



SHCJ ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN PROVINCE

AUTUMN 2009
VOLUME VII, ISSUE III

With this issue, we begin our reflections on the province chapter enactments, especially those about the global world. This issue we look at Care of Creation. How does our charism and mission draw us to embrace stewardship of creation as our own?

May this journey together into our mission bring us closer to the Child Jesus and to one another!



Living the Mission: A Love Full of Action Associate Regional Gatherings in 2010

Mark your calendars and plan to attend one or more of our regional gatherings in 2010:

March 13 Pasadena, CA

April 24 Rye, NY

May 22 Charlotte, NC

We hope that by holding three regional gatherings even more of the Associates will be able to be a part of this year's celebration!

The main events for the gathering will be on Saturday but there will be activities surrounding Saturday for those who will attend from out of town. In Pasadena and Charlotte, Associates have volunteered to host out-of-town Associates. For Rye, the Rye retirement community is offering hospitality to us.

Although we may be meeting in different places, our theme, "Living the Mission", will link us as one. Our keynotes will help us explore how the Society's mission is alive in our lives today.

More information will be available in January about each of the events. Do mark your calendars and plan to join with other Associates to share and to celebrate our blessings as Holy Child Associates!

Hope to see you in 2010!

*Cathi Duffy
Director of Associates, USA*

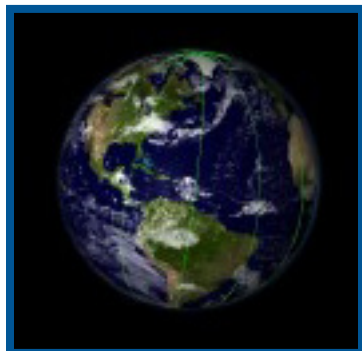
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We've Moved
Our New Address
SHCJ Associates, U.S.A.
Provincial Office
1341 Montgomery Avenue
Rosemont, PA 19010
phone: 610 626 1400

Actions not Words: Care for Creation

One of the global concerns that the SHCJ in the American Province wish to focus their attention in the next 6 years is the care of creation. They sent the following proposal to the General Chapter for Society wide discernment:



We recommend that the General Chapter initiate an on-going, Society-wide reflective study of the mystery of God's presence and action in us and in our world, in relation to evolving scientific findings about the cosmos. Because action is integral to this reflective study, we

recommend that the Society uphold the care of creation as context for living our mission during the next 6 years. We call SHCJ on every level to address the issues threatening the sustainability of our planet.

We, as Associates, are also called to discern how we might adapt this issue as part of our own living of the mission over the next 6 years.

There are a multitude of ways to enter the topic:

incarnation

water, air, earth

energy, climate, food

carbon footprint, sustainability

stewardship of creation

reverence for all creation

human dignity for all

individual changes

public policy- local, national, global

wants of the age

If you are like me, this can be overwhelming unless we start small, in one area or with a few changes at a time. The natural gas provider in Boston has a TV ad promoting that we reduce our energy usage by 3% each year for the next 10 years. 3% may be an attainable goal in one year and a target to plan to reach. The 10 year goal is over 25% of current usage - no simple feat! I read recently that people in some areas of the Southwest may need to cut their water usage by 20% in the next 10 years! These are staggering changes to how we live...How do these requests fit into our own understanding of mission? of caring for God's creation? What responses do they elicit from each of us? How do they connect us to others in our world today?

Perhaps we can all spend time in prayer on this topic. In this newsletter is St. Francis' *Canticle to All Creation* that you might find a useful meditation. As Thanksgiving approaches, we might find ourselves considering the bounty of our blessings but also the costs borne by others for our bounty.

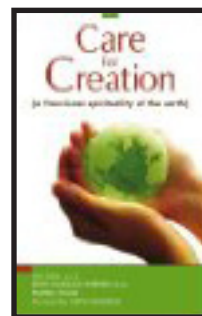
Let's try to educate ourselves on how our choices impact our planet and its inhabitants around the world. See where you are called to learn more and where you might be called to do more. Reading about Cornelia's worldview, how does her spirit challenge you in the area of caring for creation?

To share ideas and thoughts on this focus area, contact Cathi Duffy, cduffy@shcj.org. She will facilitate a process for sharing among SHCJ Associates.

Book Recommendation

In *Connecting with Cornelia and the Charism* on the next page, we read about some of Cornelia's connections with St. Francis of Assisi. This issue's book recommendation features the topics of caring for creation and franciscan spirituality in *Care for Creation: a franciscan spirituality of*

the earth. Written by Ilia Delio, Keith Douglass Warner, Pamela Wood, and Denis Edwards, this book allows us to explore the issue of environmental stewardship from scientific, theological, and spiritual dimensions.



Visit us on the web at www.shcj.org. Under the American Province, select *Sharing our Mission, Associates*.

Connecting with Cornelia and Charism: For God's Greater Glory

from Positio: Informatio for the Canonization Process for Cornelia, excerpts from p. 194 -208

Because the whole world was the field in which the Incarnate Word was to play out the drama of salvation, Cornelia too saw the world as his sphere of action -- and hers. "I am a cosmopolitan," she said. "The whole world is my country; and heaven is my home". Consequently, Holy Child spirit was broadminded and spacious. It allowed for prudent friendships with men and women outside the confines of the Society. It encouraged inquiry, experimentation, interest in learning traditionally labelled "secular". "The more we love God," she said, "the more perfectly we shall be in the joy and liberty of His children -- forgetting ourselves and rejoicing in Him" (D1).



...An "old girl" of Mayfield who became a Carmelite in Brazil wrote that when she entered Carmel, she met again "the spirit of the Holy Child, the spirit of Mayfield. It was all so simple, with a sense of responsibility, of trusting, of spiritual liberty, of looking ahead and around all the world ... and it was the spirit of our Holy Mother Teresa that inspired CC" (1136). The picture would not be complete without bringing together here other facets of the spirit of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus which have already been mentioned: respect for individual differences as God-given; reverence for God and his handiwork; love for and promotion of beauty through the arts as homage to the divine beauty; eagerness to share God's goodness with others; love for the Church: integration of the natural with the supernatural; delight in the things of God. All these characteristics flowed from the Incarnation and Cornelia's ability to see and rejoice in God everywhere.

Cornelia was strongly attracted to Francis

I am a cosmopolitan.

*The whole world is my country and
heaven is my home*

Cornelia

of Assisi. She would have seen in his flinging off his clothes in front of his father a thirteenth century paradigm of her own progressive stripping. She understood with Francis that despoilment was a way to take joyful possession in God of the whole world (CC21:57). Cornelia, like Francis, was drawn to the stable of Bethlehem where God was strong in weakness and where, having nothing, he possessed all hearts. She too wanted to imitate the Child Jesus who learned a trade and was content to earn a living. To Bishop Grant she said: "We only want to labour for our support as mendicant orders beg, and, above all, as our Blessed Lord himself laboured for thirty years. If we sink into making a provision for our support, not imitating our Blessed Lord, we shall not be blessed".

Her joy had a Franciscan character. She could delight in God, in his attributes and his beauty and in all his creaturely gifts and she knew how, through creatures, to return praise to the creator. This joy was the fruit of her poverty and an expression of her freedom of spirit.

Unworldly as was Cornelia's spirit of poverty, she practised it in the light of the Incarnation. She was greatly influenced by Ignatius' teaching on the use of creatures (CC21:36). Since her whole aim was the greater glory of God, she believed in having and using material goods whenever they could serve God's purposes.

...In Cornelia's eyes, nothing was impossible until proven so. She was always seeking better ways to do things for God's glory. She was already an accomplished musician and artist, and these gifts she exploited to the full. She learned alongside the nuns how to print small

Cornelia and Charism (continued)

books on their own press and bind them, how to make furniture, pour plaster statues, grow vegetables and hops, run a dairy, landscape a garden and draw plans for a two-story building. She launched out and took risks in the belief that it was better to have tried and failed than never to have tried (D75:550). If failure could be avoided by diligence and determination, she was pleased. But a failure humbly sustained had a value of its own for it could lead to a new and better beginning (CC6:99; CC8:5,77). Nothing need be lost to the kingdom.

...She had once commented to her brother Ralph: "The more we love God the more we love our natural duties and the more deeply we penetrate into the divine mysteries, the more capable we become of fulfilling [our natural duties] perfectly". Her educational work ~ informed by her penetration of the divine mysteries, and love drove her to do it with a perfection that attracted interest and admiration. In fact, Cornelia set an example of "a love full of action" by using her extraordinary natural gifts in this field with uncommon dedication and creative energy (CC2:67).

Cornelia was clear about the purpose of education. Its end was life in God. Children were to be given every advantage to grow because only through their full development would God be honored in that part of his creation which was made to be most like himself.

Furthermore, the Incarnation had enhanced creation with the presence of the Word in the world. Knowledge, human and divine, therefore, gave access to the mystery of his presence and enabled those with faith to see and reverence it. ...Cornelia was not afraid, then, to introduce geology into the curriculum in the midst of the Darwinian uproar. It was her vote of confidence in God's acting presence in creation. Finally, the Holy Child had led the way by growing in knowledge and wisdom. He was Cornelia's exemplar for the developmental process as well as its goal.

Cornelia's Writings

Volume 7, page 14

To Mth. Teresa
Mth. Emily & Mth.
Lucy

My dear Sisters

I wish you all to get "Bromby's Grammar". It is the most perfect little logical thing to be found & has reached the eighth edition without ever coming

*...that you may be
untiring in desires that
all of His creatures may
enjoy the same ineffable
good that you enjoy for
this is
true love and charity.*

Cornelia

under our notice. I think we must make it a point of conscience to get certain new books (to send from house to house) of the specimens of the day. At least for a time & just at this time when the march of teaching is going at such a wonderful pace. God grant we may march at an equal pace in the path of perfection & that the "Pax Vobis" of our Lord at this blessed season may bring to all peace of conscience for each and everyone – peace with God – and peace with your neighbour and not only peace for your own sakes but that all may as possess that peace which is God's own gift, that you may be untiring in desires that all of His creatures may enjoy the same ineffable good that you enjoy for this is true love and charity.

Simplicity seeks God
But purity finds Him

May your Simplicity seek & may a daily increase of purity find Him.

Pax Vobis

Ever your own in J.C.

C.

Reflecting...

Spend some time in prayer and reflection on Creation. Explore when and how you follow Cornelia's reverence of creation, by using your natural gifts for glorifying all of God's creation.

Abide in my love

John 15:9

Associates around the Country



*Bicentennial Celebration, Melrose (l-r)
Shirley Samson, Sr. Florence Rice, Jessie
Suozo, Fr. John Sullivan (pastor)*



*Bicentennial Celebration, Melrose (l-r) Marie Ryan,
Sr. Nell Carbin, Mary Donovan Crowther, Sr.
Florence Rice, Fr. Pierce, OFM, Sr. Jane Dawley, Sr.
Ruth Dawley, Ann Hackett, Mary Frances Kelley*



*Bicentennial Celebration, Melrose
Mark and Frances Flint*



*Formation Gathering
Stone Harbor
Cathi Duffy,
Liz Eager*



*Come to the Water - October, Stone Harbor (l-r)
Kathy Gibbons, Anita Martineau, Cathi Duffy,
Juliet Njoku*

Annual Appeal -Thank You!

We wish to sincerely thank all who contributed to the SHCJ Associates from September 2008 through August 2009. They are:

*Heather Banis
Sarah Brabant
Nancy Brissette
Lynn Crowley
Barbara DeConcini
Ursula Duffy
Michelle Dugan
Tricia Fell
Frances Flint
Susan Gadziala
Margaret Healy
Nora Hunt-Johnson
Gladys Latshaw
Robert Mace
Debbie Margulis
Anita Martineau
Bob & Chris McHugh
Carol & Kevin McMenamin
Harriet Nemiccolo
Rita Deeney Newark
Marilyn Nigro
Cindy & Greg Platko
Linda Sanfilippo
Kenneth Schoettmer
Ed Silva
Judy Talvacchia
Kathy Tatlow
Mariellen Whelan
Judy Woods-Knight*

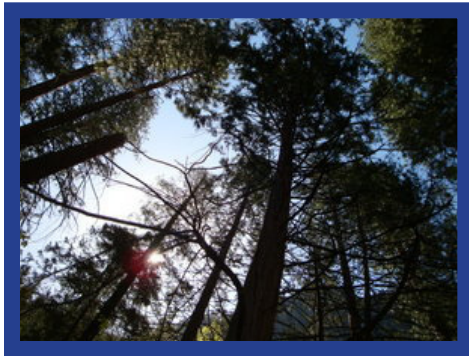
Your willingness to share in the funding of our organization helps to make us stronger each year! We also thank those Associates who have already contributed in this new fiscal year!

Thank You!

Poetry off the Shelf by Barbara DeConcini

In keeping with this issue's focus on creation, here are two more poems that deal with our human being in the natural world. Perhaps you've been watching Ken Burns' film about the national parks, as I have? The first episode's attention to the incalculable contributions of John Muir led me to read more about him. The consonances between Muir and Robinson Jeffers, last issue's featured poet, are striking. Both were the products of a harsh Calvinist upbringing. Both rejected their religious roots in favor of an impassioned romantic commitment

to nature. And in each man's experience, that stern Presbyterian conscience of their formation re-appears as an indictment of the way humans treat the rest of nature and the distorted priorities of civilization. One environmental theologian writes that John Muir was "baptized into wilderness," 'reading' the wilderness through the Biblical images and stories that were so much a part of his early education. These short poems by Robert Frost and Gerard Manley Hopkins continue these musings.



Into My Own

One of my wishes is that those dark trees,
So old and firm they scarcely show the breeze,
Were not, as 'twere, the merest mask of gloom,
But stretched away unto the edge of doom.

I should not be withheld but that some day
Into their vastness I should steal away,
Fearless of ever finding open land,
Or highway where the slow wheel pours the sand.

I do not see why I should e'er turn back,
Or those should not set forth upon my track
To overtake me, who should miss me here
And long to know if still I held them dear.

They would not find me changed from him they knew—
Only more sure of all I thought was true.

Robert Frost

One of Robert Frost's earliest published poems (1909), on first reading *Into My Own* tells the story of someone who seems to want to escape—or perhaps someone who is experiencing a call. But a call out of and into what? Out of the "here and now," into stillness, darkness, wilderness.

I remember so loving this poem as a child that I learned it by heart. I especially liked the notion of taking off into a green world where things would be so much simpler. As I grew older, I began to find the final couplet more than a little self-satisfied. Anyone following

me on my journey through life would surely (I hope!) find me changed from my early self. Returning to it now, I'm mostly struck by its fierce empathy with the natural world. Entering so deeply and irrevocably into the trees, the speaker seems to be suggesting, is to come "into my own." In that sense, he isn't so much changed as more his true and authentic self. We're not far here from Martin Buber's "I-Thou," by which he wants to suggest that God is found in the very "between" of a person's encounter with a tree, a rock, a cloud.

Poetry off the Shelf (continued)

Inversnaid

This darksome burn, horseback brown
His rollrock highroad roaring down
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home

A windpuff-bonnet of fáwn-fróth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning
It rounds and rounds Despair to
drowning

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook
treads through
Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

G. M. Hopkins



Hopkins' 1881 poem celebrates the wild beauty of Inversnaid in the Scottish Highlands, which overlooks Loch Lomond. The first three stanzas offer a wildly inventive description that personifies the turbulent stream (burn) as it roars home to the lake below, bathing the surrounding hillside with a dew that gives life to its wild heather, fern, and ash. The fourth is an impassioned plea on behalf of wild places. Like

the speaker in Frost's poem, Hopkins' speaker stakes a claim for the inherent value of wilderness in our human world.

Each of these poems, written more than a hundred years ago in the early throes of the Industrial Revolution, read peculiarly relevant in our own time, when we're faced with the destructive and well-nigh annihilating consequences of our hierarchical attitudes toward God's good creation.



Compass Points for a Spiritual Journey has been converted into a series of 8 short audio recordings, or podcasts. To listen to or download the podcasts, go to <http://www.holychild200.org/home/compass.html>.



Batey Beads! Can You Help?

This fall, four SHCJ Associates are hosting events to sell Batey Beads. Thanks to Anne Ayella (Phila.), Anne Hackett (Melrose), Debbie Kissinger (Mechanicsburg, PA), and Cindy Platko (Charlotte) for helping the

women of Batey Lecherria to feed their children through these jewelry sales. We still have plenty of jewelry for sale, and Barbara will be bringing back lots more from her trip to the DR this December. Everything is \$5! Can you help us with this SHCJ Associates' Project by taking some beads to sell to friends, colleagues, family members, and Associates? All the proceeds go to supporting the women and children of the Batey and community development in the Batey. Please contact Barbara bdeconc@emory.edu or Cindy cindyplatko@yahoo.com.

We'll make it easy for you to participate!

Meet the Associates by Barbara DeConcini

In this issue, we talk with Linda and Liam Mennis, a "SHCJ Associates couple" from Southern California. Linda serves on the Associates CORE TEAM.

BD: *Tell us a little bit about yourselves, Linda and Liam. Where are you folks from?*

Linda: I grew up on Long Island, in Glen Cove.

Liam: And I'm a Philadelphian by birth.

L&L: We've lived here in Pasadena for 26 years, and we've raised our family here, so this is home.

BD: *How did you two meet?*

L&L: We actually met at the Newman Center at Duke University.

BD: *And you have three children?*

L&L: Yes! Will, our first-born, is 25. He's a first lieutenant in the US Army, stationed in Hawaii. He and his fiancée, Michelle Pentis, are planning a January 2010 wedding. Michael, 22, is currently in his senior year at Loyola University, Maryland, majoring in Psychology. And Jessica, our youngest, is a 19 year old sophomore at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. So our family has kept up our bi-coastal tradition!

BD: *Tell us about your life's work, in addition to your family, of course.*

Linda: I'm a lawyer by training, and recently I've been mostly involved with the boards of two schools—Mayfield Junior School, where I serve as Board Chair, and Loyola High School, Los Angeles.

Liam: My education is in engineering.

Currently, I am the chief information officer for a security company here in Pasadena.

BD: *It sounds like you both lead very busy lives! How do you like to spend whatever leisure time you can carve out?*

L&L: Well, of course, spending time with our family and friends is our highest priority. We also both enjoy traveling, hiking, and going to horse races.

BD: *Tell us how you came to know the Society.*

Linda: My maternal aunt, Elizabeth Strub, is an SHCJ. She currently lives and works in Santiago, Chile, and she has previously served as Society General in Rome. She wrote the Positio for Cornelia Connelly's cause. I guess you might say that Cornelia and the SHCJ are in my blood! I attended the School of the Holy Child in Old Westbury, NY, from second grade

through high school graduation. And here in Pasadena all three of our children graduated from Mayfield Junior School; and Jessica, from Mayfield Senior School as well.

Liam: I came to know the Society through Linda and Linda's Aunt Liz. And I met lots of other SHCJ's through our children's attendance at Mayfield.



Linda and Liam with Sr. Elizabeth Strub during the Associates' gathering in 2008.

BD: *What attracted you to join the SHCJ Associates?*

Linda: For me, my participation in Sister Barbara Mullen's prayer and spiritual reading groups fostered the desire for an even deeper relation with the Society.

Liam: I really enjoyed the Associates Gathering last summer at Rosemont. And joining the SHCJ Associates offers me a way to develop the deeper spiritual component to my life that I've been wanting.

BD: *How has being an SHCJ Associate affected your everyday life?*

Linda: The Associate relationship reminds me to take a moment to attend to what is important. I also treasure the opportunity it gives me to broaden my spiritual horizons as an adult.

Liam: To remember to set my compass to joy.

BD: *What are your "dearest hopes" for the SHCJ Associate relationship?*

L&L: For us, it's pretty simple--To continue to have opportunities to grow spiritually.

Saint Francis' Canticle of All Creatures

Written over 800 years ago by St. Francis of Assisi, it is still relevant today as a meditation on the goodness of all of God's creation and of the bounty that we receive.

*Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory,
all honour and all blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce
Your Name.*

*Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour,
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.*

*Praised be You, my Lord,
through Sister Moon and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright,
precious and fair.*

*Praised be You, my Lord,
through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.*

*Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious and pure.*

*Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night
and he is beautiful and playful and
robust and strong.*

*Praised be You my Lord through our Sister,
Mother Earth who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with
colorful flowers and herbs.
Praise be You my Lord through
those who grant pardon
for love of You and bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
By You Most High, they will be crowned.*

*Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.*

*Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility.*

Retreat Opportunity June 14 - 19, 2010 "I am Cosmic and the Universe is My Home" Cornelia Connelly



Theme: Inspired by and expanding on Cornelia's "I am cosmopolitan and the whole world is my home," this retreat will deepen an appreciation for care of creation as the context for living the mission of the Society of the Holy Child. Through input and reflection, prayer and ritual, contemplative listening to Earth and to one another, we will celebrate the God hidden and manifest in the 13.7 billion year unfolding of the universe story. The retreat includes an optional visit to Red Hill Farm sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

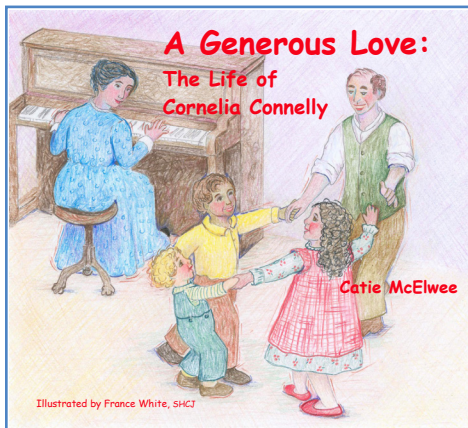
Director: Fr. Terrence J. Moran has given retreats to our sisters at Rye and New Sharon as well as retreats and workshops on theology and spirituality throughout the United States and in twenty-five other countries.

Location: St. Raphaela Retreat House, Haverford, PA
Dates: from lunch Monday, June 14 through lunch Saturday, June 19, 2010
Cost: Commuters: \$325 Overnights: \$405
Application: Send a non-refundable deposit of \$35 to Sister Jeanne Ronzani, Provincial Office, 1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19101 to secure your place on a first come, first accepted basis. This fee will be subtracted from your total cost.

SHCJ Associates, U.S.A.

A ministry of the American Province of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus
1341 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010

A Generous Love by Catie McElwee



To celebrate Cornelia's bicentennial, the Holy Child Sisters in Latin America wanted to have Cornelia's life in story form for children.

Catie McElwee, a Response-Ability volunteer who completed 2 years in the Dominican Republic in June, is the author of this new book, ***A Generous Love***.

Full page original illustrations for each page were done by Sister France White, SHCJ. Each

chapter includes conversation questions.

What a wonderful way to share Cornelia's story with your children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews!

The English version is now available. Each copy costs \$6.00 or for \$8.00 you help with the costs to provide school children in Nigeria and Ghana with copies. You can order by sending Sister Therese Currie your order request with accompanying payment to:

Therese Currie, SHCJ
SHCJ Provincial Office
1341 Montgomery Avenue
Rosemont, PA 19010