more deeply communicate and collaborate. As a growing national movement, there have been Nuns & Nones gatherings since December 2016 and hosted across the country, including Cambridge, MA; Bay Area, CA; Kalamazoo, MI; Philadelphia, PA; and St. Louis, MO. Additionally, there are local, ongoing gatherings occurring in Grand Rapids, MI; Bay Area, CA; and Boston, MA. In Boston, we have hosted two gatherings with the Sisters of St. Joseph at the Brighton Motherhouse, including in June 2018 where we shared our stories and in July 2018 where we shared in the spiritual practice of contemplative silence. Nuns & Nones as a national movement is facilitated by a team of organizers from across the country, and locally convened with the help of Maryann Enright, CSJ, Katie Gordon, Kathy McCluskey, CSJ, Rosemary Mulvihill, CSJ, and Rachel Plattus.

For more information, visit www.nunsandnones.org.
Spirits on Fire is a year-long formation program for lay leaders in the Sisters of St. Joseph (CSSJ) mission and tradition from various congregations across the country. It is designed to assist lay leaders, affiliated CSSJ Congregations and ministries to continue the influence of the Sisters of Saint Joseph’s mission, charism and values into the future. This integrated formation program consists of opportunities for leaders to engage in a transformative process of growing into and leading from the CSSJ charism. The program builds on the call to mission; integrates the CSSJ story, core values and spirituality; and fosters deep, personal internalization. The formation program includes: input, participative processes and reflections, communal prayer, and time to be together with colleagues from across the country.

1. CSSJ is used to refer to all congregations of St. Joseph in the U.S. Federation, some of whom use the initials CSJ and others SSJ.

Boston CSJ Spirits on Fire Cohort 1: Gina Norton, CSJ Boston Human Resource Director, and Terry Hodge, Bethany Health Care Center Human Resource Director

Boston CSJ Spirits on Fire Cohort 2: Brian Sullivan, Fontbonne Academy, Robin King, St. Joseph Prep, Anne Marie Willhite, Bethany Health Care Center, Katy Denning, Jackson Walnut Park Schools

Boston CSJ Spirits on Fire Cohort 3: Jamie Medeiros, Bethany Health Care Center, Suzanne Kearney, CM, Evelyn Cotter, Bethany Health Care Center, Kathy McCluskey, CSJ, F. Maura Spignesi, Fontbonne Academy, Heather Josselyn-Cranson, Regis College.

Evelyn Cotter and Jamie Medeiros

Maura Spignesi
An Experience That Continues to Burn Within

By Terry Hodge, Director of Human Resources, Bethany Health Care Center

It has been almost two years since I was fortunate enough to participate in the first Spirits on Fire leadership formation program in Latham, NY. Though deeply honored to have been invited to this week-long retreat, I initially had no idea what I was being invited to do. I had worked as the Human Resource Director at Bethany Health Care Center for over five years and I understood the CSJ terms of charism, mission, and ministry. Like the majority of the people I work with, I have a sense that my personal mission is tied to the mission of the CSJs through our health care ministry. The Spirits on Fire program, however, has, as promised, engaged me in a transformative process by which I have slowly come to understand how we are each called to take an active part in the mission of unity and how I am uniquely being called to this work.

During the first week of Spirits on Fire, I was assigned to a discussion group of five individuals, each of us representing a different Congregation in a different city. One of my favorite parts of the experience has been meeting every two months for two years via video-conference with this cohort to deepen the experience. We came to realize that, though we are responsible for varied job functions for very different ministries throughout the country, we are all part of a much larger community all working towards sustaining that same mission of unity in the world. This awareness is comforting, energizing, and key to the continuing process of leadership formation for each of us. Spirits on Fire was initially an educational, insightful, and gratifying experience that continues to “burn” within.

Open Heart; Listening Heart

By Robin King, Director of Mission Advancement, St. Joseph’s Prep.

The online modules were the threads that kept our hearts and “spirits on fire” between the immersion sessions. There was time for individual reflection and group sharing, and it was in the sharing, the connectedness, that we came to appreciate that we were on this sacred journey together, as friends and partners in the mission of unity.

The Open Heart and Listening Heart modules were particularly impactful for me in that each required a certain measure of vulnerability or “letting go” and intentionally making space for God. I’ve spent most of my life training to have all the answers, to respond swiftly and correctly, to fix things, essentially – to “do” versus to “be.”

As God’s active partner in ever-expanding unity, Spirits on Fire invited us to listen, to notice, to wait, to be aware of the quality of presence in our interactions with others, and to be open to the possibility of oneness. For me, this translates to a general need to slow down and to place mission at the center of all. Wholeness, oneness, and inclusion require deep listening and intentional opening of heart on my part. I am a work in progress!

Lay leaders from our Boston CSJ ministries have participated in all three cohorts of Spirits on Fire. In this issue of the MORE... two participants reflect on their experience. Learn more about Spirits on Fire at http://www.spiritsonfire.net/program.html

Katy Denning and Kathy McCluskey, CSJ
What do you experience as “Unfolding in Our Times?”

What does this unfolding ask of you/us?
Unfolding:
Telling the Story – Whose Story?

By Dorothea Masuret, CSJ

From my ponderings I have come to see that to “tell the Story” is to tell God’s Story unfolding among us. A way for me to describe this “unfolding” is through the developing awareness of who we are meant to be in this time in our history.

Many reading this reflection will remember when the word “charism” was not even part of our vocabulary. With the Call of Vatican II to renew our spirit and purpose, we were led to identify reconciliation as the unique gift we were called to bring to the Church and the World. As the story unfolded, God’s Spirit led us to see that the whole idea of reconciliation was to bring about Unity. Thus, Unity became the mission. Our living of this mission continues to unfold and deepen, forging an all-embracing stance that we now call “Unioning Love.”

What accompanies this unfolding story of “charism-naming” is the way that we are called to live this awesome gift, Unioning Love, a love that challenges us to see all of creation as One, all that exists as related, and all that is as reflecting the love, beauty and compassion of the Creator. All we need to do is to become the image of this One who called us into this Love!

To see the other in God, to appreciate all of creation as precious gift, and to act in ways that reflect this awareness is the work of a lifetime. This awareness does not come without cost. Unioning Love: Beautiful words – Challenging to live – Full of delight and joy when embraced!

Unfolding, alongside this charism naming, is the call to contemplative prayer. Once thought of as the way for those called to the cloistered religious life, we now understand it to be an imperative way of praying if we are to be a manifestation of Unioning Love. While important to have some moments of quiet before sharing at a community meeting, this way of praying requires a constancy that invites us to go deeper in our encounter and stay, at times, in darkness, ambiguity, and uncomfortable places. This place of trust will inevitably bring us to deeper truths, a more mature understanding, and the ability to respond in ways we might have thought impossible. For me this contemplative way of being is the gift we have been given to embrace the awesome responsibility of living, Unioning Love. How fortunate we are to be able to “tell the Story” – to tell “God’s Story” unfolding!
If our research is correct, June 24, 2018, marked the 18th leadership transition in our 145 year history as Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. Each time our collective past brings us to a new moment when another group of sisters is called forward to build upon and continue the mission of Jesus – the mission of ONENESS, of unity. We do this by extending our reach to the “dear neighbor” to whom and with whom we engage in ministry.

Our history in Boston began in 1873 when four sisters traveled from Brooklyn, NY, to open a school in the basement of St. Thomas Church in Jamaica Plain. This was the start of our long and strong history of participation in building Catholic education in the Archdiocese. Nearly a century later Vatican Council II called us to get in touch with our founders, re-examine our roots, read the signs of the times, see things anew and ask, “How shall our mission of unity continue to shape our response in ministry?”

New needs have presented new opportunities to serve. Now, in addition to educational institutions, the Sisters of St. Joseph have ministries for health care, home health care, supportive housing, educational and literacy programs for our immigrant neighbors, neighborhood outreach, women’s support programs, outreach efforts for justice and peace, and spiritual outreach and retreat programs.

Since 1873, we have chosen leaders to guide us in advancing our mission. Each era, each leadership group, has had its own unique challenges. And we have been greatly blessed that God has raised up the right women for the needs of the times.

We are mindful of the fact that leaders do not do it alone. There is close collaboration with and dependence upon sisters, associates, partners in ministry. We do it together.

The half century since Vatican II has presented many gifts and many challenges to apostolic religious life. Writers tell us that we are living in “middle space” between a past that is over and a future that is not yet. While none of us can see clearly how the future of this life is unfolding, we realize we are shaping that future as we live our lives today. Life is a journey, and we are pilgrims with a purpose, but without a map, yet we know that our God beckons us toward that future – a future full of hope, and challenge, and opportunity.

The ministry of leadership is one of collaboration. It is about working together to set our faces forward, to continue the journey, extending our charism to the wider world through prayer and ministry, and walking in the confidence that it is our God who calls us to that future.
Members of the new leadership team celebrate with ever-widening circles of friends, family, and partners in ministry.
twenty years ago the Wisdom’s Way Fund was a possibility. Today it has become an unfolding story of partnership, participation, and promise. In 1998, women on transitional assistance came and spoke at a Region I meeting of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). After sharing their stories, the LCWR members asked, “What is the most helpful thing we can do?” Their answer was clear: education. In that moment, the Wisdom’s Way Fund was born to assist women with limited financial resources in achieving their educational goals.

Originally the recipient had to be connected to a college associated with LCWR Region I. Gradually this expanded to include other places of higher learning and professional programs. Through the process, there is always a sister, associate, or affiliate from LCWR Region I who knows the woman and serves as her mentor. A woman who meets the qualifications may apply for a grant award to help pay for items such as books, child care, transportation, technology, or fees. In short, the Wisdom’s Way Fund is designed to cover expenses that other educational assistance does not.

The applications of a few of these women tell the story of the partnership of LCWR Region I congregations, the participation of mentors who accompany grantees, and the promise of expanded opportunities for grant recipients.

“This letter is intended to inform you about my extreme financial hardship in the hope it will further my chances of completing my education at Labouré College. Times became really hard for my family when my mother died after a short illness due to the fact that we could not raise money to pay for the drugs she needed. Currently, the little earnings I get are used to pay for my fees, utility bills and upkeep. These expenses are far above my income. I am hoping for a career as a nurse and I hope you help me achieve this wonderful dream.”

“I have a passion to further my education. I am very happy I was accepted to the Liberal Arts Program at Nashua Community College. My dream is to become a Nurse Practitioner. I know this will take many years. But I am ready to work hard. Thank you for considering me for the Wisdom’s Way Fund. I now have a job and am applying for scholarships. The Wisdom’s Way Fund will help me very much to pay for books, a computer, and bus tickets to get to school.”

“I would like to apply for the Wisdom’s Way Fund scholarship for both financial and personal reasons. For a majority of last semester, I was homeless until I was fortunate to find housing with the Renaissance Corporation. The largest financial setback is that I will be unable to financially support myself while taking time off from work in order to have hand surgery.”

“A scholarship like yours would help me in so many ways financially, but it is not just about the money. I read that there was a mentorship piece to it as well. The mentoring part of the scholarship would mean a lot to me also to have strong female leadership. I’m asking that you allow me to use this as a starting point to someday pay it forward to people and resources who have helped me through hard times.”
As I sit here in my dorm room at Framingham State University, I am brought to reflect upon my time and experiences at the high school that made me the woman of courage that I am today. I attended Fontbonne Academy. Throughout my four years at Fontbonne I developed a strong sense of self. Every member of the Fontbonne community played an integral part in my growth. If it were not for the people who encouraged me and picked me up when I fell, I would never have blossomed into an independent leader. I began my Fontbonne career as an introverted, insecure child. I faced many academic, social, and emotional tribulations at school. However, there was never an experience I faced that I could not handle with the help of the Fontbonne faculty and staff. I look back now with gratitude to so many, and offer special thanks to Sister Lorraine Quinn, CSJ, who was always there offering support, a kind word, and a smile!

While the teachers at Fontbonne were some of my greatest supporters and role models in my life, they also pushed me farther than I ever thought I could go academically. At the time, I never understood their reasoning for long research papers, hours of homework, and the year-long social justice project. They all felt like methods used to deprive young girls of their social lives. It was not until college that I realized that the college prep part of the school was crafted to equip Fontbonne women for the most successful college career possible. I entered college more prepared than the majority of my freshman class. The study habits and work ethic I developed at Fontbonne served me well, earning me a spot on the Dean’s List both semesters, a title as Treasurer of the Freshman National Honor Society, a job, and a position as a Resident Assistant for this year. I was proud of myself for earning my spot, especially now that I am studying alongside women and men.

Before entering Fontbonne, I was hesitant that an all-female institution would keep me from working confidently with men in the future. It is safe to say that after four years at Fontbonne Academy, there is no challenge I cannot face. Fontbonne gave me the time and space to grow confident in my intellectual abilities, as well as in my own skin. I graduated feeling empowered. I command respect from my colleagues regardless of gender, and I thank God that I chose to attend such an amazing school that nurtured my skills, confidence, and my beliefs.

I felt lost spiritually when I entered Fontbonne. I grew up going to church and felt that I had to believe in God because everyone else in my family did. As I grew older, this answer no longer sufficed. I began to question the faith I grew up in. I needed to figure my faith out for myself. I was nervous admitting my ongoing quest for faith at Fontbonne out of fear that I would be quieted. Instead of being quelled, I was praised for my desire to find my God instead of following blindly. I was not only educated, but enlightened during my time at Fontbonne. I realized, through my studies, speaking to faculty, staff, and friends, that God is a loving presence and I am being guided to life by God’s wise hand. Upon reflection, I truly believe that I was meant to go to Fontbonne Academy. My life has been changed for the better, and through Fontbonne, I have become a “woman of courage made strong.”

Growing into a Woman of Courage Made Strong

by Madeline Devin, Fontbonne Academy, ’17
As I left my interview with CSJ friend and supporter, Irene Desharnais, I thought, “How can I capture this amazing woman in only 400 words?” – Impossible!

Irene first came to know the sisters through Sister Waltrude at St. Francis Xavier School and remembers her welcoming arms (especially when she pushed her desk into the hallway so there would be room for Irene to join the class of 60). A scholarship to Fontbonne Academy was her next step and there, Sister Thomas inspired her with a promise to “teach them to fly to heaven.”

Upon graduation, she entered the CSJs where she spent 11 wonderful years. Then she heard God’s call to family life. Irene drifted for a while after leaving, but maintained close ties with her friends, Maryann Enright, CSJ, and Peggy Rooney, CSJ. She raised a family of three children with her husband, Paul, “The Prince.” Her personal call to minister to the “dear neighbor” was active and Irene reunited with the CSJs. She served on the Alumnae Board of her Alma Mater, Fontbonne Academy, and Casserly House Board in Roslindale. This ministry resonated with her own desire to help immigrants and neighborhood children of her hometown, Roslindale. Founder, Nancy Braceland, CSJ, is one of Irene’s heroes.

Irene’s husband Paul died in 2010 and Irene experienced a dark time. She credits Mary Rita Wechsler, CSJA, and the Women’s Table Grief Circles with helping her through. Irene became part of The Women’s Table family as a volunteer and board member and greatly admires the work of the staff and volunteers. In addition to her work with CSJ ministries, she has given her time and support to her parish, Pax Christi, and Horizons for Homeless Children. She truly lives St. Francis of Assisi’s call to “Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words.”

Irene says this about her connection with our sisters: “My affiliation with the sisters is a very special blessing in my life. Their exhortation to minister to the ‘dear neighbor’ has profoundly influenced the trajectory of my life. I am grateful for the Sisters of St. Joseph and their insistence on the dignity of each ‘dear neighbor.’ I often find myself singing the words of John Philip Newell’s chant, ‘Whichever way you turn, you see the face of God.’ If we are going to save the world, we have to see the face of God in every dear neighbor.”

Irene, you are certainly doing your part! Thank you!

1Attributed to Francis of Assisi
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 Office of Mission Advancement of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. If you wish to make a donation, know someone who would like to do so, 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/

Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston Card Program

Memorial Cards

God our Refuge
Morning Rose
Light of Peace
New Beginnings
St. Joseph
Madonna and Child
Resurrection Mandala

Card Order Form

Name__________________________________________
Address_______________________________________
City_______ State____ ZIP Code____________

Card Choices

Memorial Cards

___ God our Refuge ___ Morning Rose
___ Light of Peace ___ New Beginnings
___ Madonna and Child ___ St. Joseph
___ Resurrection Mandala

Other Occasions

___ Congratulations ___ In Your Honor (2)
___ Get Well ___ Thinking of You (1)
___ Happy Birthday ___ Thinking of You (2)
___ In Your Honor (1) ___ Tulips (Blank)

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
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.