



SHCJ ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

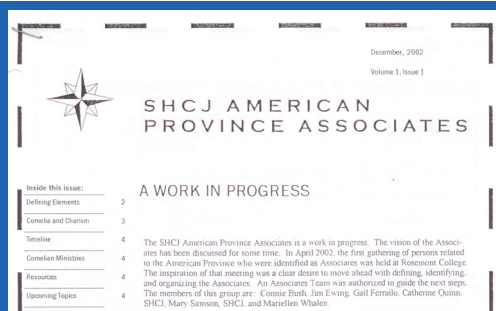
AMERICAN PROVINCE

WINTER 2017 Volume XV Issue I

ACTIONS NOT WORDS



Associates celebrate Epiphany 2017
Eileen Dorman, Kathy Tatlow, and Tricia Fell
Pompton Plains, NJ



The first issue in 2002! We are beginning Issue 15!



Learn more about SHCJ ministries.
This issue we explore Hope Partnership and
Providence Center in Philadelphia.

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From the Director

This is a milestone year for us!

We celebrate 15 years since that first meeting at Rosemont College for all 'who were identified as Associates'. In December 2002, the first issue of the newsletter was produced. For 15 years, the Associate Newsletter has been sharing news and reflections while introducing us to Associates from across the United States and beyond.

We also celebrate 10 years of Associates making commitments as part of a national community of SHCJ Associates.

Major milestones to celebrate! Whether you were at the first gathering (I was not), the first commitments, or were called to the Associate relationship recently, each of us can share how profoundly we have deepened our faith and our spiritual relationship with the Society while making the mission and charism more fully our own.

May we be open to the possibilities of living the mission in new and deeper ways during the next 15!

*Glory be to God whose power working in us
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine!*

Providence Center

by Pat McKinley and Marilyn Nigro

Note from the Director: Many thanks to Judy Talvacchia who shared with us 5 years of reflections under Cornelia and her Charism! I am always grateful for the Associates who generously share their talents with the larger Associate community. No doubt Judy's gifts will surface again in new and wonderful ways! Thank you Judy!

Last year, Judy shared in this feature the many ways that Associates live lives of mercy. In 2017, Pat McKinley and Marilyn Nigro will feature ministries in which the American Province is involved. They will share a general description of the ministry as well as possible volunteer opportunities – both local and at-a-distance. We hope that this information will complement Ministry Connections, the province emails, that share a moment in time of the ministry – highlighting an individual or event.

If you are anything like us, you watch (with deep admiration and appreciation) the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, most in their retirement years, but still working so hard and faithfully with members of their immediate communities, and you wonder, is there anything I can do to help? Recently, we visited Providence Center in Philadelphia to understand more about the work they do. We met with Sister Peggy Doherty, SHCJ who is a co-founder of Providence Center and is currently Director of the ESL programs and prayer groups. Also sitting down with us was Dave Chiles, the Executive Director, who has extensive experience in volunteering with and supporting poor and immigrant communities.

Providence Center was started after St. Edward parish and school closed in 1993. The school had been staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus for over 100 years. Sister Peggy Doherty, who was the principal of St. Edward School did not want to walk away from this mission. After going door-to-door to discuss ongoing needs and plans for the future, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus began the work of maintaining a presence and relationship with the community and the Providence Center was born. With this article, we are hoping to define a personal role for those interested in volunteering time, expertise, or networking to find resources for those who continue to

struggle in these impoverished communities.

Information about Providence Center

Providence Center is located in the heart of Fairhill, a vibrant community in North Philadelphia. The people served are primarily from Puerto Rico or immigrants from the Dominican Republic, Mexico, or Central America. The community faces many challenges, including poverty rates that are the highest in Philadelphia. Over half of the community lives below the poverty line, and the median household income is under \$15,000. At the same time, the spirit and resiliency of neighbors is inspiring, and they are working hard to build better lives for themselves and their families. Providence Center supports revitalization efforts in the community, and accompany students as they strive for futures full of possibility and grace.

At Providence Center, children are empowered to overcome trauma and grow into their full potential, teens become leaders and role models in their community, and adults find the confidence and skills to speak English. The mission is to educate people to have the power and spirit to transform their lives and their communities.

What They Do

Many of the students have experienced too much of the world's cruelty. Providence Center offers a "love full of action"—a safe space, nurturing environment, and vibrant educational experience to help children, teens, and adults grow as bright, caring, and creative people.

Children's Programming: This program is rooted in our Holy Child educational mission to educate the whole child. Providing a values-based afterschool program for 45 elementary and middle school children, it is grounded in social-emotional learning principles. As a safe haven for children after school, it is a place where children develop nurturing relationships, make choices that contribute to their growth and safety, and explore creative outlets to understand and express their feelings.



Teen Programming: Role modeling is a critical part of youth programming. Teen Leaders from North Philadelphia are hired and trained to work with the children. The teens receive personal development to help them identify and achieve their own goals and to prepare for college. They are powerful mentors because they have grown up facing similar challenges and yet are now taking leadership roles in the community.

English as a Second Language (ESL): Providence Center offers ESL classes for adults, serving approximately 300 each year, currently in four levels of instruction. Learning English improves their employment prospects. And with newfound confidence and skills, our adult students are able to help their children with schoolwork, communicate effectively with their teachers and doctors, and become more involved in their community.

Providence Center will be moving to their new building in the spring of 2017. It is located only 1 block from their current location but will afford 6500 square feet of space, a huge improvement. There will be volunteer opportunities both at the site and also remotely, from the comfort of your own living room. They are looking for the following types of volunteers:

Homework help - for example, if you are or were a math teacher and would like to be an on-call resource, there are students who need extra help understanding mathematical principles. Perhaps you would be available one or two nights per week to answer questions and offer learning guidance. This effort could include students in Kindergarten through college.

Curriculum writer - do you have experience and could you help with curriculum development? Any subject would be helpful, from reading and math to science, art, and physical education.

After school program tutors - perhaps you could visit one day per week for after school from 3:00-5:30 pm. They need people to help children with their homework or just read stories to children.

Field Trips and Events - Would you have time to attend a one-day fair for local children to help



out, or to go on a field trip to the zoo or a local museum? Providence Center could always use a few extra adults to help out at one-time events. Sometimes a small group may form to clean up a local park; more hands will make the job more fun. They have a Spring Fair for children in the community on May 19 and could really use volunteers for the different games and activities.

Workshops - Do you have a specific skill or work experience that you could share at a one-time workshop? Perhaps you have computer skills, were an electrician, a yoga teacher, or have particular arts & crafts talent.

Remote volunteer consultant - The Providence Center would love to have a list of resource people who would be willing to share expertise by phone or in person. Are you a current or former English teacher who could read and offer direction with college essays? Maybe your skills and experience can inspire someone or give them the confidence to reach beyond their current dreams.

In addition to direct support for students and families, the Providence Center can use help with marketing, grant writing, social media, graphic design, office skills, data entry, building maintenance, and accounting. Could you be a resource to help with computer set-up or even simple tech help, by phone?

Watch the website www.providencecentershcj.org for information about a Spring event on April 30 at the Holy Child School at Rosemont to learn more about the

Center, and a fall Open House in the new building to welcome everyone. Providence Center is hoping to expand the ESL classes, the teen leadership program and would like to offer more family oriented programs. Sister Peggy leads monthly prayer groups which bring all people together.

If you are interested in helping



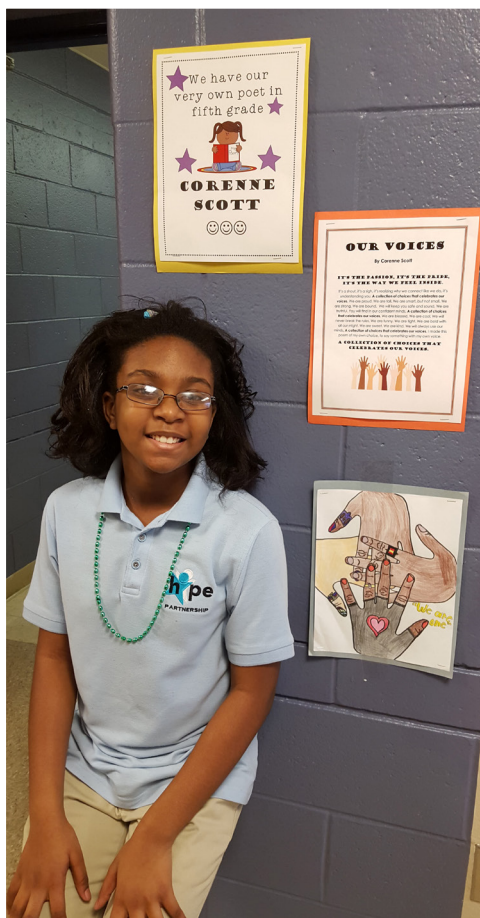
Hope Partnership

financially, there are sponsorship opportunities for individuals or groups. They would also love to come and speak to your congregation or civic group about their work!

The current address is: 2635 N. 4th Street in Philadelphia, PA 19133 215-739-7465

But remember, the new building will be one block away starting in the spring of 2017 and they will have plenty of parking available.

If you are interested in learning more about the Center or any of the above opportunities, visit the website: www.ProvidenceCenterSHCJ.org or please contact: David Chiles, Executive Director at dchiles@providencecentershcj.org



Are you curious about how you can help others to enjoy a quality education, or even to help hopeful workers learn how to fill out a job application or write a resume? Are you a retired teacher with some time and energy to invest in a wonderful cause? Well, you may be interested in learning more about Hope Partnership for Education, located in Philadelphia. It all started in 2001, when sisters from the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and the Sisters of Mercy first met to obtain a grant for a feasibility study. They formed planning committees and got to work. Then in 2002, Sr. Rose Martin, RSM and Sr. Carol Ann Knight, SHCJ incorporated Hope and moved into office space in eastern North Philadelphia to begin the work that has grown into a loving and supportive middle school and an Adult Education community center.

Hope is a member of the *NativityMiguel Coalition* along with 45 other schools, dedicated to the mission of breaking the cycle of poverty through faith-based education. Beginning with an after school enrichment program in 2002, Hope Partnership for Education began the first full middle school class in 2004 and graduated the first 8th grade in 2008. They quickly followed with a Graduate Support program for students in grades 9 through 12. Hope Partnership provides a third bond for the community with Adult

Education courses, which meet up to 4 times per week. In 2013, Hope moved into their current building, a former Salvation Army Recreation Center with 28,000 square feet of space, located in the Fairhill section of Philadelphia, the most impoverished zip code in the city. After intense planning and a lot of hard work with donors, architects and builders, Hope now enjoys a new



bright space and happily shares their large gymnasium with the Fairhill PAL Center, supporting even more friends in the community they have nurtured.

Recently, we toured Hope and were so impressed with their wonderful work and facilities. We met with the Executive Director and co-founder, Sister Rose Martin, RSM and Pam Carunchio, Director of Adult Education and Strategic Partnerships. One of the first things you will notice as you enter the lobby area are depictions of Catherine McAuley, the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, with her words listed below, "the proof of love is deed". Beside her is Cornelia Connelly, foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus with her words written below, so similar and just as powerful, "Actions not words". The sisters, employees and volunteers who continue their dreams obviously have been inspired by these women into building this welcoming community center. What an intense amount of love and work has been going on inside these walls.

**tell me and
i'll forget.
show me
and i may
remember.
involve me
and i learn.**
- Benjamin Franklin

We followed Sr. Rose into other areas. We began in a large, inviting room containing musical instruments and an oversize video monitor for multimedia presentations. Recently, students were introduced to instruments like saxophones, trumpets and trombones. Generous businesses, donors and organizations supplied all of the instruments, along with quality furniture. We continued through bright, cheerful, open classrooms, a growing library filled

with books and rows of computers and everywhere we met smiling, eager children. On the wall hangs a very cool piece of art depicting a young person reading. It is a collage which was made by an artist and the students.

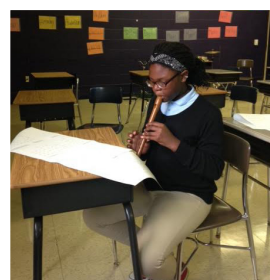
One youth ambassador was called out of class to personalize the tour and answer our questions. The young man we met was polite and well-spoken, and happy to respond and discuss studies and methods. He explained setting and meeting his "power goals" for the week with us and described his participation in a group who are joining in the 100 book challenge. The class sizes are small, 15 students. The teachers hold advanced degrees along with a passion for working with youth. Additionally, Hope offers tutoring/mentoring, or leading afternoon activities like chess, drama, art or sports (and is

always looking for qualified volunteers to join in). They are helping to fill out college applications and working through the FAFSA maze. Hope needs people who can write articles and/or take photos of events. Their school schedule runs on an extended basis to help students catch up and surpass current grade levels of study. Enrichment classes run in 6-week sessions, and the adult education classes are 8 week cycles. Volunteers can participate as little as one day per week, or only an afternoon per week for 2 hours. Try it out for one 8 week session only or one after school session for a 6 week commitment.

Adult Education includes GED and Basic Literacy courses. Introductory computer classes and ESL courses are also offered. Adults can also take courses on financial literacy, health issues, or family crisis management. Workshops in resume and business writing for adults are slated for the future. There are classes for parents which prepare them to help their own children with math or reading homework.

Committee members are also needed. They typically meet only 5 times per year. Maybe you have expertise to help with finances, site facilities, PR and marketing or social media.

If you have an interest in helping Hope Partnership for Education in any way, or would like to learn more, please contact the Executive Director and co-founder, Sister Rose Martin, RSM. She would be delighted to help you find your niche at Hope.



For more information:
www.hopepartnershipforeducation.org or
call 215-232-5410 Ext. 101

Hope is located at :
2601 N. 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19133

Next issue we head west to our California ministries.

Wallace Stevens

by Michelle Dugan

Not Ideas About the Thing but the Thing Itself

At the earliest ending of winter,
In March, a scrawny cry from outside
Seemed like a sound in his mind.

He knew that he heard it,
A bird's cry, at daylight or before,
In the early March wind.

The sun was rising at six,
No longer a battered panache above snow . . .
It would have been outside.

It was not from the vast ventriloquism
Of sleep's faded papier-mâché . . .
The sun was coming from outside.

That scrawny cry—it was
A chorister whose c preceded the choir.
It was part of the colossal sun,

Surrounded by its choral rings,
Still far away. It was like
A new knowledge of reality.

"Not Ideas About the Thing but the Thing Itself", from The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens, copyright 1954 by Wallace Stevens and renewed 1982 by Holly Stevens. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House, Inc.

Source: The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens (Alfred A. Knopf, 1954)



Of Mere Being

The palm at the end of the mind,
Beyond the last thought, rises
In the bronze decor,

A gold-feathered bird
Sings in the palm, without human meaning,
Without human feeling, a foreign song.

You know then that it is not the reason
That makes us happy or unhappy.
The bird sings. Its feathers shine.

The palm stands on the edge of space.
The wind moves slowly in the branches.
The bird's fire-fangled feathers dangle down.

Wallace Stevens, "Of Mere Being" from The Palm at the End of the Mind: Selected Poems and a Play. Copyright © 1967, 1969, 1971 by Holly Stevens. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Source: The Palm at the End of the Mind: Selected Poems and a Play by Wallace Stevens (Alfred A. Knopf, 1971)

The Dove in Spring

Brooder, brooder, deep beneath its walls—
A small howling of the dove
Makes something of the little there,

The little and the dark, and that
In which it is and that in which
It is established. There the dove

Makes this small howling, like a thought
That howls in the mind or like a man
Who keeps seeking out his identity

In that which is and is established . . . It howls
Of the great sizes of an outer bush
And the great misery of the doubt of it,

Of stripes of silver that are strips
Like slits across a space, a place
And state of being large and light.

There is this bubbling before the sun,
This howling at one's ear, too far
For daylight and too near for sleep.

Influential and esteemed by his contemporaries and by the current literary establishment as well, the Pulitzer Prize-winning American poet Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) presents a challenge for anyone seeking spiritual insights in his poetry. In fact, one of his most famous poems, "Sunday Morning," is considered a refutation of Christian belief and even, in Stevens' own words, "simply an expression of paganism." Throughout his lifetime, Stevens maintained a resolutely secular stance, replacing religious faith with the power of the artistic imagination as a way to understand and affirm human experience. Nevertheless, when I came across these last of his poems, purely by chance (left behind by our pianist son who tried and didn't particularly care for the accompanying musical transcriptions), I was intrigued. Was this the Spirit asking that I wrestle with them? So it seemed to me, and the more I read about Stevens, the more convinced I became that "the nonspiritual poet" is an oxymoron. Then what was he getting at, especially as he lay dying of cancer? There is a controversy surrounding Stevens' possible deathbed conversion to Catholicism that remains unsettled, disputed by his daughter, who published "The Dove in Spring" and "Of Mere Being" in a posthumous volume. "Not Ideas about the Thing but the Thing Itself" appeared as the final poem in *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens*, which he published just before his death in 1955.

"Not Ideas..." locates us in a specific moment in time ("At the earliest ending of winter,/In March") as the poet is caught between sleep and waking, when the individual's consciousness, like the season, is in transition. The change of state prompts an awareness – "A new knowledge of reality." What is inside, what is outside? How are they one? The bird is a "chorister" whose "scrawny cry" nevertheless is "part of the colossal sun." As a narrative, this poem tells us that the poet wakes up and realizes that what he hears is real, not "the vast ventriloquism/Of sleep's faded papier-mache." Reality can be clearly established and distinguished. And yet, the experience itself exposes the fluidity of the mind and even more striking, the interconnectedness of existence: man, bird, and sun – each is "the thing itself," and each is part of this moment of awakening.

"The Dove in Spring" presents a less confident view of

our ability to know what is real. The dove is a brooder; its "small howling" is "like a thought/That howls in the mind or like a man/Who keeps seeking out his identity." Daunted by the "great sizes" and "the great misery of the doubt," the bird longs for what can only be seen in glimpses, "stripes of silver.../Like slits across a space." In the last stanza, the poet himself seems to acknowledge that he too is tormented by doubt, "bubbling before the sun,/This howling at one's ear, too far/For daylight and too near for sleep." The sense of confinement within a limited awareness, "The little and the dark," contrasts vividly with the scope of what lies outside the bird's comprehension – and ours – "a place/And state of being large and light," a place clearly worth our yearning.

While "Not Ideas..." and "The Dove..." present realistic depictions of the natural world, "Of Mere Being" takes us "Beyond the last thought" to a place "without human meaning,/Without human feeling, a foreign song." Here "on the edge of space," Stevens invents gorgeous visual imagery: "bronze décor" and "a gold-feathered bird" that sings and shines. The final stanza delves deep into the mythos: "The wind moves slowly in the branches./The bird's fire-fangled feathers dangle down." As in the W. B. Yeats poem, "Sailing to Byzantium," a golden bird suggests immortality and perfection, stillness and otherworldliness. I cannot tell what "it" is intended to reference when Stevens tells us, rather ruefully it seems, "You know then that it is not the reason/That makes us happy or unhappy"; or perhaps he is simply saying that having an explanation is irrelevant in the end.

So, there you have it, three beautiful poems, at once simple and mysterious, all with a bird as a central image, by one of our most celebrated poets writing at the end of his life without the hope of heaven. Is he afraid? Has the consolation of art been sufficient? My heart goes out to the twentieth-century modernist whose job it was to demolish the old order so that we can envision the new. Incarnational spirituality allows us to see in creation, here and now, what is divine and eternal. Science and faith, the body and the soul, the natural world and God are no longer opposed; relishing this world makes us grateful Christians, not pagans; and our not-knowing is no longer a howling but a joyful love song.

Michelle Dugan

Barbara Bernardi

So here again we have another example of the wonderful people that comprise the SHCJ Associates, all brought about by our beloved Cornelia Connelly. Our spotlight for this issue is on someone whose introduction to Cornelia and the SHCJ is a little different.

Michelle Dugan [who is currently author of *Poetry Off the Shelf*] was born in Philadelphia but instead of attending parochial schools she attended the public schools of Haverford Township. As she tells the story her very proud Italian-American parents, while staunchly Catholic sent her to public schools. Her father was left-handed so was traumatized by nuns while in school. Obviously not SHCJ nuns! But Michelle attended catechism class and received all the sacraments. Although she says she wished she could wear a Catholic school uniform she feels that her non-Catholic education prepared her to have the zeal of a convert when she discovered the SHCJ. This happened as a parent when her middle son switched to the Holy Child grade school in Drexel Hill (now Holy Child Academy). Although the Dugans had never heard of the school, Michelle loved the school and soon found herself teaching there when her position as a theme editor at Marple Newtown High School was eliminated. She actually should be writing these articles as her degree from Tufts University is in English. Anyway, Michelle soon became the Service Coordinator and, due to her parents' generosity, her youngest son Peter also was able to attend HCA. Now Michelle is retired but her eldest son, who did not go to school there, is currently the piano and guitar teacher so the family ties to the school live on.

Cornelia's charism came to be central in Michelle's life when she decided to deepen her spiritual life. This, strangely enough, as was the case with so many others, was facilitated by our own Cathi Duffy, who agreed to be Michelle's guide in the formation process. Meanwhile she also discovered the Eco-Spirituality Group and Sisters Terri MacKenzie and Tese Currie - her mentors! Michelle made her formal commitment almost five

years ago in the chapel at New Sharon with Sr. Tese by her side. As with so many of the members of her Evergreens eco-spirituality group, they have become central and much loved as they meet in prayer and hope each month.



Another big part of Michelle's SHCJ Associate life is the work she does for justice issues as a member of the Catholic Relief Services Advocacy Committee, along with another Associate, Anne Ayella. They have met many kindred spirits in that group as well. Everyone in the group is committed to seeing a Church that is inclusive and loving in the way that Pope Francis inspires us to be. In a few weeks they plan to lobby Senator Toomey, which is exciting for them!

Now Michelle wants a big shout-out to the Associates of St. Luke's Parish in North Carolina, brought together by Sr. Veronica Grover who welcomed her with such open arms when she was seeking to belong. Michelle has had so many unforgettable experiences along the way! Sr. Jeanne Marie Guerin, for example, invited her to join the sisters working since Vatican II on peace and justice issues; although the group has "retired" now Michelle says it was a great privilege to know them. And of course she made the discovery of Teilhard deChardin and all that followed from his spirituality: Mary Evelyn Tucker, Ilia Delio, Elizabeth Johnson, Brian Swimme, Thomas Berry and the whole idea of an evolving human consciousness within a universe animated by Love.

Michelle and her husband will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary this June; her mother celebrated her 100th birthday last fall. They are expecting their 9th grandchild in July. Her greatest joy is being with her children and grandchildren.

So here again we have another example of the wonderful people that comprise the SHCJ Associates, all brought about by our beloved Cornelia Connelly.

Care of Creation

Kay Rowan and Linda Tarney



Have you considered incorporating some integral ecology into your Lenten preparations? Perhaps the section sited below can help you prepare as you go about the work of these forty days which culminate in the joys of Easter and our Risen Lord.

"Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others." #159

Reflection Questions:

(taken directly from #160 of Laudato Si)

- *"What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?"*
- *"What is the purpose of our life in the world?"*
- *"What need does the earth have of us?"*

Resources

Freecycle.org

Do you want to simplify your life?
Do you want to declutter your home?
Do you want to keep items out of the landfills?
Do you want to pay it forward?

If you said yes to any of these questions, then consider joining a Freecycle community on Freecycle.org. It is an online community in your local area where you can regift items you no longer use. It is about giving away something that has no use in your life anymore to someone who could extend its usefulness a little longer. You post offers for items you want to gift and post wants for items you may need. Remember, one person's trash is another person's treasure. Let's make the best of God's gifts to us and help out our brothers and sisters while keeping the earth clean. Sign up today!

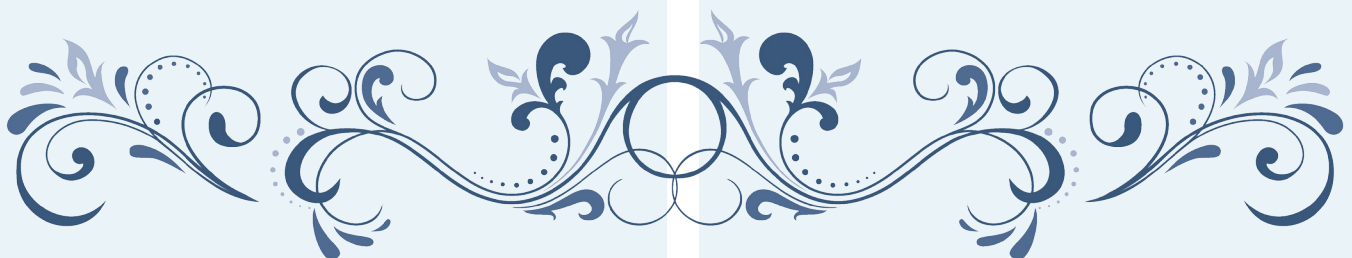


Laudato Si' #159-162

Lent 2017: I Thirst (Water)
ecospiritualityresources.com

catholicclimatemovement.global

(This site had a nice Lenten resource last year that has not yet been updated for 2017)



From the Director

Associate Highlights

by Cathi Duffy



Prayer Connections

Do share your ideas and thoughts about ways to deepen the Associate – Sister relationship.

March 25 - International Associates Day of Prayer

Join with Associates in this special day of prayer.

International Newsletter

The theme for our annual International Associates Newsletter will be Associates' engagement with the migrant and refugee issues and crises in each of our countries. What are you doing personally or regionally?

Please share with Barbara DeConcini, bdeconc@emory.edu, what you are doing so it can be included within the response for Associates from the United States. Thank you!

Congrats to Pat and Willa Izzo

Shepherd's Center in Lewisburg, West Virginia have named Associates Pat and Willa Izzo as recipients of the 2017 Community Service Award. Pat and Willa came to know the Society through Sr. Veronica when the Izzos were living in Charlotte. For the many ways that Pat and Willa live 'actions not words' through their community service, we too congratulate them on this special recognition.

2017 Grand Coteau - Natchez Pilgrimage

Please keep in your prayers the 20 pilgrims who will be visiting Grand Coteau and Natchez in late March.

2018 National Gathering Planning

Be part of committees that plan our Associate Gathering in 2018. Do you have ideas for topics, speakers, prayer, meals...? Discussions will take place via conference calls. There are already a few Associates who are willing to lead specific areas of our next gathering. Join in by replying to this email with your area of interest. Thanks!

