

HOLY CHILD ASSOCIATES

AMERICAN PROVINCE - USA



*Our good God
is ever ready
to bring forth fruit
where we least expect it.*

Cornelia Connelly

Photo by Gerry Jarney

ACTION NOT WORDS

Vision of Associates

*One in Spirit,
Holy Child Associates
collaborate with the Society
of the Holy Child Jesus to
embody the charism of
Cornelia Connelly
in our everyday lives while
responding to the
wants of the age
with generosity.*

Mission

Holy Child 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.*

Provincial Leadership Liaison

Dear Associates,

There is a season for everything...

Gratitude to **Cathi Duffy** for her devoted service of fifteen and a half years to the life of the Associates. From its inception as a formalized relationship, her dedication has borne much fruit in nurturing spiritual growth in a community of faith and fostering a commitment to service by responding to local and global needs. She expanded the reach of the Associates by connecting with the SHCJ Associates International, by being an active member of the North American Conference of Associates and Religious, and the Ohio-Pennsylvania Associate Leadership regional group. These efforts continue to strengthen the bonds of collaboration within and beyond our SHCJ family.

Reflection on the founding inspiration and growth of the Associate Relationship. The membership of the Associates is spread throughout the United States with groups in Chile and the Dominican Republic. These Associates were drawn to the charism of Cornelia Connelly and find various ways to live out this spirit. How has this relationship evolved during the time of demographic changes in the Society?

New Growth as the Associates follow an intentional path toward living out their mission “to help others believe that God lives and acts in them and to rejoice in God’s presence in our midst.” The Core Team with the Associates are bringing their wisdom and experience to the fore in “meeting the wants of the age” with great vitality.

Transitions bring about opportunities to envision new horizons. We build on a firm foundation as we journey together to look to the future of the Associate Relationship.

“Remember that it is not sufficient to have begun well; you must also persevere with courage and finish with resolution.” – Cornelia Connelly

Gratefully,

Francine Gunther, SHCJ

Province Leadership Team Liaison

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Laudato Sí Action Platform

With the Magi as models let us be willing to follow our star with courage and confidence this year. Let us reflect on the signs of the times and seek wisdom from foreigners (others) to follow the shining light. The star may be a synod in our diocese, the General Chapter of the Society or the Laudato Sí Action Platform, all of which may be a new beginning on our spiritual path toward the Light.

The Laudato Sí Action Platform, launched on 14-November-21, is a star leading us on a journey towards full sustainability in the holistic spirit of integral ecology. The Platform is a collaboration between the Vatican, an international coalition of 200 Catholic organizations and “all men and women of good will.” (LS 3) Considering that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth, the Platform goals were developed. The goals, also, tackle climate change and work to preserve our planet.

Systemic change takes time and critical mass to become irreversible. This critical mass needs to be 21-25% of the population. Through the Action Platform, Pope Francis is asking 1.3 billion Roman Catholics (~17% of the world population) to help build that critical mass. To bring about this systemic change we are asked to embrace the 3 pillars of the Laudato Sí Action Platform. These pillars are: a public commitment that promotes action and advocacy; the transition to Integral Ecology with measurable projects; journeying together with all sectors of the society.

With these pillars at the forefront, there are 7 major goals created for the 7 sectors of society in the

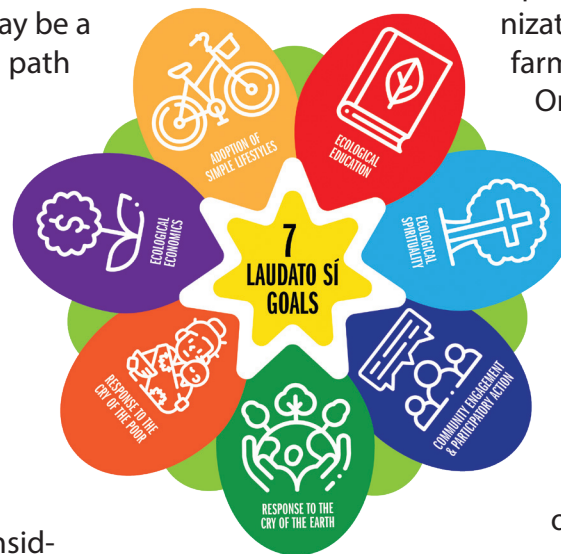
church to be achieved within a 7 year time-frame. When enrolling in the Action Platform at www.laudatosiactionplatform.org you will select a sector to make a commitment. The sectors include: families, parishes and dioceses, schools and universities, hospitals and healthcare facilities, organizations and groups, businesses and farms, and religious congregations.

Once you enroll, your environmental impact will be calculated and you will receive suggestions and resources for achieving the Platform goals

The 7 Laudato Sí Action Platform goals are:

1. Response to the cry of the Earth—a call to protect our common home for the well-being of all.
2. Response to the cry of the poor—a call to promote eco-justice.
3. Ecological economics—acknowledging that the economy is a sub-system of human society.
4. Adoption of sustainable lifestyles.
5. Ecological education—rethinking and redesigning curricular and institutional reform in the spirit of integral ecology.
6. Ecological spirituality—helps us to “discover God in all things”.
7. Community resilience and empowerment—to envisage a synodal journey of community engagement and participation.

Is this the star you are following this year?



Find more resources on
<https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>

Poetry Off the Shelf

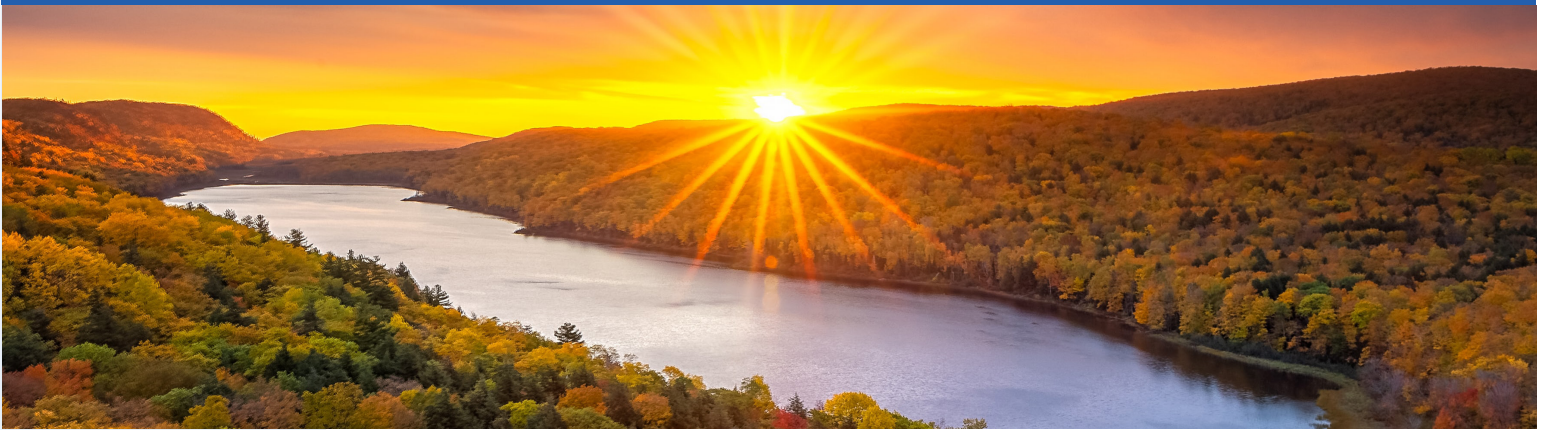


Photo by Dave Hoefler on Unsplash.com

Amanda Gorman, who became our first-ever National Youth Poet Laureate in 2017, won the hearts of Americans when she read her poem “The Hill We Climb” at President Biden’s inauguration last winter. As 2021 came to a close, “New Day’s Lyric” appeared as an Instagram post – a gift to her followers and to me when a friend shared it. For this issue of our newsletter, dedicated to beginnings and renewal, this young poet’s voice offers inspiration and vision.

Gorman’s brilliant word play is striking; “cursed” becomes “cure” and “plagued” becomes “pure” as she references our experience of the pandemic (“solace can be sourced from sorrow”). She takes familiar devices like rhyme and alliteration to a whole new level, demonstrating her mastery of the contemporary African-American hip-hop art form known as spoken word. This is a poem meant to be read aloud so that the heartbeat of hope can be heard!

In the concluding stanza of the poem, Gorman incorporates the lyrics of “Auld Lang Syne” and then, for the very last word, chooses “overcome,” calling to mind the gospel tune turned civil rights anthem, “We Shall Overcome.” Using these two traditions, recognizable to all and expressive of our best selves, Gorman performs her magic and “binds us as one.” How like Cornelia she sounds, filled with joy and generosity! “New Day’s Lyric” encourages a weary people: “Be bold!” Our own “woman styled bold” reminds us, “So ought all to begin again.”

See the full poem on next page.

The forces of change are driven by the energies of love.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.

"New Day's Lyric"

*May this be the day
We come together.
Mourning, we come to mend,
Withered, we come to weather,
Torn, we come to tend,
Battered, we come to better.
Tethered by this year of yearning,
We are learning
That though we weren't ready for this,
We have been readied by it.
We steadily vow that no matter
How we are weighed down,
We must always pave a way forward.*

*This hope is our door, our portal.
Even if we never get back to normal,
Someday we can venture beyond it,
To leave the known and take the first steps.
So let us not return to what was normal,
But reach toward what is next.*

*What was cursed, we will cure.
What was plagued, we will prove pure.
Where we tend to argue, we will try to agree,
Those fortunes we forswore, now the future we foresee,
Where we weren't aware, we're now awake;*

*Those moments we missed
Are now these moments we make,
The moments we meet,
And our hearts, once all together beaten,
Now all together beat.*

*Come, look up with kindness yet,
For even solace can be sourced from sorrow.
We remember, not just for the sake of yesterday,
But to take on tomorrow.*

*We heed this old spirit,
In a new day's lyric,
In our hearts, we hear it:
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne.
Be bold, sang Time this year,
Be bold, sang Time,
For when you honor yesterday,
Tomorrow ye will find.
Know what we've fought
Need not be forgot nor for none.
It defines us, binds us as one,
Come over, join this day just begun.
For wherever we come together,
We will forever overcome.*



Watch Amanda recite "New Day's Lyric" on Instagram.
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CYEpCgxBTAf/>

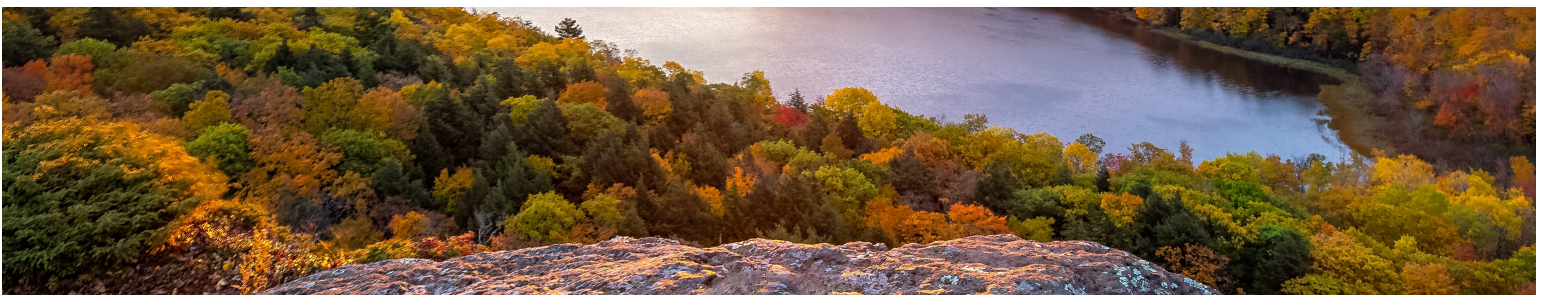


Photo by Dave Hoefler on Unsplash.com

Share the Journey

The usual focus of "Share the Journey" is sharing and celebrating SHCJ actions on behalf of the poor, marginalized and our migrant and refugee sisters and brothers.

However, with the start of "new beginnings" in 2022, the focus is shifting to the WHY. What draws us to this work? We are enriched by words from Jane Maloney, Chair, SHCJ Refugee Collaborative and Oak Knoll alum, SHCJ Associate Stephanie Fielder and Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ. In addition, Cornelia reminds us "to take care NOT to lose the interior spirit by the pressure of activity. "Sometimes the "Why" behind the action is as important as the action!



Jane Maloney shares, "throughout my working life, I have always considered my work as ministry. What drew me to professional opportunities always was the opportunity to make a difference.

Helping others to find the right "home" - be it educational or actual - has defined my working life. Now, in retirement, I feel called to help those who have struggled and suffered most to find a safe home and haven...immigrants and refugees. Anything I can do through the SHCJ Refugee Collaborative will prove a blessing to me and to those in search of a warm welcome and true homecoming."

Stephanie Fielder believes she is "called to be that welcoming face when so much of our civic discussion and our processes are anything but welcoming". She shares, "as I've gotten into the work, I've gained an all-new understanding of why people try to come to America and how high the cost is to them. The loss of family contact, culture, foods, language, etc. is SO high and I just feel called to try and make things a little better in whatever way I can."



Sr. Mary Ann believes her interest in being part of the emerging Refugee Collaborative is rooted in her experience as a third-grader when a large Haitian family moved into the neighborhood and she was asked to help her new class-mate, Ella, learn English at school. She says, "There were other newcomers in my class, too - Hedwig, a "displaced person" from Poland who had lost her family and came to America to live with her aunt, Ardea, from Eastern Europe, struggled earnestly to keep up with the rest of us; her clothes were somber and foreign-looking to me, and I always felt an empathy for her. They were my first teachers of diversity.

(cont. on p. 8)

Share the Journey

(cont. from p. 8)



Years later, during the fall of Saigon, while working at Rosemont College I came to know Amy, an 18-year-old Vietnamese woman separated from her family, forced to flee and start a new life among strangers. Most

recently I've accompanied an Afghan family who came to Philadelphia four years ago. I've taught English to Sabera who never had the chance to become literate as a girl growing up under Taliban rule, and helped her husband Sardar fill out the

tedious forms required to request asylum for his brothers who are still waiting at risk in Kabul. Ella, Hedwig and Ardea have been with me in my efforts to reach out to Amy, Sabera and Sardar and, in a small way, to the more than 84 million refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons worldwide today."

In each of these sharings, we catch a glimpse of three dedicated women who are "rejoicing in God's presence and helping people believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world." May 2022 be a new beginning and a year in which each of us, like them, try to live out this call on our journey. Amen.

NOTABLE... AND QUOTABLE

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

March 25, 2022

Mark your calendars for the annual International Day of Prayer on March 25th. This year's reflection has been created by our Summit, New Jersey prayer group with Sr. Cynthia Vives. The associates who worked on this inspirational reflection include Joanne Ainsworth, Nonie Murphy and Kathy Tatlow. Thank you.

"Because all creatures are connected, each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another."

(Laudato Si, 42)

Building a better future requires "the active participation of all members of the community."

(Laudato Si, 144)

Please be sure to complete the **2022 Associate Survey**.
Your input will assist in determining future leadership for the associates.

