

# HOLY CHILD ASSOCIATES



**Everything is a gift.**

*Fr. Richard Rohr*

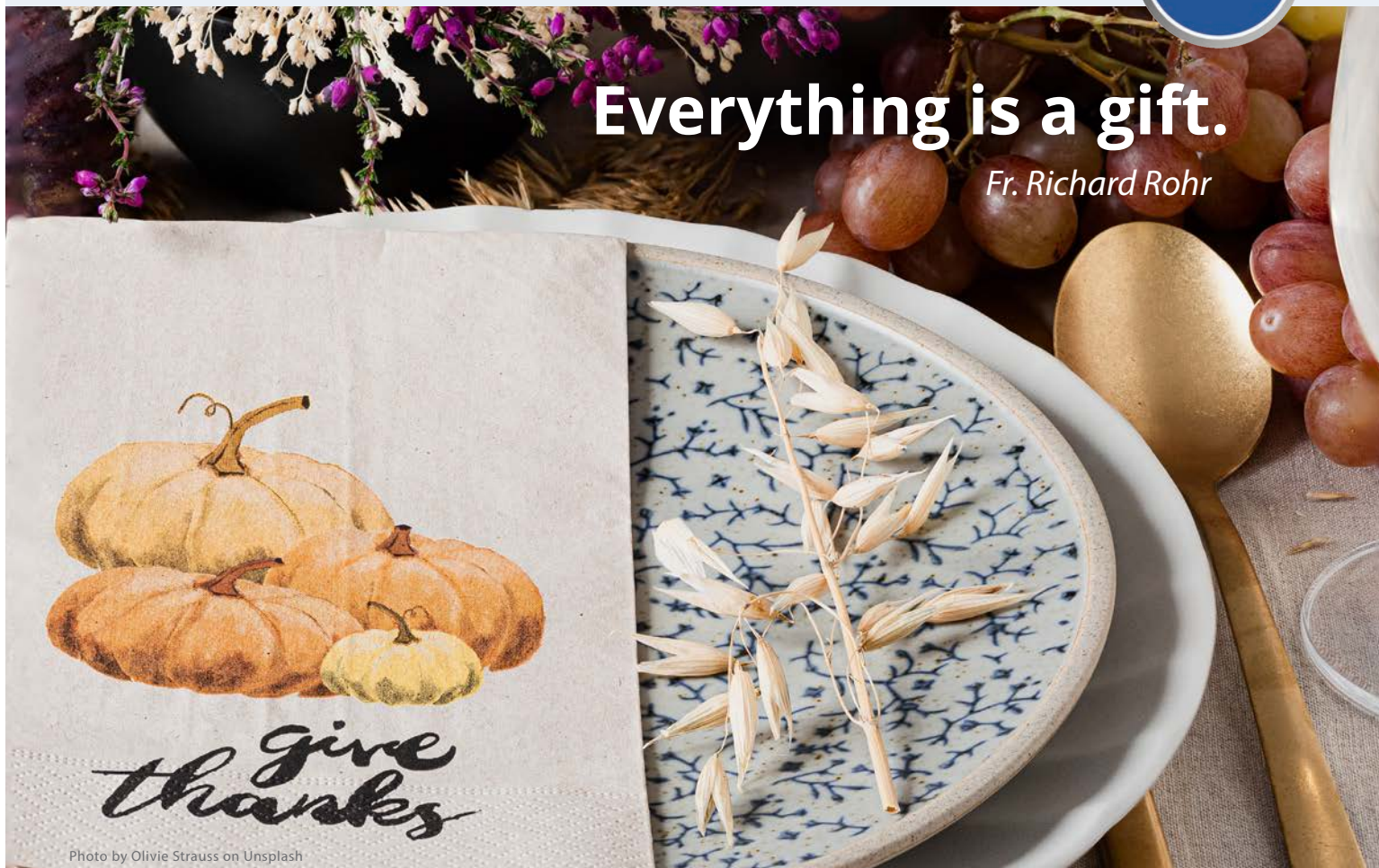


Photo by Olivie Strauss on Unsplash

## 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.*

# Reflection



John Keats, the English poet, wrote the famous Ode on a Grecian Urn. Do you remember the opening lines?:

*Thou still unravished bride of quietness,  
Thou foster child of silence and slow time.*

I have a cushion on my chair that is *ravished* by use and marked by *slow time*. But it's more than a cushion and worthy of an ode. Keats addresses the immobile and immortalized *happy, happy boughs that cannot shed your leaves*, but I celebrate embroidered trees that bend in the wind on my cushion. Keats mourns for the *bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss*. And I, in spirit, climb a ladder to sit with a bold child on a tree limb. Keats asks of his Greek urn, *What little town by river or sea shore...is emptied of its folk this pious morn?*. And my cushion shows two slightly crooked houses under a bright morning sun. And there's more: laundry flapping in the breeze, and a girl in a yellow skirt jumping rope, all stitched out against the background of three snowy peaks that rise in the distance. Even my name is written in heaven - spelled out in red yarn across the sky. The sight of it always undoes me. I don't have to tell

myself, "Now here's something to be grateful for." Affection, thanks, love, spring up and hug the artist of bright stitches. There's something holy about this cushion that sends me straight to God, even though I sit on it day after day. Here the Incarnation plays itself out in a three-way embrace binding the maker of the cushion, and me to our ultimate source. It's as ordinary as today's to do list.

Now, I have a question for you: What do you cherish the way I, cherish this cushion and the friend that made it? Do you have anything in your room, your house, that brings you, God and the donor of the "thing" together in a timeless moment of joyful awe?

Keats speaks a final word to his Grecian urn:

*Cold Pastoral! When old age shall this generation waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,  
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty" ---that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.*

I, for one, know more than that....

Elizabeth Strub, SHCJ

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### Holy Child Associates

#### American Province - USA

1341 Montgomery Avenue

Rosemont, PA 19010



# One Planet, One Family

In the 2021 American Province Chapter Direction Statements, we are called to remember that “our incarnational charism impels each of us to address issues of justice and other pressing matters of the day.” Among the many issues that are before us, certainly climate justice issues are at the top of the list. Climate justice recognizes the fact that the climate crisis disproportionately affects people who are low income, especially Black, Brown and Indigenous folks – all people with the fewest resources to cope with the challenges that the crisis brings.

Resources such as the Global Catholic Climate Movement (now Laudato Si Movement) have helped all of us come to a greater understanding of climate justice. Many Associates recently shared in their Eco-Spirituality Reflection- “Behold God in Everything” and prayerfully reflected on our own call to care for our common home.

Another prayerful and thoughtful resource to support efforts to make a difference for our planet was recently introduced by Catholic Relief Services. “One Planet – One Family” was launched on October 4th, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. The campaign reminds us that God created our world so ALL could thrive. Sadly, millions around the globe struggle to survive afflicted by poverty, hunger and the consequences of climate change. It doesn’t need to be this way. Each of us can make a transformational difference to make sure all of our sisters and brothers live in dignity and are able to achieve their full potential.

To learn more and explore the prayerful action steps, visit [crs.org/campaigns](https://crs.org/campaigns) and click on climate change to learn how your prophetic voice can make a difference. CRS’ “One Planet-One Family”

Campaign includes an Action Toolkit that calls all of us to become involved through prayer, action and advocacy on behalf of our planet. Videos and stories of hope introduce us to real people whose lives and livelihoods have been dramatically impacted by the climate crisis. It also shares some of the creative and innovative ways in which CRS is positively impacting lives through new and improved agricultural practices.

Pope Francis reminds us in Laudato Si that “climate change is a global problem with grave implications. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day.” Our faith calls us to action, and when we come together as a global community, we can make a big impact. May we, as SHCJ Associates live out our call to Actions Not Words and act on behalf of our common home !



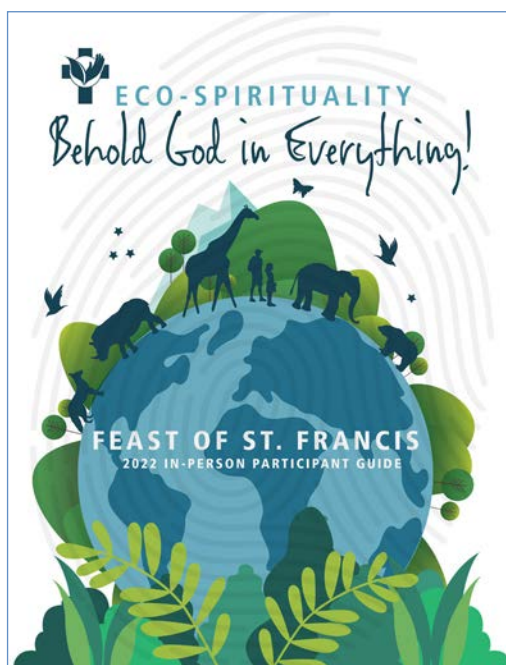
Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. We alleviate suffering and provide assistance to people in need in nearly 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. The international headquarters is located in Baltimore, MD, USA.

# Core Team Update

The SHCJ Associate leadership board, the Core Team, will be sharing their journey with the Associates in our quarterly newsletters. In October, the Associates Core Team sponsored opportunities for Associates to experience an Eco-spirituality Retreat (1 of the 7 goals of the Laudato Sí Action Platform). The retreat, the Feast of St. Francis: Eco-spirituality, "Behold God in Everything!" was made available through the Catholic Climate Covenant. There were two in-person retreats and two virtual opportunities with 33 participants in total! One of the in-person retreats led by Judy Talvacchia included the film, "The Letter". This film follows six people from around the world experiencing the effects of climate change, who were asked to an audience with Pope Francis.

Thank you to the following Associates who led the retreat ("Actions, not words." Cornelia Connelly):

- Michelle Dugan
- Judy Talvacchia \*
- Linda Tarney



Thanks to the Associates who helped coordinate the events:

- Tom Darcy \*
- Michelle Dugan
- Chris McHugh
- Linda Tarney

\* Core Team member

Link to the letter:

<https://theletterfilm.org/>

Link to the retreat:

<https://default.salsalabs.org/T33dbb406-226b-4b3b-b239-3d2f29054639/71ea3036-e052-4caf-98b2-6b55df20262a>

Current Core Team:

- Tom Darcy (Acting Co-Chair, Acting Treasurer)
- Marilyn DeFeliciano
- Jessica Keaveney
- Jimella Monroe-Lawrence
- Judy Talvacchia
- Dian Taylor-Pringle
- Eugenia Ukpo (Secretary)
- Emily Wells (Acting Co-Chair)
- Mary Alice Minogue, SHCJ
- Cynthia Vives, SHCJ
- Francine Gunther, SHCJ (PLT liaison)

For any questions about or for the Core Team, please contact:

- Emily Wells (Seigel) at [ewells1308@gmail.com](mailto:ewells1308@gmail.com)
- Tom Darcy at [tdarcy01@carolina.rr.com](mailto:tdarcy01@carolina.rr.com)

**Actions Not Words!**



## Feast of St. Francis Retreat

On October 20th, Michelle Dugan led an in-person Feast of St. Francis Retreat: "Ecospirituality Behold God in Everything!" The retreat in Rosemont, Pennsylvania at New Sharon was attended by Associate Dr. Barbara DeConcini, Walt Lowe, Sr. Mary Hamilton, Charlie Dugan and Associate Michelle Dugan.

"The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything."

—Julian of Norwich



"The Letter" was produced by Off the Fence and Laudato Sí Movement. This emotional film, a message for our Earth informing us of our planetary crisis, has already been viewed around the world 4 million times. Four voices hailing from Senegal, the Amazon, India and Hawaii bring the perspective of the poor, the indigenous, the youth, and wildlife on the climate crisis to Pope Francis and us.

Will you take action joining more than 4 million viewers and watch "The Letter"?

<https://theletterfilm.org/>

"Everything in nature has a trademark, God's trademark: the stripes on a shell and the stripes on a zebra; the grain of the wood and the veins of the dry leaf; the markings on the dragonfly's wings and the pattern of stars on a photographic plate; the panther's coat and the epidermal cells of the lily petal; the structure of atoms and galaxies. All bear God's fingerprints."

—Rev. Ernesto Cardinal, *Abide in Love*, 1972



# Meet the Associate

## Meet our newest Associate, Dr. Darlene Boyd

I was born and raised in the Philadelphia area except for some grade school time in Los Angeles, California. My mother had attended high school in Philadelphia where she was taught by a variety of orders of nuns. She developed a fondness for the SHCJ sisters. For this reason upon returning from Los Angeles she sought a parish school for me staffed by SHCJ sisters. The parish school was Holy Spirit, just a short path down from Sharon. Thus began my shared fondness for SHCJ. I was blessed to have the opportunity to attend Sharon as my high school. I was class President and a member of the Children of Mary and at graduation, received the Sharon Cornelia Connelly award.

My dream was to attend Rosemont College. However the cost at that time was not possible for my family. I attended Cabrini College in Radnor PA and graduated with a BS degree in education.

I taught elementary school before serving as a public school administrator of programs for gifted students. Not too long after, I took on a position as Professor and founding Director of the Gifted and Creative Studies Network at Widener University. I received my Doctor of Education from Temple University in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, and completed post-doctoral work in Creativity Studies at Harvard University. After several years I was recruited by the University of California Irvine to

serve as Professor and UCI Founding Director of the UCI Gifted and Creative Studies Network. Dr. Boyd is a sought-after speaker in Creativity and Leadership Studies.

I recently retired from the University of California. Presently, I am a journalist for Think Tech Hawaii and host a talk show for Think Tech Hawaii. The show is called the "Creative Life".



I am chair of the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton parish Pastoral Council, Vice President of the parish Saint Vincent DePaul Council. (Coincidentally, Sister Mildred worked with founding members of this parish.)

I was recently installed as a Dame of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

My daughter, son in law and two granddaughters live in Glen Mills, PA. I am fortunate to visit them often. The older granddaughter is a competitive figure skater, and

the younger granddaughter is a competitive cheer team member.

I became interested in the SHCJ Associates by reading articles about Associate efforts in our ACTION Bulletin. Now that we have ZOOM, my dream goal, as an Associate would be to offer teacher training opportunities to our Nigerian sisters.

# Poetry Off the Shelf

## "Daisies"

*It is possible, I suppose that sometime we will learn everything there is to learn: what the world is, for example, and what it means. I think this as I am crossing from one field to another, in summer, and the mockingbird is mocking me, as one who either knows enough already or knows enough to be perfectly content not knowing. Song being born of quest he knows this: he must turn silent were he suddenly assaulted with answers. Instead*

*oh hear his wild, caustic, tender warbling ceaselessly unanswered. At my feet the white-petalled daisies display the small suns of their centerpiece, their — if you don't mind my saying so — their hearts. Of course I could be wrong, perhaps their hearts are pale and narrow and hidden in the roots. What do I know? But this: it is heaven itself to take what is given, to see what is plain; what the sun lights up willingly; for example — I think this*

*as I reach down, not to pick but merely to touch — the suitability of the field for the daisies, and the daisies for the field.*

by Mary Oliver

Beloved American poet Mary Oliver, who died in 2019 at the age of 83, has gifted us with a body of work that is highly respected by the literary establishment and cherished even more by contemplatives and lovers of the natural world. "When I Am Among the Trees," one of her most famous poems, was featured in our fall 2020 newsletter as we commemorated the 175th anniversary of the SHCJ. "Daisies" interweaves this newsletter's theme of gratitude with another, one that Oliver presents as foundational: "to be perfectly content not knowing." Because she grounds core spiritual principles in what we actually experience through our senses, each image in this poem rings true and allows us to trust the poet's message, even when she poses the largest of questions – "everything/there is to learn" and "what the world is, for example,/and what it means."

In the first stanza of "Daisies," there are no flowers yet, just a field in summer that Oliver is crossing. The mockingbird's song coincides with her musings, and she imagines that he is mocking her, foolish human with her desire for answers. Doesn't she know enough already? Shouldn't she be content with that? These key lines close the stanza: "Song being born/of quest he knows this: he must turn silent/were he suddenly assaulted with answers." Being human, we cannot help but ask those ultimate questions of meaning and purpose; yet it is in the quest itself that meaning lies. The "song" is found in the seeking and experiencing. Our mortal minds can never fathom the mystery in full; in fact, we'd be "assaulted by" it. This mockingbird is onto something, our poet realizes. She ends the first stanza with that single word "Instead," letting us know that a fresh revelation is coming next.

# Encore

## Poetry Off the Shelf

(continued from p. 7)

Oliver begins the second stanza with a clarion call to attention – “oh hear” – and a string of disparate adjectives that describe being “ceaselessly/unanswered”; we acknowledge that being alive can be a “wild, caustic, tender” journey indeed. Now the epiphany of the daisies can finally unfold: “At my feet.” Here is the humble, hidden life; it is not necessary to know or to be right, only to “see what is plain.” Oliver wonders if she should anthropomorphize the daisies by speaking of their “hearts,” but how can she resist? The feeling of kinship with the life of the field has overwhelmed her with gratitude. Gratitude, then, is what can be “known” – not an answer but an attitude, a way of finding “heaven itself” in “what the sun/lights up willingly.” With an awareness of the Incarnation, it is enough to “reach down...merely to touch” beauty in order to appreciate the “suitability” of God’s creation and to rejoice in it, as Mary Oliver does in “Daisies.”

## NOTABLE... AND QUOTABLE



Photo by Antoni Shkraba: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/person-giving-a-gift-box-5810664/>

Wishing you many blessings during this season of giving thanks and sharing gifts. Celebrate with family and friends with gratitude and humility.

*“He will bless us  
and do all things for us.”*

– Cornelia Connelly, SHCJ

### Share Your Associate Events

Consider sharing your Associate event details and photos with us to post on our Facebook and Instagram pages. Send your event information to Emily Wells at [ewells1308@gmail.com](mailto:ewells1308@gmail.com).



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<https://www.instagram.com/holychildassociates/>

ACTION NOT WORDS