



SHCJ ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN PROVINCE

ACTIONS NOT WORDS



Associates Rita Fortner, Linda Mennis, and Jan Clifford at SCLAMP 25th Celebratory Brunch with SHCJ Sisters and others



Associate Linda Tarney was keynote at Last Straw: Save the Planet sponsored by Associates in Mint Hill (NC)



Associates celebrate with SHCJ Sisters, alums, and parishioners at the SHCJ Province Appreciation Mass and Lunch in Melrose (MA).

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Vision of SHCJ Associates, USA

One in Spirit, the SHCJ Associates collaborate with the Society to embody the charism of Cornelia Connelly in our everyday lives while responding to the wants of the age with generosity

From the Director

Gratitude is an integral part of my Associate relationship. As we move toward Thanksgiving, know that Sisters and Associates, by name, are remembered in prayer.

As I recall the past year, the energy and enthusiasm of the National Gathering is still vivid. The hard work catapults us to explore our spiritual journey as individuals and as community; from there, we are called to actions that heal the world while sharing the joy of God's presence in our world.

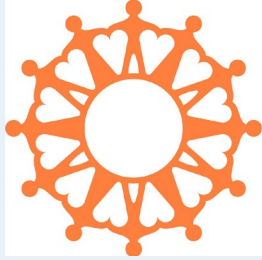
Twelve Sisters volunteered as spiritual directors for the Associates Ignatian atHome Retreat crafted by Sr. Elizabeth Mary Strub. Several Associates have begun while others are scheduled to begin in early 2019. Another grace of being in the Associate relationship! Gratitude abounds!

With the Core Team, we have begun another new year with Invitation, Visibility, and Visioning as key areas. If you feel the Spirit nudging you to participate in a new way, check in with a Core Team member or me to explore options (short task or long term activities). It takes all of us to co-create the future to which God is calling us!

The past year exemplified the many ways that Associates live 'a love full of action' at home and in areas of great need. Humble and (continued on Page 3)

Sharing the Journey

by Anne Ayella



Share the
Journey ✨
#sharejourney



It has been over one year since Pope Francis has invited all of us to “share the journey” with our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters. Many exciting prayer and action activities have taken place and are continuing in Year 2.

A recent effort that encourages all of us to listen, learn and find common ground is Catholic Relief Services’ “Be Unafraid” Campaign. This campaign has interviewed dozens of refugees and their American neighbors and has encouraged them to share their stories with the hope that the fears that can tear us apart can actually bring us together. “Be Unafraid” is a traveling photo exhibit that challenges us to understand the plight of our brothers and sisters. The stories are also available by visiting www.sharejourney.org/real-refugee-stories. What better way to connect with refugees and come to a greater understanding of their fears, why they left their country and their hopes for a brighter future!

On a practical note, the work of the SHCJ Wants of the Age (WOTA) committee continues. The committee continues to award grants to groups working to support those in need, including migrants and refugees. A recent grant has been awarded to Father Joe’s Village in San Diego thanks to a recommendation by Sr. Ann Durst SHCJ, founding Director of Casa Cornelia Law Center which is celebrating 25 years providing free quality pro bono legal services to indigent immigrant communities.

If you are currently working with or volunteering with a group or want to recommend a group that serves migrants and refugees, grants are available to support your efforts. Contact WOTA@shcj.org for more information. Holy Child Sisters and Associates’ recommendations are welcome as we continue to “share the journey” and make a real difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters seeking a better life for themselves and their families.

In the spirit of Cornelia Connelly and her love for children, we conclude with :

PRAYER FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN

Loving Father, in your infinite compassion, we seek your divine protection for refugee children who are often alone and afraid. Provide solace to those who have been witnesses to violence and destruction, who have lost parents, family, friends, home, and all they cherish due to war or persecution.

Comfort them in their sorrow, and bring help in their time of need. Show mercy to unaccompanied migrant children, too, Lord. Reunite them with their families and loved ones. Guide those children who are strangers in a foreign land to a place of peace and safety. Comfort them in their sorrow, and bring help in their time of need. Show us how we might reach out to these precious and vulnerable children. Open our hearts to migrant and refugee children in need, so that we might see in them your own immigrant Son. Give us courage to stand up in their defense against those who would do them harm.

For this we pray through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

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hidden, few know of the heroic efforts!

I also want to thank all of you who contributed financially in the last fiscal year. Through the Associates' Annual Appeal, registration fees, and in-kind donations, Associates covered all expenses (excluding my salary and most benefits). Gifts are recognized in the Annual Report of the American Province. Thank you for the many ways that you support the Associate relationship!

Autumn has been full of events for SHCJ Sisters and Associates. The photos on page 1 highlight just a few of the activities that we have shared together - celebrating ministries and long-term relationships/friendships and calling us forth for meeting the wants of our age!

My sincere prayer is that you experience an abundance of blessings in this busy season of family, friendships, joy and the Light of our world! May the powerful embrace of God's Love be your peace and the source for emanating love to the vulnerable in our world!

Cathi



Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on [Unsplash](#)

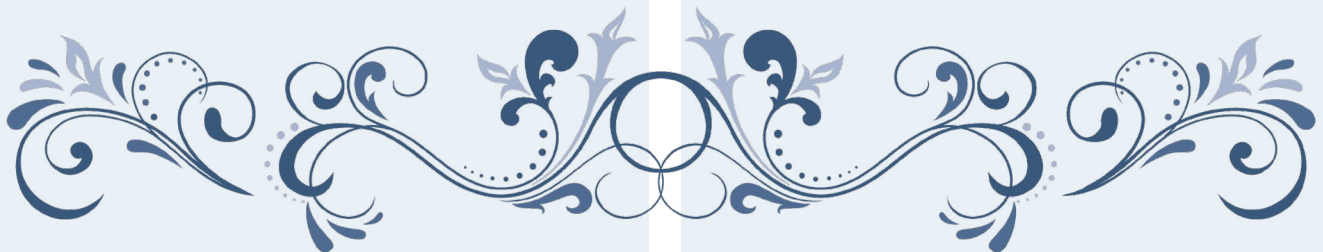
Excerpt from *On the Call to Holiness in Today's World* by Pope Francis

This Apostolic Exhortation is a powerful message on what it means to be called to holiness today. It speaks especially to us as Holy Child Associates since Pope Francis writes from his Ignatian spiritual experience. In this and future issues, we will share a brief quote. Consider reading the entire document for your personal reflection and/or with a faith-sharing group.

Share your favorite quotes from this document by sending them to associates-usa@shcj.org and perhaps it will appear here in a future issue.

**"23...You too need to see the entirety of your life as a mission. Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs that he gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make so as to discern its place in the mission you have received."*

Reflect: Do you experience your life as a mission? What is your mission?



Eileen Dorman

In this issue we are introducing you to Eileen Dorman. Thanks Eileen for sharing the following about your life and your spiritual journey.

When I was asked to write about myself for the newsletter, I hesitated because I really wasn't sure what I would say; however, I felt that perhaps Cathi Duffy, who put forth my name, saw something in me that other Associates might find good reading. Well here goes!

I am the middle child of five. I have an older brother, an older sister, and two younger sisters. I grew up in Palisades Park, New Jersey which is close to the George Washington Bridge. Being a family of seven, we didn't have many "things" growing up but we did have each other and my parents would save enough money during the year so that we could spend a week in the summer at the Jersey Shore and have presents under the tree for Christmas. Perhaps, most important though, my mother and father gave us the gift of faith. We went to church every Sunday, Holy Days, Novenas, May Crowning, etc. We also went to Catholic grammar school. My mother and father continued to be active in the church particularly after my father retired. This foundation of faith was important to developing my own faith's journey.

After college, I found myself in a period of darkness concerning my faith and I even explored other religions; however, I always came back to the Catholic faith. When I moved into my townhome in Pompton Plains (about 45 minutes from Palisades Park), I started looking for a church. After going to many different churches in the area, I found that I was most at home at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Pompton Plains which is the starting point of my introduction to SHCJ through Sr. Rosemary McSorley. She gathered a group of us together for faith sharing which then turned into us being involved with the RCIA program which then turned into asking us if we wanted to be Associates. I really had no idea what it meant to be an Associate so at first I said I don't think so. If you know Sr. Rosemary, that answer wasn't a good one. In addition, the little I knew about Cornelia did not spark any type of connection for me. Well, God has a habit of showing you the way. With Sr. Rosemary as my guide, I came to understand all that Cornelia went through and how much she loved Jesus to bear the suffering of not only seeing the death of her two small children but to lose the rela-



Eileen Dorman(center) at prayer gathering in Pompton Plains with Associates Kim Nyugen (left) and Kathy Tatlow (right).

tionship with her other 3 children as well. This suffering could only be overcome through a deep and loving relationship with our Lord. For me, Sr. Rosemary exemplified Cornelia's values. She lived her life simply but with great joy loving all those around her, embracing the poor, and providing justice for those who couldn't afford it. In addition, I have had and continue to have the privilege of getting to know many of the Sisters and of course, Cathi Duffy, who has been an inspiration for me. I am always in awe of how she creates and leads our retreats and works tirelessly for the Associates and our spiritual enrichment.

I am continuing my faith's journey after making the decision to leave my last job after 16 years. It was always my intention to take some time off after I left; however, every time I thought I would look for another job, it just didn't happen. I was very blessed to have my mother move in with me about two years ago. During my time home, she took ill and I feel fortunate to be able to take care of her and give back to her for always taking care of us and everyone else. I got involved in projects at church and also I became a member of the SHCJ Associates International Coordinating Committee. I was recently elected as Secretary for this Committee. If I was working, I know that I wouldn't have been able to do any of these projects and take care of my mother. God once again paved the way for opportunities that would allow me to grow spiritually and personally. Where I am headed is still a mystery but I know that God has a plan! In the meantime, I am learning to be patient, to have a deeper relationship with God and let Him do the leading.

Praying in (Un)likely Places

by: Elaine Zajano

Praying in the Closet

Back in 1609 when St. Francis de Sales wrote, "Our hearts should each day pick and choose some place ... as a retreat where they can retire at various times to refresh and restore themselves during their exterior occupations".¹ He surely could not have imagined how literally this spiritual protégée would one day take his words. Actually, he was referring to a spiritual site such as Mount Calvary or Our Lord's wounds, but many years ago, when I was first studying his spirituality, I found that taking his advice quite literally was most beneficial!

I had been asked, after 15 happy years teaching third grade, to switch to middle school to fill a gap created by a teacher's sudden departure. So I left my beloved little ones and moved up to blossoming adolescents. It was NOT an easy transition! Sparing the details, I found myself in great need of solace and peace, and St. Francis' advice nudged me to find a place and a time each day for what he calls "spiritual retreat," when I could "take myself away," even for a few minutes, to find myself with the Lord. I needed a concrete location or habitual action where I could bring His presence to mind. Perhaps it was Francis' further reference to St. Catherine of Siena's "shutting herself up in her interior closet"², but I realized one morning that right before recess, when I opened the closet to distribute the snacks to be sold during morning break - this moment afforded me the very opportunity I was seeking. Thereafter, each day, with my back to the restless children, I opened the closet door, closed my eyes, and greeted my Friend. He was always waiting. A deep breath, a smile - sweet refreshment, "dulce refrigerium," as the Pentecost Sequence calls it - and I was back on track.

I don't think this was exactly what Our Lord had in mind when he counsels us in Mt. 6, "Go into your closet, shut the door, and pray," but it worked for me!

When feeling stressed by the demands of our everyday life, let us look for some place or daily ritual (grabbing that coffee mug for a refill, turning on the photocopier, opening a water bottle, unlocking the car - be creative!) when we can send up a silent word of love or thanks, or a quick plea for help, and restore inner peace before our next step forward in spreading the Kingdom.

¹ Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1972, p. 96.

² *Ibid.*, p. 97.



Photo by Ben Lenz on [Unsplash](#)



Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

by Michelle Dugan

Still Life at Dusk

It happens surprisingly fast,
the way your shadow leaves you.

All day you've been linked by
the light, but now that darkness

gathers the world in a great black tide,
your shadow joins

the sea of all other shadows.
If you stand here long enough,

you, too, will forget your lines
and merge with the tall grass and

old trees, with the crows and the
flooding river—all these pieces

of the world that daylight has broken
into objects of singular loneliness.

It happens surprisingly fast, the drawing in
of your shadow, and standing

in the field, you become the field,
and standing in the night, you

are gathered by the night. Invisible
birds sing to the memory of light

but then even those separate songs fade,
tiny drops of ink in an infinite spilling.

The feeling of being unmoored, the loss of certainty and order, even a premonition of death – all these emotions stir under the surface of Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer's "Still Life at Dusk." Her evocative images are familiar – "the tall grass and/old trees, with the crows and the/ flooding river" -- so we can easily imagine ourselves present in the moment she describes. Having served as Colorado's Western Slope Poet Laureate from 2015 to 2017, this young American poet locates her experiences in a particular landscape; dusk, however, comes everywhere, and she addresses this poem

directly to every reader: "your shadow leaves you." In fact, seven of the eleven couplets that comprise the poem contain a form of the second person pronoun "you" – and the first person "I" is never used at all. Yet we know that it is the poet herself who is standing in that field as the light disappears "surprisingly fast." It seems that her desire to draw us into her experience is key to an understanding of the poem, a poem that at first seems simple but presents challenges as we reread it.

It is clear that the contrast between light and darkness is a unifying theme of the poem. At first Trommer tells us, "All day you've been linked/by the light." Darkness "gathers the world in a great black tide." Doesn't this sound a little scary? However, when our shadow "leaves" us, it "joins/ the sea of all other shadows." We begin to "forget" our separateness as we "merge" with our surroundings. Now in the seventh couplet, the daylight is described as having broken the world "into objects of singular loneliness." What has begun with the shadow's leaving and the loss of our individuality ("you, too, will forget your lines") has transitioned into a "drawing in," "gathered by night." The light has, in fact, been an illusion; perhaps it does not link us but rather separates us.

The last part of the poem starts with a reiteration of the opening line, "It happens surprisingly fast." This repetition intensifies our awareness of the passage of time and the transience of our lives, often felt at dusk. When "standing/ in the field, you become the field," does it become possible to embrace the darkness and to feel, not frightened, but held in the oneness of creation? "Invisible/ birds sing to the memory of light"; they remind us that the world is beautiful but we are mortal beings: "even then those separate songs fade." These lines express an ineffable nostalgia that once again circles back to our reluctance to let go of what is known, the clarity and definition that daylight provides.

The final image of "Still Life at Dusk," the "tiny drops of ink," is the only one not taken from the natural world. "Inky darkness" is a cliché often used to describe the nighttime, rarely in a comforting way. Yet overall the poem says "yes" to the darkness. Ultimately we must be willing to lose ourselves; our separate songs may fade, but the spilling is infinite, and we "tiny drops" are a part of it. The strength of our faith is tested by what is dark, vast, unknown. Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer does not offer reassurances in this poem; rather she invites the reader to stand with her in contemplation as the night falls.



Care of Creation

by Kay Rowan and Linda Tarney



Business partners, Shaun Frankson and David Katz, wanted to create a for-purpose business as their next venture.

After traveling, David was hit with the idea to make plastic too valuable to enter into the ocean. As we know all too well, plastic is a real threat to the global environment, to coastal regions (often developing countries), and to sea life. If plastic was worth the right price, most likely the result would be the elimination (at least the reduction) of plastic litter. This plastic litter could be exchanged for other goods and recycled by large corporations.

Shaun and David discovered 80% of the plastic refuse came from areas with high levels of poverty and no effective waste management. This is where they set out to create recycling systems beginning with stabilizing the reward for plastic at a fair price. This in turn gave the plastic collectors a sense of pride and a way to support their families.

Many of the collectors in these developing countries lacked bank accounts. Also cash could be dangerous for them to have due to corruption and crime in these areas. David and Shaun noticed most of the people in these disadvantaged areas had cell phones, so they decided to come up with a digital transaction system. They partnered with the expertise of IBM and a blockchain reward system. A blockchain reward system made it possible for collectors to safely and securely earn and spend Plastic Bank digital tokens.

With the Plastic Bank venture, people in these developing and polluted areas can collect enough plastic refuse to exchange for tokens to use to buy food, water, phone-charging credits, and more. The regions' store owners can use the Bank's app to allow exchange of digital tokens for items in their stores. Also, some of the world's largest corporations buy and recycle the collected plastic with

the expectation this will help stop ocean pollution and improve lives.

With the assistance of IBM's programs and using blockchain technology, the Plastic Bank makes sure that the process is secure and would be able to handle transactions from 20 to 30 countries every day. In the future, Plastic Bank will be working with IBM on a visual recognition program to identify different plastics. The collectors will then be appropriately rewarded for the higher grades of plastic they collect.

In conclusion, Pope Francis encourages us to help the marginalized, as well as telling us that technology alone will not solve the problem of the degradation of our planet. Shaun and David's Plastic Bank shows us one way technology can greatly aid us in finding creative solutions to this global crisis.

From "*Plastic Bank Deploys Blockchain to Reduce Ocean Plastic*" blog article by Shaun Frankson written 8/31/2017

Shaun and David certainly have followed the directives of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* whether intentionally or not! They created a way to use their technological expertise, connections to global technology enterprises and the natural human resources of underdeveloped countries to help eliminate some of the massive amounts of ocean plastic.

We have the freedom needed to limit and direct technology; we can put it at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral... Or when technology is directed primarily to resolving people's concrete problems, truly helping them live with more dignity and less suffering.
(*Laudato Si* # 112)

What a wonderful undertaking but I'm not a digital strategist with all the connections of a Shaun Frankson. How can I use technology in the way described in *Laudato Si*?

I decided to google Shaun Frankson to see what he was all about. Shaun has given many inspirational talks and interviews. In one such interview he stated that his core values are "to create, to inspire, to strategize." In answer to a question he says that:

Most people underestimate the fact that the modern consumers are the most powerful source on earth... if you are a responsible consumer and you are looking to make the right decisions, then you're intentionally using your purchase power for good. That's where EVERYONE can have an epic power.

In one of his motivational talks Shaun says that blind consumerism is dangerous and unsustainable. We must become responsible consumers who research our options and alternatives in the commercial world. Shaun and his wife have committed to spending 5 minutes together each day to researching a product.

I found my answer as to how to implement the aforementioned section of *Laudato Si!* I can use my computer, iPad, phone to research products I am interested in and make a responsible choice in whether or not to purchase or continue to use a product. I'm not sure I can commit to five minutes every day but I can do so once a week and maybe work up to daily. How about you? Will you join me?

Resources:

Laudato Si Chapter 3: The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis

Plasticbank.org

Video: How to save the World Through Responsible Consumerism

This site also provides info and updates on the ocean plastic project.

shaunfrankson.com



Mission

SHCJ Associates of the United States are women and men rooted in the charism of Cornelia Connelly who want to grow in her spirit. The Associates strive to bear witness to a life grounded in the Incarnation. Associates are called to help others believe that God lives and acts in them and to rejoice in God's presence in our midst.

The charism of Cornelia Connelly is grounded in the gospel message of the Word Made Flesh and centered in the mystery of God's life and presence in the lives of women and men.



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