



Photograph by Katie McNally (Hale Reservation, Westwood)

35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Associates — November 13, 2021

## Celebrating Memories and Dreams



Sandra Selvarajah, CSJA, who worked with her sister and all CSJ Associates to create this magnificent Associate Memory Quilt. Blank squares are left for future associates.

In welcoming all who gathered for prayer in celebration of the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Boston CSJ Associate Relationship, Cathy Clifford, CSJ, told Margaret Silf's story of "The Memory Quilt"<sup>1</sup> and concluded, "That's what we are celebrating today—wonderful memories, treasured years of dedicated people. People who have shared some of the fabric of their lives with us and certainly embraced the CSJ spirit. We, the Sisters of St. Joseph, are so fortunate and privileged to be with you as we continue together on the journey." During the prayer, a number of sisters and associates reflected on the past, present and future of our Associate Relationship. A few comments are included here.

Kathleen Hagerty, CSJ, spoke of the early beginnings saying, "Our first sisters did not perceive their mission as exclusive.... They understood the Gospel and our charism as a universal call to all believers. The first meeting of Boston CSJ Associates was held in March 1986. Thirty-five years have passed since the first meeting. During that time, you have grown and developed a strong and vital Associate Relationship with us both in Boston and in New Mexico. Your witness of our charism of unity and reconciliation is manifested by your

presence in many different places and to so many different people. We as a Congregation are also gifted by your presence among us."

In reflecting on her 35 years as an Associate, Mary Rita Weschler, CSJA, commented, "I was searching for 'something more,' and seeking a deeper spiritual relationship, albeit not as a sister.... As partners on the journey, we shared stories of the CSJ charism in our lives, and how we lived it - whether single, married, vowed or searching.... My experience as a CSJ Associate for thirty-five years has been enriching and deeply meaningful to

my life. In John Lennon's words, 'You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us, and the world will be as one.'"

This article barely scratches the surface the memories and dreams that characterized the entire celebration. The full texts of these and other reflections and service can be viewed in the On Demand section our "StretchInternet" streaming video site at: [Associates Gathering Video](#).

<sup>1</sup> Silf, Margaret, One Hundred More Wisdom Stories, © Lion Books; New edition, 2013, p. 104.



Lee Hogan, CSJ, presents symbols to our most recent CSJ Associates whose initial Associate Commitment was made via Zoom due to the pandemic. Left to Right: Associates Mary Lou Seitz, Mary Catherine MacGillivray, Rose Yesu, Mary McShane, Maureen Smith and Ellen Gunning.



Cathy Clifford, CSJ shares a story

## Associate Happenings

by Kathy Tighe CSJA

“Spotlight Sister” is a new addition for our Associate meetings, in our endeavor to learn and share our CSJ story. As part of this initiative, on October 16, Roberta Ristuccia, CSJ, shared her life story.

Catherine Sabatini, CSJA, worked with Cathy Clifford, CSJ, to present “SOMETIMES WE JUST NEED A LIFESAVER TO KEEP US AFLOAT.” Sr. Cathy shared a powerful and true story about Captain Charles Plumb, a Naval Academy graduate and former fighter pilot, who survived nearly 6 years as a POW in North Vietnam. In the story, he shared his prison experience as a message of hope. Several years after returning home, the captain accidentally ran into the humble sailor who had packed the parachute that saved his life.

Cathy explained that Captain Plumb’s story demonstrates the impact of people who “pack our parachutes” and emphasizes the importance of saying “thanks” to all those who selflessly support us in our daily lives. Wonderful small and large group sharing ensued after some quiet reflection time. We all left with a lifesaver bookmark and the gentle reminder from the book of Sirach, 51:8:

Then I remember your mercy, O Lord,  
and your kindness from of old,  
for you rescue those who wait for you  
And save them.

Thank you, Roberta, Cathy and Catherine. The day and your gifts were like a lifesaver to keep us afloat.



Associates Mary Gaudet, Kathy Teahan, and Mary Rita Weschler



Join the Associates in Knitting Hats!

Join the knitting project to provide winter hats and mittens for the children in the second grade class taught by Beth Sheehan, CSJA. All are welcome to participate. For more information contact [Margaret.Lelakes@csjboston.org](mailto:Margaret.Lelakes@csjboston.org)

Pictured right: Associates Beth Sheehan and Margaret Lelakes stand in awe of the generous outpouring of hand-knit hats for students in Beth’s second grade class.



## The Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston Publicly Commit to the Laudato Si’ Action Platform

This commitment is made in faith, hope and love, knowing that we are participating in God’s work of transformation, “for we know that things can change.” (Is 13)

See [CSJBostonReadAbout](http://CSJBostonReadAbout) to see the full text of the commitment.

*Night's Song* A poem by Charlene Favreau, CSJ

We are delighted to announce that a poem by Charlene Favreau, CSJ, was chosen as a winning entry for the *Legacy Writing Contest*, a program funded in part by the Dracut Cultural Council and sponsored by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. A complete anthology of all entries will be forthcoming.



Charlene Favreau, CSJ.

[The Massachusetts Cultural Council is an independent state agency that promotes excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences, fosters a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents, and contributes to the vitality of our communities and the economy.]

*Night's Song*

Under your night canopy  
my eyes grow big to be privy  
to your star ballet.  
It is in this moment  
I feel that I, too,  
must partake of the dance.  
Sheltered, cooled, awakened...  
My eyes take in the silent music  
of night's song...  
Behold.

*This Day in ... 1693*

On November 20, 1693, the first edition of the Le Puy Constitutions was printed by hand.



A New Partner in Mission



Gariné "Ga" Minassian

Social Media & Marketing Coordinator

Welcome to the newest member of the Motherhouse Administrative building! Gariné "Ga" Minassian joined the Communications staff as Marketing and Social Media Coordinator in mid-October. Ga is an alumna of Regis College with a BA in Communications and is working on her Master's in Communications with a focus on non-profit communications. In the spring and summer of 2020, Ga worked with us as a Communication intern with a focus on Social Media. Be sure to check out our Social Media channels and view the work she is doing to expand the reach of the story of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston.

In particular visit our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages. While you're there, like/follow us if you haven't done this already! Links below.



[Facebook](#)



[Twitter](#)



[Instagram](#)

## *Feast Day of Mother St. John Fontbonne—November 22*

We honor Mother St. John Fontbonne on the anniversary of her death for many reasons—but certainly with special reverence because she is the Mother Superior who sent the first Sisters of Saint Joseph to the Americas; therefore is the reason the Sisters of Saint Joseph are in Boston today. The following is a reflection beautifully written by Clara Santoro, CSJ, from the Brentwood congregation, which also owes its existence to the iconic Fontbonne.

### *“Remembrance of Mother St. John Fontbonne*

Mother St. John Fontbonne was a woman who truly experienced death and rebirth. At the age of twenty-six she was elected superior of a thriving convent; at the age of thirty-four, because of the French Revolution, she was in prison facing probable execution. Caught in the political turmoil of the times, the congregation was disbanded. Some of the Sisters were martyred at the guillotine and others returned to their homes or went into hiding. She had lost her convent and all its resources. Her community was disbanded. Her values and beliefs were the cause of her persecution. Finally she became a prisoner with no control over her future and with no recourse. There was nothing left around her but there was life in her core, and in that inner conviction the seed of new life was sheltered and it prevailed. After the revolution had ended, Jeanne Fontbonne, who had narrowly escaped the guillotine herself, refounded the Sisters of St. Joseph at Lyon, France. During that imprisonment at Montfranc, she could hardly have imagined that more than 14,000 Sisters of St. Joseph on five continents would be her legacy. **Her spirit is our heritage.”**



### Prayer

*God of wisdom and grace,*

*We pray in the spirit of Mother St. John Fontbonne.*

*May our lives model her humility, fidelity and courage*

*As we embrace this present moment.*

*With an expansive heart, Mother St. John Fontbonne opened herself  
to the unfolding mystery of God's call in herself and in the dear neighbor.*

*Inspired by her vision, strength and compassion,  
may we live and work with the Zeal of Christ Jesus,*

*“that all may be one.”*

*Amen.*

Reflection by Clara Santoro, CSJ, from [brentwoodcsj.org](http://brentwoodcsj.org). Nov 22, 2013. Used with permission.  
Poem by Joanne Gallagher, CSJ, in honor of the 60th anniversary of Fontbonne Academy, Milton.

## *Dates to Remember*

**TUESDAY, NOV. 16TH—GOD’S AUTUMN GIFT OF AGING, LED BY KATHLEEN HAGERTY, CSJ—Motherhouse Chapel**

**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 17TH—FIAT —“SISTERS TODAY”—Zoom**

**SATURDAY, NOV. 20TH—SERVICE OF GRATITUDE—Zoom**

**SUNDAY, DEC. 12TH—“ADVENT THROUGH THE HEART OF MARY” LED BY PATRICIA SMITH, CSJ—Motherhouse Chapel**

**MORE INFORMATION AND A COMPLETE LISTING OF EVENTS IS AVAILABLE AT:**

[Event Dates » Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston \(csjboston.org\)](http://Event Dates » Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston (csjboston.org))

