

SHCJ ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN PROVINCE

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With this issue, we continue our reflection on the Holy Child Spirit! With all of the bicentennial celebration over the past several months, our focus is Joy. We will explore how Cornelia understood the virtue and offer ideas for further reflection.

May this journey together into the Spirit of the Holy Child bring us closer to the Holy Child Jesus and to one another!

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Rejoice & Renew!

This bicentennial year of Cornelia's birth has brought many celebrations throughout the Society. Each locale chose their own timing and format. At all, there has been a genuine joy to be together with others that share in the spirit and legacy that Cornelia began.

At the beginning of April, I was blessed to participate in an international gathering of Associates in Mayfield, England, the site of the Old Palace that Cornelia had restored and in which she is buried today. (See page 7 for more on the gathering.)

In late April, 15 Sisters and 4 Associates shared in a pilgrimage to Grand Coteau and Natchez. The reactions were similar-- Cornelia became more real in new and different ways for each. Not only did we each come to know Cornelia better as a mother, wife, and Catholic lay woman, we developed and deepened relationships with one another. We traveled, prayed, ate, and laughed together. We searched for clues for Cornelia's life and for our own!

For me, Grand Coteau had been a place of great losses for Cornelia. This year, I kept returning to abundance. Cornelia's nature was to find the abundance in a situation. Grand Coteau, stripped of many things, provided a perfect setting for family and faith in abundance. Given our own economic times when we may feel stripped of much that we desire, let us look as Cornelia did to the abundance for faith and for relationships. Like Cornelia, we may find many spiritual blessings await us.

Speaking of abundance and blessings...in late June, there is a celebration for the 2009 SHCJ Jubilarians. Check page 9 to see a list of sisters celebrating a jubilee in 2009. I'm sure that I speak for all Associates in thanking the sisters for their years of faithful service to the Church!

In early July, the sisters of the American Province will be meeting in chapter, their governing body that convenes every 6 years. A small delegation of Associates will be present. Attending from the Core Team will be Anita Martineau (chair), Kathy Gibbons (secretary), Barbara DeConcini, and myself. Please keep the sisters in your prayers as they discern where the Spirit leads them.

In joy and wishing you abundant blessings,

Cathi Duffy

Director of Associates, USA

Associates Gather in Mayfield, England



Tina Chikezie, SHCJ and Sophie Rudge



Malena Munoz and Elizabeth Valenquela from Chile



Pamela Hussey, SHCJ and Celia Capstik



Cathi Duffy and Rosemarie Tedesco, SHCJ



Maria Nwosu

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

Connecting with Cornelia and Charism: Joy

from Positio: Informatio for the Canonization Process for Cornelia (pages 190-192)

The Holy Child as Cornelia's source of joy

Just as there were two sides to Cornelia's humility, there were two sides to her joy. One of her most marked characteristics, her capacity for finding joy in suffering, has been explained as the result of the companionship and union with Christ which suffering occasioned. But there was also a heavenly joy which was evoked by proximity to Bethlehem and Nazareth.

One of Cornelia's human gifts was a natural buoyancy, a joie de vivre which infected all who came within her orbit. This natural trait was heightened by the delight she took in God and things of God when she came to know him in a personal way.

Her own experience as a mother of five little children, and her joyful, enthusiastic, playful ways with them carried over into her spiritual life. The Holy Child, though a "hidden" and a "humbled God," a Child who suffered, was also all that was charming, endearing and winning in childhood. In his presence her spirit could expand and rejoice mightily, and the remembrance of the loveliness of his youth kept her own spirit young. It was part of Cornelia's own charm and power of attraction that both kinds of joy could flower in her precisely when there was every reason for it to die.

To understand the kind of joy of spirit Cornelia knew in the Holy Child, one must remember that according to her theology, the Child was consciously united to his Father from the first moment of the Incarnation. The life of God, consciously perceived by him



*The more we love God the more perfectly
we shall be in the joy and liberty of his
children — forgetting ourselves and
rejoicing in him.*

Cornelia
CC 8:98

or not, infused his humanity so that he was in possession of the pure, ineffable joy of God's being. No shadow could dim that joy; it was wholly life-giving and light-bearing. Her contemplation of the mysteries of Jesus' infancy and youth revealed this to her faith and rewarded her with the overflow of divine joy. This "heavenly" joy of Cornelia's has a different quality from her suffering joy. It asserts itself throughout her life in simple and charming ways.

Bishop Blanc wrote, after giving her her first Communion: "Son bonheur fut grand". As a new convert, she told her sister: "I never was happier in my life". Returning to America from Europe in greatly reduced material circumstances, Pierce said of her: "...She is dancing with delight at the thought of soon being back in our old home". Now living with her family in the cramped quarters of a log cabin at Grand Coteau, Cornelia was described by Pierce as "gay as a bird". Visitors to their home in Grand Coteau invariably commented on the joyful atmosphere that prevailed there.

Installed at the Trinita as a quasi-Postulant, Cornelia had to struggle for joy: "Sunday ... reproach myself for misplaced gravity. Give the Holy Ghost many Smiles and offer each Smile as an invocation -- a fidelity -- a co-operation with grace," she wrote in her journal (CC22:2). A guest at Pierce's ordination a year later wrote home: "... I was almost surprised to see her so joyful. Indeed I never saw any person more so. I am sure it is the happiest day of her life". Convinced of her own vocation, Cornelia told her sister: "I am but too happy and grateful for

Cornelia and Charism (continued)

so blessed a vocation” .

At Derby, a companion said of her: “It is almost impossible to convey in words an idea of her bright joyous spirit or of the charm of her personality at that time”. In the early days at St Leonards when the boarding school was still small, nuns and children would recreate together. Cornelia was the moving spirit behind most of the fun. When the Society took charge of the Duchess of Leeds’ orphanage at nearby Fairlight Hall, Cornelia often went to play with the children. In 1868 the convent church was finally finished. The night before its consecration, Cornelia and a young nun went in to make sure all was in readiness. Overcome by sheer joy and gratitude she began to sing in the dark church. Hymn after hymn poured out.

France seemed to release Cornelia’s joy in a unique way. The setting up of a community there was her last great project. In Toul she “retained her youthful spirit of enjoyment of whatever pleasure came her way”. Rowing in a boat on the Moselle with the children on a picnic was one such pleasure. Buckle tells how Cornelia had once suggested to some of her sisters that they go through a kind of “spiritual death” through mortification, descending into the tomb with Jesus. Then they could return to life’s joys with a taste that was wholly spiritual (Gompertz: 229). It was in that setting of resurrection that Cornelia could so heartily enjoy such pleasures.

Writing to Bishop Danell in 1873, Cornelia could say: “I am as full of business and eagerness for the Schools as if I were only 30 years of age instead of 64!” (CC16:57). She was at that same time under the heavy cloud of threatened schism and the possible break-up of her Society.

In 1875, Cornelia went up to London to help the nuns set up a new house there. Her presence brought “immense joy” to the little group as they worked together, Cornelia setting the pace, to ready the house for occupancy .

Three years before her death, she was with the nuns in a dismal temporary house in Paris. She made the atmosphere bright by singing and playing the piano for the handful of boarders in the evenings. At her last community recreation in 1876, it is reported that she joined

enthusiastically in a lively game. In Cornelia’s view, goodness and happiness belonged together and could not be obscured by suffering.

Angelica Croft’s statement to Cornelia’s brother-in-law John Connelly soon after her death stands for all the other descriptions of her “heavenly” joy: “She ... maintained to the last such a fresh, bright spirit, that she managed to cast a sunshine around her which no other presence ever did or can create”.

Reflecting...

*O God of God,
light of light,
joy of joys!*

Spend some time in prayer and reflection on Joy. Explore when and how you follow in Cornelia’s ways of joy.

*I have said these things to you so that
my joy may be in you, and
your joy may be complete.*

John 15: 11

*I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them
gladness for sorrow.*

Jeremiah 31:13

*As you try to live gospel joy more deeply,
how does it promote God’s Kingdom in your
world?*

Cornelia's Writings

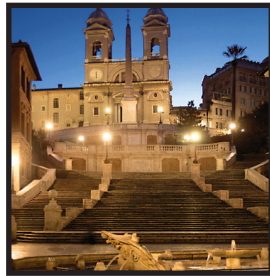
In this letter to her sister Mary, we read about Cornelia and the family's first visit to Rome.

March 6. 1836.

Dear Mary

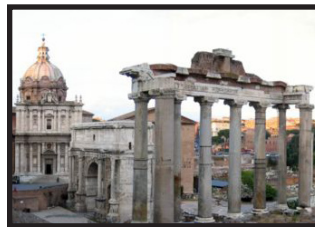
You will have reproached me, long before you receive this, I know, with not having kept my promise but you ought not you must not – I will not make any excuses for if you reflect a moment on the constant occupation I have with the children and the kind attention of many friends you will no longer for a moment doubt my total inability to fulfil it – I may say I have seen nothing of Rome yet though I have been out every day – but seeing it wont do – it must be studied and it will take a [sic] least a year to study it with any kind of advantage – At every step you see the most precious

works of art. the beautiful obelisks columns statues and fountains in every piazza (open space) [sic] the magnificent churches & palaces, shops, streets, all is a mass of confusion to me at present. We will talk of these things by & bye [sic] perhaps dearest dear Molly you will go over them with us But to ease your mind I will tell you at once we are all well excepting colds which I cannot say we have ever been without since we arrived at Marseilles. Your dear little son will not forget you – he asked me the other day if you did not used to whip him in bed? his eyes continue as defective as ever the physician of Marseilles ordered a pair of spectacles with a little hole in the centre to be worn an hour every day but I find great difficulty in keeping them on ten minutes at a time – he plays the master as much as ever & Nanetter cannot understand a word of English – I find her everything I could desire her to be. Grillé [sic] we have parted with having found him more expensive than useful. We are in delightful Rooms 3 chambers a dining room sitting room anteroom & our expenses including the table (which is excellent 3 courses allways [sic] with clean napkins every day and every article of furniture in both chambers and parlour that we could desire, 7 bureaux & lovely



wide sofa surrounded with pillows) are but 70\$ per month We hire a piano which costs 5 or 6\$ per mo [next word is blurred] about 20cts pr day – We hope however during the summer to fix ourselves somewhere in the neighbourhood for about 50\$ per mo. Little Ady is sweeter than ever but she is very delicate & weak [sic] she can just get up by a chair alone. What is the reason dear Mary that you tell me nothing about the dear children nothing about any of the family – the very thing that you used to complain of your self. Do you expect either of the boys this spring? Tell them to take the same love for themselves that I send to you. talk about religion now, and tell me too all your own feelings for who should you tell them to if not to your little Sissy m [sic] who loves even more than ever and who is blessed with a dear husband who cannot speak of you without tears of affection – Mercer asked today when we went to ride if we were not going to see you.

We dined two or three days ago at Lord Shrewsbury's the countess is a most fascinating woman great dignity of manner rather tall; & very handsome face, and her faith, her piety! Oh it would charm you and she does so much good among the poor – She has two daughters one unmarried the Princess Talbot [word crossed out] The other has made a very splendid marriage with the Prince Borghese of immense wealth and ~~of qualities which would~~ [sic] rich qualities of heart & mind – The Princess his wife, is beautiful, amiable & clever (English) she speaks four languages and is a splendid musician. – Dear Mary you may imagine poor little american me seated at a table surrounded by Princesses Earls and Countesses! We dined at half past seven – all dressed [sic] in full dress



March 28. I have kept this letter in order to get as much in it as possible. Addie is better – I have been over ruins churches convents etc etc oh! I have not told you anything yet but I am afraid to open half my heart to you about religion – You may imagine my joy Pierce is satisfied about Miracles has made his abjuration and writes to dear Bishop Otey today whom I trust through the mercy of God may be brought to a knowledge of the truth. Oh my sisters what is all that this world can give or take away compared to the joy of feeling yourself in the true way. ~~My heart is too full~~ [sic]

Poetry off the Shelf by Barbara DeConcini



O Light Invisible, we praise Thee!
Too bright for mortal vision.
O Greater Light, we praise thee for the less;
The eastern light our spires touch at morning,
The light that slants upon our western doors at evening,
The twilight over stagnant pools at batflight,
Moon light and star light, owl and moth light,
Glow-worm glowlight on a grassblade,
O Light Invisible, we worship Three!

We thank Thee for the lights that we have kindled,
The light of altar and of sanctuary;

Small lights of those who meditate at midnight
And lights directed through the colored panes of windows
And light reflected from the polished stone,
The gilded carven wood, the colored fresco.
Our gaze is submarine, our eyes look upward
And see the light that fractures through unquiet water.
We see the light but see not whence it comes.
O Light Invisible, we glorify Thee!



In our rhythm of earthly life, we tire of light. We are glad when the day ends,
when the play ends; and ecstasy is too much pain.
We are children quickly tired: children who are up in the night and fall asleep as
the rocket is fired; and the day is long for work or play.
We tire of distraction or concentration, we sleep and are glad to sleep,
Controlled by the rhythm of blood and the day and the night and the seasons.
And we must extinguish the candle, put out the light and relight it;
Forever must quench, forever relight the flame.
Therefore we thank Thee for our little light, that is dappled with shadow.
We thank Thee who hast moved us to building, to finding, to forming at the ends
of our fingers and beams of our eyes.
And when we have built an altar to the Invisible Light, we may set thereon the
little lights for which our bodily vision is made.
And we thank Thee that darkness reminds us of light.

O Light Invisible, we give Thee thanks for Thy great glory!

T.S. Eliot, from Choruses from "The Rock"

This is such simple verse—more a sort of psalm than a poem per se—that it speaks for itself. Eliot wrote the words for the larger work from which it is taken, *The Rock: A Pageant Play*, in 1934 as a commission by the Church of England. Unlike his other choral drama, *Murder in the Cathedral*, these choruses are generally conceded to be tedious, tendentious, and dogmatic. As one critic put it, "The least said about this verse, the better." Even so, I count this selection among my Eliot favorites. It is one of the handful of poems that I return to in the Easter season, when the Christian liturgy delights in metaphors of darkness and light to proclaim the Christian mystery at its core.

Darkness and light are such core symbols of both nature and culture, of course, that they tend to lose their resonance for us, becoming, ironically, little more than dead clichés. One of the things I like about Eliot's paean is that it hews so closely to our everyday experience and yet at the same time reads fresh; opening up to the deeply simple truth of our lives and spirits. In that sense, I think he accomplishes in them what Christian Witman, editor of *Poetry* magazine, claims as the purpose of poetry: "In the end, we go to poetry for one reason, so that we might more fully inhabit

Poetry off the Shelf (continued)

our lives and the world in which we live them, and that if we more fully inhabit these things, we might be less apt to destroy both.”

Or, as Annie Lamott comments, “...it makes you a little lighthouse, when you’ve gotten down to what’s true and what’s real. And lighthouses don’t go running around the islands looking for boats to save...they are on the islands of wreckage and disaster and they give off a little bit of light, so that people might be saved.”

This may be something of what Quakers mean when they talk about “holding in the light.” John Gallery comments on this Quaker form of prayer this way:



When I became a Quaker and found that people used the phrase “hold in the light” rather than the word pray, I was greatly relieved. I felt I could relate to that, or at least to what I meant by holding in the light. I know that the “light” is God’s grace, but imagine for a moment that it’s actual light. The light gives clarity, warmth, optimism — many good things, but it gives them on its own. I don’t have to do anything. Holding someone in the light means I am not asking God for anything. I am not asking God to make something happen that I have determined in my human and all too often shortsighted way, to be the “right” thing for that person. I’m just holding them there. Basically I am saying two things: (1) God, please be with this person, let them know that you are there and they can depend on you; and (2) I am saying “thy will be done.” I am accepting for myself and asking help for that person to accept that whatever the outcome of the particular circumstance, it is good and part of a spiritual journey. If that is prayer, then that I understand.

International Associates Gathering

by Cathi Duffy

To gather with Associates from the different reaches of the Society and to feel an immediate bond was, for me, the best part of our time together. It was truly special to be in Mayfield and to meet some with whom I’ve communicated via email for three years and to get to know others for the first time. The inter-provincial SHCJ community that lives at Mayfield, Carolyn Green, SHCJ, from the Society’s Generalate in Rome, and various SHCJ from across Europe joined with Associates for many or all of the activities.

We gathered in prayer and also to share in a series of presentations and discussions. Judith Lancaster, SHCJ, led us the first full day which also included a tour of Mayfield. Some brief highlights of two of her talks follow.

Cornelia and Her Associates

Who might have fit the concept of Associates in Cornelia’s life? For Sr. Judith, Louisa Catherine, Duchess of Leeds, led the list. Born in Maryland in 1792, married and widowed twice, she had moved to St. Leonard’s in 1860 and met Cornelia. A committed Catholic, she helped and bothered Cornelia and the Society in many ways. When the Duchess’ sister died, Cornelia let Louisa Catherine stay as a lady boarder in the convent. See *Yes Lord, Always Yes* for more details.

What is it to be Holy Child?

Sr. Judith shared 4 words/phrases that summarize Holy Child for her: Incarnation, Freedom, Women of the Church, and Passion. For each theme, she shared key ideas and then related the topic to aspects of Cornelia’s life and/or quotes by Cornelia.

In describing **Incarnation**, Sr. Judith summarized it as:

Because God chose to become a human person,

We know God as relational

We desire to live fully human lives

We see the world as fundamentally good

We seek God in all things

We live in a life-affirming way

Continued on Page 11

Meet the Associates by Barbara DeConcini

In this issue, we are featuring Sarah Brabant. Many of you know Sarah through her various contributions to the Associates. Serving on the Core Team, Sarah gave a warm welcome to the group of Associates who visited Grand Coteau in 2005. She participated in the panel on Creation at last year's Associates gathering and prepared a Cornelian walking tour of Grand Coteau for the pilgrimage in April.

Sarah, tell us a little bit about yourself and your family.

I was born and grew up in Georgia. At twenty I married and we moved to Memphis. Later, when I found myself faced with a failing marriage and three children to support, I returned to college and earned both bachelor's and master's degrees at Memphis State. In 1967, newly divorced, I moved with my children to Athens, GA to work on a Ph.D. in sociology. When I was offered a position as Assistant



Sarah Brabant

Professor of Sociology at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette, we moved yet again. I am currently Professor of Sociology, Emerita, at the university.

What have you concentrated on in your scholarly work and teaching?

Given my own experience, I focused my research and

community work on the needs of women. I was one of the founders of the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women, as well as the first Rape Crisis Center and the first battered women's shelter in this part of the country. After my mother's death, I was moved to develop a seminar on the Sociology of Death and Dying. After continuing requests from students, the course became a curriculum standard, and I continued teaching it until my retirement in 2006. And, because of this course, my research and community work also shifted.

My publications include numerous articles in

books and professional journals on death and bereavement, as well as a book, *Mending the Torn Fabric: For Those Who Grieve and Those Who Want to Help*. I helped found Healing House, a program for bereaved children, and I've served for years as a consultant to the local Compassionate Friends chapter and the local AIDS program.

In 1973, I married a former professor and colleague, Wilmer MacNair. In addition to the Ph.D. in Sociology, Wilmer is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. At 76, we are both retired (supposedly!), but he is the interim minister at the First Presbyterian Church here in Lafayette and has a book coming out (*Unraveling the Mega-Church*). Meanwhile, I've been working on a series of articles on death and bereavement and conducting related workshops.

Wow, it sounds like a very active retirement. I think what retiring from one's full-time employment actually means is that you get to do the work you love, on your own terms. Have you found that to be true?

Absolutely! Through a series of rather strange events, I'm currently working with a neighborhood outreach ministry in an impoverished drug infested area. One night while helping with the clean-up after a meeting, I commented to an older African American woman I've known for years that the Lord seemed to have led me through three degrees and years of teaching and community organization to become a dish washer in an ex crack addict's (the leader of our ministry) kitchen. There was silence and then she responded, "I 'spect it took Him that long to get you ready." I 'spect she's right! In addition to our ministries, Wilmer took up the cello when he retired, and I continue to enjoy working in my garden.

How did you come to know the Society, and what attracted you to join the SHCJ Associates?

I was born and raised an Episcopalian, joined the Catholic Church when I married the first time, returned to the Episcopal Church when I divorced, and accompany my husband to Lutheran and Presbyterian churches whenever

Meet the Associates (continued)

he is preaching. Given my checkered church history, I was looking for some spiritual direction. I made my first retreat at the Jesuit Spirituality Center which is just a few miles down the road in Grand Coteau in 1991, and the following year I was assigned to Sister Elizabeth (Mel) Loomis, SHCJ, as my retreat director. Mel remained my spiritual director until she left Grand Coteau. She came into my life at a time when I desperately needed guidance and acceptance. She gave me both.



Later I heard about the Connelly children's graves at Grand Coteau. They are the ones who led me to their mother Cornelia. Through Mel's help, I was able to obtain a copy of the Positio and was immediately drawn to Cornelia--her life was so similar to mine, and her response to both its joys and sorrows became a guide for me in my efforts to lead the life God wants me to lead.

Mel was visiting Grand Coteau when I made the thirty-day retreat. I often remind her that she asked me if she could forward my name as a prospective associate when I was under a rule of silence and couldn't respond! At the time, I wasn't sure that I wanted to get involved in anything else. I am glad now that she took my lack of response as a "yes."

How has being an SHCJ Associate affected your everyday life?

In this part of the country, sixty percent of the population is Roman Catholic and numerous religious communities are represented in the area. Many have begun some kind of associate program, but for the most part they are little more than auxiliaries, doing things like hosting teas and luncheons. (Quite frankly, some even seem to me to be little more than a source of revenue for the communities.) The SHCJ Associates program is so utterly different! SHCJ Associates tend to be women (and men) who are very involved in ministries of their own, are looking for spiritual resources and support, and are called to Cornelia's life as a much needed guide in today's world.

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

I feel that Cornelia Connelly is one of the best kept secrets in Christendom, and my dearest hope is that we can bring her story to other women like me who have been abused, abandoned, and betrayed. Far too many have left organized religion to seek solace in new age or pop culture. I believe that Cornelia Connelly can provide them comfort, hope, and, most importantly, a spiritual path that can grace their lives and, through them, the lives of others.

2009 SHCJ Jubilarians - American Province

75 Years

Julia Hare, SHCJ

Mary Urban Haughton, SHCJ

70 Years

Virginia Marie Gorvin, SHCJ

Rosemary McHugh, SHCJ

Elizabeth McNamara, SHCJ

Anne Phyllis Ryan, SHCJ

60 Years

Jeanne Adams, SHCJ

Dorothy Cunnion, SHCJ

Lorraine DeViller, SHCJ

Immaculata DiBlasi, SHCJ

Elizabeth Gehrman, SHCJ

Pauline Mary McShain, SHCJ

Edwina Menten, SHCJ

Margaret Rogers, SHCJ

Helen Schwarz, SHCJ

Mildred Whall, SHCJ

50 Years

Constance Craig, SHCJ

Jean Gilbon, SHCJ

Sheila McNiff, SHCJ

Ann-Joyce Peters, SHCJ

Joan Spearing, SHCJ

Loretta Tiernan, SHCJ

Pilgrimage to Grand Coteau and Natchez

Grand Coteau



Associates at Oak Alley



Prayer Service at children's grave



Bishop's Cottage



Reading the Baptismal Records of Mary Magdalene and Frank at St. Charles Church



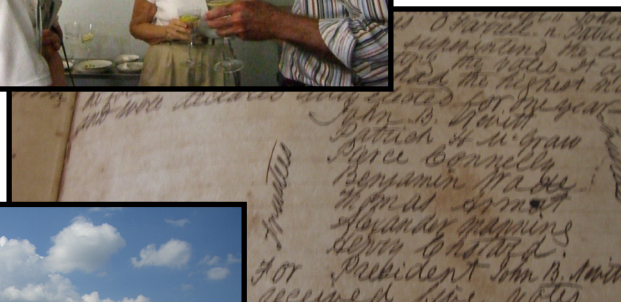
Sharing this special time



Reading the Baptismal Records of Mercer and Adeline at Trinity Episcopal Church



At St. Mary's Basilica, seeing church records from 1838



At Mississippi River

Natchez

International Gathering at Mayfield (continued)

For **Freedom**, Sr. Judith understands the Holy Child spirit as having a freedom of spirituality, a freedom of thought, liberty of spirit, and independence. Some of Cornelia's quotes that help to promote Cornelia's sense of freedom include:

'most liberal God'

'an almost unlimited elasticity of spirit & simplicity of spirit among us'

'true liberty is that of the children of God'

'I have burnt the letter, my Lord!'

'I find that I have changed my mind'

Although there are men as Associates

in Nigeria, Chile, Dominican Republic, and the United States, there are, to date, only women Associates in England. Sr. Judith's words for **Women of the Church** are as appropriate for the guys as well. Cornelia always maintained an adult stance in her relationship with the Church hierarchy. For us, as for Cornelia, Sr. Judith focused on:



Viewing chapel at Mayfield

- Seeking a fuller contribution for women in the life of the Church
- Engaging with theology, scripture, church history
- Being willing to ask the hard questions
- Being in loyal opposition when necessary

For **Passion**, we are called to live with zeal, enthusiasm, generosity, a willingness to take risks, make mistakes, and taking seriously our longing and desire. One of Cornelia's quotes from this theme is "give me a love full of action".

Role of Associates Today

On Friday, April 3, we spent the day learning about the Associate relationship in the different countries and discussing how we might collaborate.

For all, there is the common threads that bind us as we try to live the Holy Child mission and spirit in our daily lives, ever diverse they might be! For Associates in Chile, they have added a missionary role as they head south each year to bring the Catholic faith to others. The Associates in Nigeria are fairly new in being organized beyond the local communities. From an initial meeting early this year, they hope to assist in fundraising efforts for projects in the African Province. The Associates in Britain have regional faith-sharing gatherings throughout the year and then hold 2 annual events in the spring and autumn for all Associates across England. The European Province Coordinator of Associates volunteers for a 3 year term. In September Sophie Rudge will be assuming this role when Jenny Banks-Bryer completes her term.



Jenny Banks Bryer and Cathi Duffy

Ideas for Collaboration Across Provinces

How can we collaborate with one another? How do we deepen the connection for all Associates? Some are the ideas included:

- International Day of Prayer, perhaps March 25. Common prayers would be celebrated in local settings by Associates in the 3 provinces.
- Common resources for retreats or faith-sharing
- International project to support one of the Society's ministries. This would need to ensure that there is no conflict with any support done for local projects.
- Invite international representatives to national gatherings
- Embrace technology, e.g., Facebook
- International gathering, minimally of core teams, every 5 years
- Twinning of prayer groups both regionally and internationally

Share your thoughts and ideas with Cathi.

Book Recommendation by Cathi Duffy

Since this issue focuses on Cornelia's capacity for joy in her every day life, the recommendation is the book of reflection, ***Growing in Joy***, by Robert Morneau. The product description on amazon.com states:

"Featuring the writings of Mother Teresa John Paul II Thomas Merton Jessica Powers Evelyn Underhill Simone Weil Thomas a Kempis Julian of Norwich, ...and many others. We are susceptible to joy. Spending quality time with joyful people and their writings might well transform our heart and soul. Bishop Robert Morneau reflects on how we can live a life imbued with joy and share this treasure with those around us. Let the passages and reflections presented here invite you to rejoice and delight, nourishing seeds of joy and life in its fullness."

I have an edition of this book that was published in 1998 but I noticed that the version being sold was printed in 2006. I've used it over the years not only for personal reflection but also as a great resource for faith-sharing.

In concluding one reflection, Morneau asks if we 'bring delight and gladness' to work and suggests that our prayer response be:

*"God of creation and of joy,
you long to share your blessings with us.
Send the Spirit of joy into our heart
that our work and leisure may be done in
delight,
and that our worship and love may be filled
with your peace.
Lead us gently into your abundant love."*

We can all say Amen to this prayer!