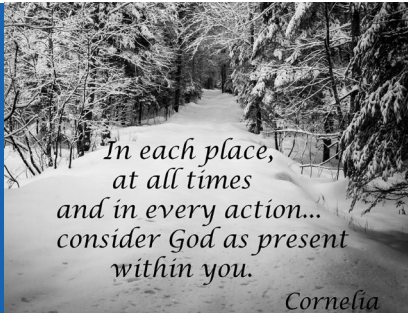




SHCJ ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

AMERICAN PROVINCE

ACTIONS NOT WORDS



*In each place,
at all times
and in every action...
consider God as present
within you.*

Cornelia



Associate Connie Izzo shares a few words with Sr. Helen McDonald during the Advent Nativity Open House in December



St. Luke Associates (and others) respond immediately to need for supplies in San Diego. (See *Share the Journey* on page 2)

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and soon Twitter! Reflect on Cornelia quotes with more features coming soon!

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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

Associates are living the Holy Child mission and spirit and carrying it forward! With the support of Sisters and in the spirit of Cornelia, Associates also realize that "It is precisely because [we] are called to live busy lives that [we] must lead lives of prayer." (Cornelia Connelly)

Several Associates participated this past autumn in an Ignatian atHome Retreat created by Sr. Elizabeth Mary Strub. The feedback from the participants - both Associates and Sisters /spiritual directors - was overwhelmingly positive. It was deeply and uniquely moving for all. If you would like to participate this Lent/Spring, please be in touch. The Sisters are open to walking again with interested Associates. Sr. Elizabeth Mary will also create a second set of materials that will be offered in late 2019 for all who have participated in the first retreat. What blessings for us as Associates to be supported in this way!

Several Sisters and Associates have and/or will spend time at the border in San Diego. Read *Sharing the Journey* for more details.

The Associates International Coordinating Committee is comprised of 10 Associates with two (2) representatives each from Chile, Dominican Republic, United States, African Province, and European Province. We will be meeting in Rome for the first week of April. Our goals, as a committee, are to discuss and plan ways that Associates internationally grow closer together while promoting the Society's mission through the Associate relationship. (continued on Page 3)

Sharing the Journey

by Anne Ayella



Share the
Journey ✨
#sharejourney

In the spirit of Cornelia Connelly, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus have often encouraged and invited us to live a “love full of action”. The most recent invitation takes us to the San Diego-Mexican border.

Many SHCJ Sisters and Associates are deeply troubled and feel called to act on behalf of our migrant and refugee sisters and brothers. The 2016 General Chapter called Sisters and Associates to “do all we can individually and together to alleviate the struggle and suffering of migrants”. With resources made available from a bequest to the Society and disbursed through the Wants of the Age (WOTA) committee, several Sisters and Associates have been moved to act on the front line.

Sr. Margaret Doyle has recently returned from working in San Diego. As a result of contact over the years with Casa Cornelia Law Center, she has known the plight of families trying to immigrate to the US. When the LCWR issued a call last Fall for volunteers to work at the San Diego shelter that welcomes and cares for families released from detention by ICE, Sr. Margaret shared, “I had the time and the desire to help. With the resources from the WOTA fund and the Chapter’s blessing, I was able to do my small part to address this urgent need in San Diego.” Over another dozen Sisters and Associates will be sharing in the border ministry over the next several months, as well.

Sr. Marcia Sichol, Chair of the WOTA committee shared, “most of my years in ministry have been spent in administration, a step or two removed from direct service to people our Sisters serve. The chance to work directly with the refugees in San Diego presents me with a real opportunity to work with those whom I had been assisting.”



SHCJ Associate and WOTA committee member, Stephanie Fielder shares, “I’ve been appalled by the actions of our government separating families, refusing to allow people to apply for asylum and turning people away at the border. I’ve used my voice in protest and have used my money to support organizations that are fighting for change. God then sent the opportunity through the SHCJ to use my hands by volunteering at a shelter at the border. This opportunity to serve speaks to Cornelia’s charism to serve the wants of our time and to be the loving face of God through our actions.”

SHCJ Associate Barbara De Concini also sees “the Province’s invitation as an invitation to practice a love full of action.” She shares, “I cannot think of a better opportunity, made so easy for us by the Society, to reach out to persons who continue to suffer incredibly in their search for a safe home for their children. What I am doing is precious little.”

How exciting to see such a wonderful response to the call for action! Whether we are traveling to the border or offering our prayers or support, may we continue to live out Cornelia’s challenge to “meet the wants of the age”.

One way that all Associates in the Society are united as one is through the observance of the International SHCJ Associates Day of Prayer, March 25th (Feast of the Annunciation). We rotate who creates the prayer; this year, the Associates in Chile will provide our prayer. I hope that you can plan to be with other Associates and Sisters to celebrate this special day. You will receive the prayer in March.

Thanks to all who participated in the survey about an African trip in 2020 for Associates. Many of you expressed interest so we are moving forward with more planning. Stay tuned.

We re-launched our social media presence in January. Check us out on one or more of the following: Instagram, Facebook, and soon Twitter. Let us know what we can do to improve the experience for you. We have some new features planned for the coming year. Follow us to be inspired!

Abundant blessings,

Cathi

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

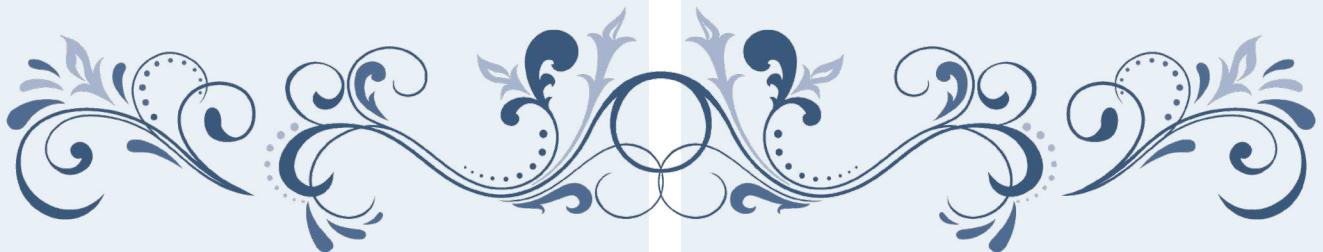
"136. True enough, we need to open the door of our hearts to Jesus, who stands and knocks (cf. Rev 3:20). Sometimes I wonder, though, if perhaps Jesus is already inside us and knocking on the door for us to let him escape from our stale self-centeredness."

Reflect: For most of us, there are always places in our heart where we keep God at a safe distance.

1. How are you open to a new and different encounter with Jesus today?
2. What is stale and in need of being refreshed anew by God?
3. Does this give you any focus for Lent?

The entire 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.



Jan Clifford

Barbara Bernardi

In this issue we are introducing you to Jan Clifford. Thanks Jan for letting us get to know you. In her own words...

I was born in Chicago and grew up in East Chicago. My parents were both from southern Illinois and moved to Chicago because teaching jobs paid much better in that area. My father was a public school educator (industrial arts teacher and administrator). My mother was a stay-at-home mom until I went to elementary school and she went back to a part-time job.

Growing up, our family was small - just my parents, my brother (6 years older) and me. They have all passed away, so it's my 3 adults kids and me (plus my 2 nephews and their families).

A big move in 1992 from the Midwest (Cincinnati) to South Pasadena introduced us to the SHCJ. It was important for my children to have a catholic education, so we chose Mayfield Junior School (after being accepted) because of everything it offered. All 3 of my children graduated from Mayfield Junior School; my daughter is Mayfield Senior graduate and my boys are Loyola High School grads.

As a stay-at-home mom, I was involved in supporting the many activities at MJS, MSS and Loyola, so I was blessed to become acquainted/involved with the SHCJ. I served on the parents' boards at both MJS and MSS and as a member of the Board of Trustees at Mayfield Senior from 2006-12. (I was named an Honorary Trustee in 2012.) I have also been a member of Sister Barbara Mullen's (deceased) Advent and Lenten Book/Prayer Groups. When the opportunity presented itself to become an SHCJ Associate it seemed like an additional way to support the good work of the Society. Sister Peg Doyle asked me to serve as the SHCJ representative to SC LAMP (South Central Los Angeles Ministry Project) which is an SHCJ ministry. I was happy to do this because the SHCJ have been so good to my children and me. I served 6 years on that board and continue my involvement as a member-at-large. I enjoy knowing Sisters Sheila McNiff, France White, and Susan Slater and I was able to visit with Sister Inez Berger when I was at Rosemont in June 2018.

I am a proud graduate of Purdue University. My degree is in Early Childhood Education. During the past 5 years, I made a decision to pursue Yoga Studies through



Jan Clifford (r) with Rita and Tony Fortner during the Cornelia's Philadelphia Tour 2018

programs and classes offered at Loyola Marymount University. I am a 200 hour RYT (Registered Yoga Teacher) and have earned a variety of certifications in trauma-informed yoga, pre-natal/post-natal yoga, working with veterans, Prime of Life Yoga and the Yoga of 12 Step Recovery. I am a member of Prison Yoga & Meditation. I recently traveled to India with the LMU Yoga Therapy Program where we engaged in academic studies and symposiums at hospitals, universities and yoga studies institutes. There is a great deal to learn about the principles of yoga, movement, ayurvedic practices, meditation and yoga nidra (meditative prayer). I guess you could say I've become a life-long learner!

With yoga, I volunteer my time to teach in the LA County Jail system, to moms enrolled in the programs at SC LAMP, to a residential mental health group and as a leader of a Yoga 12 Step Recovery group. I do have a (very) part-time job as a substitute teacher at the Disney Children's Center - a day care provider for the children of employees at Disney Imagineering, Pixar, Marvel and Lucas Films. The children range in age from infants to pre-K. I get to have fun with the kids and am not tied to any administrative work, plus I'm able to work around my yoga class schedule and other volunteer commitments!

I'm very proud to be a SHCJ Associate. I think it's a smart way for the Society to have support for its work and to involve lay people who want to give/be of service. I look forward to what the Associates' Program decides to call upon us to be involved in as we face ever-changing community needs. If we can help in any way that positively impacts others and helps the Society fulfill its mission, that's really what we're called to. As Cornelia said/lived, ACTIONS not words.

Praying in (Un)likely Places

by: Cathi Duffy

Ignatian atHome Retreat

This issue we offer a special opportunity for prayer. Ignatian retreats are not really unlikely places. For many, they are a likely place for a very special encounter with God in one's life in the present moment.

Did you consider entering into the retreat last fall but could not figure out how to carve out the time commitment?

Perhaps this Lent or Spring is an ideal time to participate.

It is meant to be 7 days but can be done over 7 weeks (more or less), i.e., each week incorporates one day of prayer resources.

How does it work?

Each week you receive a description of the process, a scriptural focus, and reflection questions created by Sr. Elizabeth Mary Strub. You are asked to define prayer time in the morning and again in the evening. You are asked to keep a journal of the stirrings of the Holy Spirit that you receive each day. Each Associate connects with a spiritual director for the course of the atHome retreat; you will 'meet' once for each 'day' of the retreat. The journal is a good resource for sharing when you meet with the director.

The meeting with a director can be in-person or by phone. The times are flexible and determined in advance. In the autumn, the official start was mid-October but Associates started through early November depending on schedules. In some cases, there might have been an extra week between a 'weekly' meeting with a director because of previously scheduled commitments by the associate or director.

If you don't have access to a computer, printed materials can be sent (usually a few weeks at a time).

How much time is required really?

Most of the autumn participants did one day of the retreat each week. Most prayed an hour in the morning and then returned in the evening for a reflection of the day's activities.

I personally used the scripture reading each day (of the week) in prayer. In my listening during prayer time and at other moments too, I came to understand what God desired for me now. For instance, the first day's reading is about "there is a time for everything"; was my calling in

late 2018 into 2019 about planting, harvesting, mourning, dancing and/or a combination of these and more? I did spend many days coming to understand those times in which God affirmed or called me forward anew. Jotting down thoughts in a journal really works!

How about the meetings with the director?

Overwhelmingly, most were done by phone although a few were able to meet in person. The phone conversations were convenient because of distance or other time commitments. The Spiritual Directors and Associates agreed that the phone worked well because there was a level of deep sharing by Associates. Associates trusted the Directors and the results were rich conversations. All came away changed by the encounters.

There are several Sisters and Associates willingly to walk as a spiritual director / companion with you during this special retreat.

Be in touch with me if you have more questions or wish to take the next steps toward participating. (Find my contact info on the last page of this issue.)



Billy Collins SHOVELING SNOW WITH BUDDHA

by Michelle Dugan

In the usual iconography of the temple or the local Wok
you would never see him doing such a thing,
tossing the dry snow over a mountain
of his bare, round shoulder,/ his hair tied in a knot,
a model of concentration.

Sitting is more his speed, if that is the word
for what he does, or does not do.

Even the season is wrong for him.
In all his manifestations, is it not warm or slightly humid?
Is this not implied by his serene expression,
that smile so wide it wraps itself around the waist of the
universe?

But here we are, working our way down the driveway,
one shovelful at a time.

We toss the light powder into the clear air.
We feel the cold mist on our faces.
And with every heave we disappear
and become lost to each other
in these sudden clouds of our own making,
these fountain-bursts of snow.

This is so much better than a sermon in church,
I say out loud, but Buddha keeps on shoveling.
This is the true religion, the religion of snow,
and sunlight and winter geese barking in the sky,
I say, but he is too busy to hear me.

He has thrown himself into shoveling snow
as if it were the purpose of existence,
as if the sign of a perfect life were a clear driveway
you could back the car down easily
and drive off into the vanities of the world
with a broken heater fan and a song on the radio.

All morning long we work side by side,
me with my commentary
and he inside his generous pocket of silence,
until the hour is nearly noon
and the snow is piled high all around us;
then, I hear him speak.

After this, he asks,/can we go inside and play cards?

Certainly, I reply, and I will heat some milk
and bring cups of hot chocolate to the table
while you shuffle the deck,
and our boots stand dripping by the door.

Aaah, says the Buddha, lifting his eyes
and leaning for a moment on his shovel
before he drives the thin blade again
deep into the glittering white snow.

Though I've already written about Billy Collins in our news-
letter, "Shoveling Snow with Buddha" was irresistible for
midwinter. Published in his 1998 anthology *Picnic, Light-
ning*, the poem features his unique blend of comic irony and
profound reflection. Collins never fails to capture experi-
ences that are immediately recognizable, like shoveling
snow; then with his boundless imagination and mastery of
language, he transforms what is vividly real into something
magical, extraordinary – from our perspective, incarnational.

The opening line tells us right away that this is not a partic-
ularly reverential invocation, for this Buddha can be found
just as easily in "the local Wok" as in "the temple." Never-
theless, Collins describes his companion respectfully as "a
model of concentration," a powerful figure whose shoulder
is a mountain. We are to be just as surprised as the poet by
the Buddha's presence there.

The couplet that comprises the second stanza and the two
first lines of the third continue in a comic vein, but then
suddenly Collins gives us "that smile so wide it wraps itself
around the waist of the universe." This incredible image
expresses a cosmic joy that prepares us to enter the world
of stanza four, where "the light powder," "the clear air," and
"the cold mist" – "these fountain-bursts of snow" – take on a
mystical quality as "we disappear/and become lost to each
other." The poet says it "out loud" in the fifth stanza: "This is
the true religion." Buddha is too busy to engage in meta-
physics. "Actions, not words" comes to mind when in stanza
six Buddha "has thrown himself into shoveling snow/as if it
were the purpose of existence." Then Collins turns sharply
ironic, "as if the sign of a perfect life were a clear driveway/
you could back down easily." Must transcendent experience
in stanza four be lost amidst "the vanities of the world"?

As two beings, one mortal and one divine, "work side by
side" in stanza seven, the former attempts connection
through "commentary"; the latter remains "inside the gen-
erous pocket of his silence." What a marvelous surprise it is
when we hear the Buddha speak! This ordinary world we
must inhabit is not so bad after all! "After this, he asks/can
we go inside and play cards?" The divine accompanies us al-
ways, not only in rare spectacular moments but also in daily
tasks and in the simplest pleasures we are blessed to share.

In the last stanza, Buddha's "Aaah" expresses a perfect con-
tentment with life. His moment of contemplation, "lifting his
eyes" and resting on his shovel, is brief; we can almost hear
the blade scrape as back he drives it "deep into the glittering
white snow." This final image conveys both pure beauty and
powerful motion. In the interwoven rhythms of work and
play, talk and silence, we find laughter, purpose, and aware-
ness that our God is everywhere, an incarnate, benevolent
presence not distant in the next world, but here with us.



Care of Creation

by Linda Tarney and Kay Rowan



What Will Be Your Earth-friendly Resolution of 2019 As A Steward of God?

As 2019 was approaching, I thought deeply about what my resolutions would be. After much deliberating, I came up with several, but will share with you my eco-friendly resolution. I am giving up deodorant. You may be wondering how is that going to help the environment. It will most likely smell up the environment. Well, I wanted to use less plastic and be exposed to fewer chemicals so I thought why don't I start with all those plastic deodorant containers. So I found an alternative source in Australia, a stick of potassium alum crystal in a (World Wildlife fund approved) cork container. It contains no alcohol, perfumes, dyes, aluminum, or preservatives and the cork is 100% recyclable (or upscale) and biodegradable. It works for 24 hours and 1 container of the potassium alum crystal lasts twelve months. I shall see how it works and how long it lasts.

In case you did not include an earth friendly resolution among yours, I have compiled with the use of Kyle Fitzpatrick's article titled "5 Earth-friendly Resolutions You Can Actually-Easily-Keep in 2019" (first published on 12/19/18) some easy ways to be God's good stewards in 2019 and beyond. These are environmental protecting resolutions you can start right now in 2019 or put into practice during your Lenten journey.

1. Use your own vessels when you go grocery shopping, grab a coffee or pick up your take home dinner.

Did you know that plastic litter clutters our entire planet now?

Take your own tote bags when you go shopping. Invest in a metal, glass or bamboo straw and a straw brush. Keep a reusable mug or tumbler in your car or office. Bringing your own vessels with you helps shift

you away from society's single use mentality.

2. Designate one day off from driving every week. Did you know that cars are the 5th biggest producer of emissions in the United States? One day a week work from home if permitted, car pool, ride-share pool, ride a bike or take a bus instead of driving your car to work.
3. Become a semi-vegetarian or flexitarian and save meat for the weekends. This is a wonderful Lenten practice, also. Did you know that the way food is produced today is a root cause of problems like deforestation, water shortages, and greenhouse gases? In 2019 (or for Lent) eat more legumes, vegetables, fruits and nuts instead of meat. These food types are better for your health and going vegetarian is a much cheaper lifestyle. Also, if you can't cut out meat all together buy local meats to cut down on the carbon footprint of the food.
4. Switch all your lightbulbs to LED bulbs. Did you know that LED bulbs produce the same quality of light, but use 40% less energy than incandescent bulbs? Incandescent bulbs last up to 365 days while LED bulbs can last 25 years. LED bulbs do cost more initially than incandescent bulbs, but do save you money in the long run. "When used 8 hours a day, every day incandescent bulbs cost roughly \$23 a year, whereas LEDs cost \$4 a year."
5. Start composting. Did you know that by composting you will keep organic waste out of landfills and help prevent the generation of greenhouse gases? In turn, this saves 277 lbs. of waste per person per year from going into the landfills. Basic composters start from \$20, while worm-friendly composters can cost over \$100.

Begin your eco-friendly, sustainable resolution by committing to one lifestyle change and adding more when feasible. Make a plan and work with friends for support to keep your resolutions. Really, it is okay to make mistakes. Always remember that with work, perseverance, and support from the Spirit, family and friends you can keep your 2019 resolutions and get a little greener.

Now, how are you going to give back to God and His beautiful creations?

Wow! After reading Linda's great article, Lent will definitely find me committing to at least one new earth friendly project! What will it be?

1. When I forget to take my own containers shopping I'll remember to make sure those plastic bags go to a store that recycles them.
2. Carpooling? I no longer work but do volunteer and often join friends for lunch. More intentional carpooling could be a way to help here.
3. Giving up meat, at least on Fridays during Lent and perhaps the rest of the week is doable.
4. LED bulbs? We already changed out. Intentionally using less artificial light where possible sounds like a good next step.
5. I already compost just differently. I save all the peelings and scraps from my vegetables in a container in the freezer. When my container is full I boil it all up into a nice vegetable broth for soup and then dispose of a much smaller volume of leftovers.

I think I have my earth friendly Lenten resolutions in place!

Linda is right that we need support and inspiration from the Holy Spirit, from family and friends so choose someone to journey with you if you can and pray!

Here are some useful resources:

ecospiritualityresources.com – Terri MacKenzie offers two resources for Lent 2019, one on soil and one on Laudato Si' as well as books, videos and other sites to try.

catholicclimatemovement.global – good resource for activities taking place around the world. They usually post Lenten activities closer to Ash Wednesday.

Delio, Ilia, K. Warner, P. Wood, *Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth*. Paperback or Kindle edition.

Each of the four sections of this wonderful book offers the reader insights to help nurture a Franciscan spirituality of the earth as well as prayers, meditations, spiritual practices and group activities to help reconnect with the earth.

Laudatosi.com At this *Word on Fire* site you can read the encyclical on the official Vatican website, download a PDF copy or order a paperback edition



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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