

Actions

SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS / AMERICAN PROVINCE

WINTER 2026



PRAYER TO OBTAIN THE BEATIFICATION OF VENERABLE CORNELIA CONNELLY

In 1992, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints recommended to Pope John Paul II, now Saint John Paul II, that he proclaim the heroic virtue of Cornelia Connelly as a Servant of God. Cornelia was declared Venerable. The next step in the canonization process is beatification.

Please join us in Prayer for the Beatification of Venerable Cornelia Connelly.

O God, who chose Cornelia Connelly
to found the Society of the Holy Child Jesus,
inspiring her to follow the path
marked out by your divine son,
obedient from the crib to the cross,
let us share her faith, her obedience and her
unconditional trust in the power of your love.
Grant us the favor we now implore
through her intercession...
and be pleased to glorify, even on earth,
your faithful servant, through the same
Christ our Lord.
Amen.

If you have found praying through the intercession of Cornelia helpful and believe that your prayer has been answered, please report this to Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Rector of the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, at info@cathedralphila.org.



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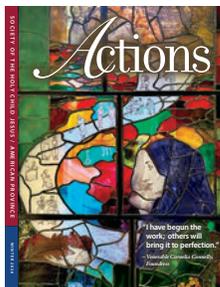
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On Our Cover:

Stained glass window of Venerable Cornelia Connelly by Hazel Parry, Mayfield School in Mayfield, England. Photo by Saul Harris, Mayfield School.



Actions is a biannual publication of the American Province of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Comments and questions can be directed to holychildsisers@shcj.org.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I am delighted to share with you the winter 2026 edition of *Actions*, featuring stories of transformation, connection, and unwavering commitment to our Holy Child mission.

In our cover story, **“Organizing for Mission in a Changing World,”** we explore how the American Province is responding to the evolving landscape of religious life. Drawing inspiration from the words of theologian James Corkery, SJ—“Cornelia didn’t look up to find God; she looked around”—we are guided by our Foundress’s inclusive spirit as we deepen partnerships with lay collaborators and embrace progressive change. This article offers insight into exciting new initiatives, including the Holy Child Collaborative, which connects all our constituencies in our shared mission.

This past fall, our province hosted a series of inspiring **pilgrimages to Philadelphia, Louisiana, and Mississippi**, with a total of 49 participants. These journeys deepened the pilgrims’ understanding of Cornelia’s faith and fostered meaningful connections among our Sisters, Holy Child Associates, ministry leaders, and heads of schools. As one pilgrim reflected, the experience left them “energized and even more connected to the Holy Child mission.”

Also in this issue, we celebrate **four new Holy Child Associates**—Joanne Ainsworth, Shalonda Neeley Gutierrez, Jeanne Mackin, and Mary Sciarrillo—who made their commitments this past fall. Their dedication embodies Cornelia’s vision that, **“God has chosen to need women and men in every age to reveal divine love.”**

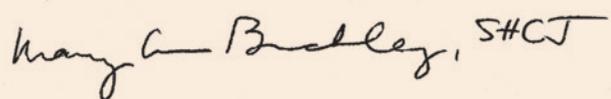
Additionally, we share news of the **Holy Child Network of Schools** welcoming Margaret Fox-Tully as its Executive Director, the first layperson to serve in this vital role. Her 40 years of educational leadership experience will guide our nine schools as they continue to educate with “love, joy, and respect.”

Throughout these pages, you’ll find updates on our ***Laudato Si’* initiatives** and joyful **reunion celebrations**. We also remember and honor Sisters Elizabeth Ann Clarke, Virginia Gaine, and Elizabeth Mary Strub, whose lives of service continue to inspire us.

As Cornelia wrote, “Where there are many contradictions . . . much fruit is to be hoped for.” In these challenging and evolving times, may we “look around” and take her words to heart and courageously envision a future filled with hope.

Thank you for your steadfast support and love of Holy Child!

With prayers and gratitude,



Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ
American Province Leader



Organizing for Mission in a Changing World

Pauline Darby, SHCJ, the leader of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, interviewed James (Jim) Corkery, SJ, theologian and emeritus professor of theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, about the Society's Foundress, Venerable Cornelia Connelly, and the spirituality of the Incarnation.

The 90-minute, virtual conversation between Father Jim and Sister Pauline took place in June 2023, with Holy Child Sisters, Associates, friends, and staff from four continents—Africa, Europe, North America, and South America—in attendance.

Within the first minutes of the conversation, Father Jim shared:

“Cornelia didn't look up to find God; she looked around. She was certain that God could be found in the hidden and ordinary things of the world – the people, places, situations.”

Indeed, Cornelia saw God's presence all around her. As Foundress, she rooted the Society's mission, “to help others believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world and to rejoice in the divine presence,” in an Incarnational spirituality.

As her writings and actions reveal, Cornelia was a welcoming person, inviting not only vowed women religious but also the laity and people “around” her to advance the Society's mission. Cornelia's inclusive and open spirit was likely connected to her experiences as a convert, wife, mother, and teacher. With a deep and active faith in God, she wrote, “I have begun the work. Others will bring it to perfection.” Her inclusive spirit also is reflected in the Society's constitutions, opening with: “God has chosen to need women and men in every age to reveal divine love and to make known the reality of the Incarnation.”

The Society acknowledges that, like many other vowed religious communities, it is evolving and moving in new ways due to changes in religious life. In the United States, for example, vocations are decreasing, and the average age of professed women religious is 80. In other parts of the world,

including the Society's African Province, vocations are stable or growing.

The Society's 2022-28 General Chapter Enactments, or goals, are a call to action to respond to the shifts in religious life: **“Now is the right time to begin a progressive change in how we organize ourselves today and tomorrow for mission in a rapidly changing world.”**



Theologian James (Jim) Corkery, SJ, and Society Leader Pauline Darby, SHCJ, discuss “Spirituality and the Incarnation Spirit,” in Rome, Italy, June 2023.

As the whole Society responds to this call of “progressive change” with prayer and in conversation groups, Sisters in the American Province have reflected on their years of **commitment to the formation and empowerment of lay partners.** Women and men have been advancing the Society's mission and spirit side-by-side with the sisters for decades, responding to the call of the Church's Second Vatican Council. These collaborators include Holy Child Associates, the Holy Child Network of Schools, ministries founded or co-founded by the Society, employees, and many others who are already intent on revealing God's love in the world and making known “the reality of the Incarnation.”

During the past two years, the province's planning and action has also led to increased engagement with

(Continued on page 6)

A portrait of Venerable Cornelia Connelly, a woman in a dark blue or black habit with a white collar and a white headband. She is looking directly at the viewer with a calm expression. Her hands are clasped in front of her. The background is a dark, textured brown. The top and bottom edges of the image feature a row of colorful, rectangular tiles in shades of red, orange, and green.

“Cornelia didn’t look
up to find God;
she looked around ...”

*Venerable Cornelia Connelly was a convert,
wife, mother, and foundress of the Society of the
Holy Child Jesus. Portrait by Ellen Cooper, 2021.*

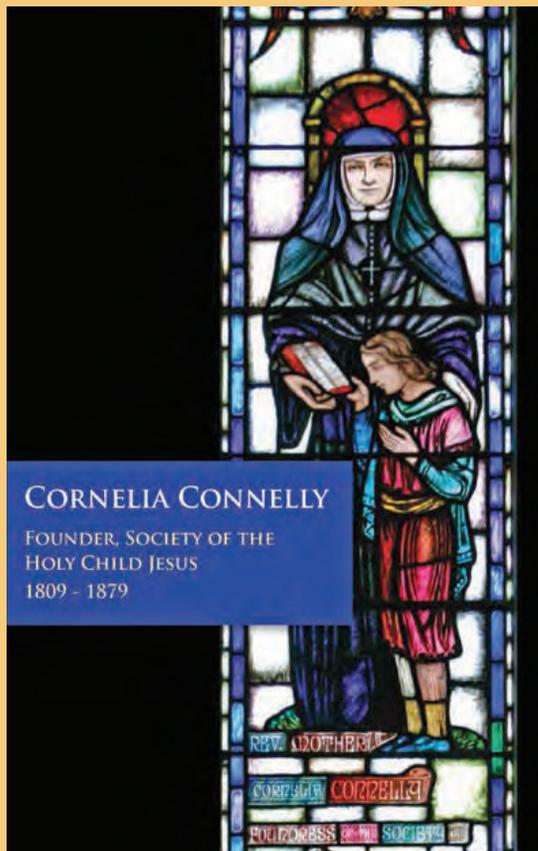
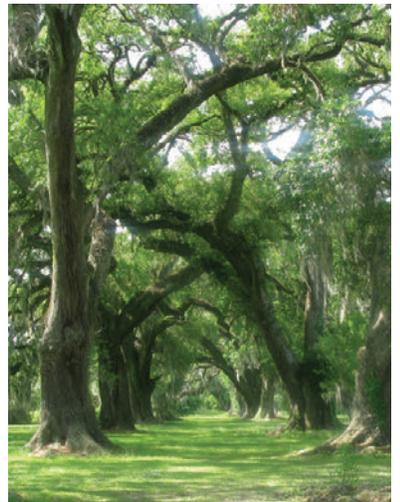
Prayer Cards

A Meaningful Way to Remember and Honor Family and Friends

To request prayer cards, please contact the Sisters at holychildsisisters@shcj.org or call 610-626-1400 ext. 1307, or visit the Province's website at www.shcj.org/american.

Any donations received through this program benefit the Holy Child ministries.

Thank you!



THE LIFE OF CORNELIA CONNELLY

By Judith "Judy" Talvacchia
is now available in English and Spanish!

To receive a copy, please send an email to holychildsisisters@shcj.org.

"Thank you so much for the book on Cornelia Connelly. I first read about Cornelia during my school days at Saint Leonard's. Many times my children heard her quotes, especially 'be yourself but make that self just what our Lord wants it to be.' My husband and I both read the book and then discussed it. Now I will pass it on to others and trust that Cornelia will also inspire them." – Nannette

"The book is beyond informative. Every page captivated me. Kudos to Judith A. Talvacchia! I shall keep my copy on the coffee table for the rest of my eighty-four years! The twelve of which have made me ever grateful for the education the Holy Child Sisters imparted to me." – Katharine

(Continued from page 3)

communities of women religious, connecting with them in new ways. As recently as this past year, the American Province has become a founding member of the Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries, a partnership of religious congregations supporting and sustaining 10 ministries that provide outreach and assistance to the needs of “people on the move” along the Southern California-Mexico border region.

In April 2025, the province was one of 21 congregations of Catholic sisters to express hope and a commitment to Gospel values in a full-page ad in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Looking ahead, empowering the laity remains a priority. As *Actions* goes to print, the province is implementing a new program, Holy Child Collaborative, that connects and serves all Holy Child constituencies. The collaborative, which will officially launch on April 18, was the outcome of months of conversations and meetings with our community of Holy Child Sisters and all Holy Child constituencies. During



Shelia McNiff, SHCJ, raises her hand during a presentation at the province-wide Holy Child Collaborative meeting in October 2025, where Sisters, Associates, heads of schools, ministry leaders, and staff came together to discuss how to respond to our changing world.

these gatherings, organizations and individuals asked for deeper collaboration with the Sisters, additional resources on Cornelia and the Society, and opportunities to share and connect, **ensuring the Holy Child mission and spirit continues to flourish**, as a gift for others and in response to the call of the Gospel.

Near the end of Sister Pauline’s interview with Father Jim, he said: “Love makes you act. In that sense, you can see that the love of the child sends the Holy Child sister out. She can’t sit still. People who know the good news of the Incarnation and the Resurrection are not homebirds. They have places to go, people to see, things to do. **Incarnation is a motor.**”

Cornelia’s Society was founded with a living, breathing mission to respond to the wants of the age, guided by a “Love Full of Action” (Venerable Cornelia Connelly). As the plans of the American Province continue to evolve and organize for the future, **the Holy Child community remains fully committed to love and to serve, and to look around to find God in the ordinary and the hidden in our world.** We are “not homebirds.”



Holy Child heads of school and ministry leaders share a meal during the pilgrimage to Louisiana and Mississippi.

Connecting the Sacred Paths of *Our Foundress*

For the past several years, the American Province has organized pilgrimages to “walk the sacred paths” of Venerable Cornelia Connelly, Foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. These pilgrimages have deepened participants’ understanding of Cornelia’s life and faith, advanced the Society’s mission, and fostered the “true spirit of the Holy Child.” (Venerable Cornelia Connelly)

This past fall, 27 people participated in a tour of Cornelia’s Philadelphia on October 20, 2025, for the first of two pilgrimages that month. The pilgrims retraced Cornelia’s steps in Philadelphia, where she was born and lived until the age of 22. They also shared a meal, conversation, and reflections on Cornelia’s life and their own lives. One of the Philadelphia pilgrims reflected, “I thoroughly enjoyed the Philadelphia Pilgrimage, especially seeing the shrine to Cornelia at the Cathedral and the informative visit to Christ Church in Olde City.”

The second pilgrimage, a five-day trip to Louisiana and Mississippi, was attended by members of the Holy Child Associates, Holy Child ministries, Provincial staff, and Holy Child Network of Schools. The group visited several sites significant to Cornelia, including St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans and Sacred Heart Academy in Grand Coteau. Discussions during the trip centered on Cornelia’s faith and the Holy Child values—simplicity, humility, compassion, and joy—guiding the pilgrims on their journey and leading them to reflect on how Cornelia’s faith deepened through both joyful and challenging times.

United in their inspiration of Cornelia and their desire to advance the Society’s mission, the 22 pilgrims made many new personal, professional, and spiritual connections. One pilgrim, Virgil Sheppard, President and CEO of Hope Partnership for Education, a Holy Child co-sponsored ministry with the Sisters of Mercy in North Philadelphia, shared: “I left the experience energized and even more connected to the Holy Child mission. I also left the experience validated because of the alignment of the work we are doing at Hope Partnership for Education. I know my inclusion in the pilgrimage will only strengthen the work being done at Hope.”

Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ, American Province Leader, who attended the five-day pilgrimage, noted that recent



Members of the Holy Child Academy Class of 1970, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania, pose for a photo at the Memorial to Venerable Cornelia Connelly, located inside the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia.

pilgrimages have had a meaningful impact throughout the Holy Child community, inspiring greater connection, collaboration, and engagement. She expressed the province’s commitment to continue organizing and sponsoring pilgrimages, as well as lectures and social gatherings to advance the Society’s mission. “Like Cornelia, Holy Child Sisters have relied on others to carry on the mission and spirit of the Society. As a province, we look forward to providing these resources and connections to better serve our lay collaborators and the larger society.”

If you are interested in deepening your understanding of Cornelia, learning more about the Society’s mission, or discovering ways to embody our Holy Child spirit and values, we invite you to reach out and engage with us. Connect today to explore opportunities to participate or support our ongoing mission by contacting holychildsisters@shcj.org.



At Christ Church in Philadelphia, pilgrims listen as a historian shares valuable insights into Cornelia's childhood and early adulthood in the early 1800s.



Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Rector, Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, greets pilgrim Patrick Tully at the Shrine of the Holy Child.



Holy Child Associate Sarah Brabant, Ph.D., gives a presentation on Cornelia's life and spiritual journey in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, in the 1800s.



(From left) American Province Leader Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ, along with Holy Child Sisters Francine Gunther and Maureen Duffy, place flowers at the gravesite of Cornelia's children, Mary Magdalen and John Henry, at St. Charles Borromeo Cemetery in Grand Coteau, Louisiana.



Bonnie T. Barry, a parishioner of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, shares the history and the artwork of the parish. The parish is in front of St. Charles College, where Pierce Connelly, Cornelia's husband, accepted a teaching position.



Pilgrims enjoy viewing Holy Child and Venerable Cornelia Connelly artifacts at Saint Mary Basilica in Natchez, Mississippi.

Holy Child Sisters and Associates engage in joyful *Meet and Greet*

By Judy Talvacchia, Chair of the Associates Core Team

Philadelphia-area Holy Child Associates and Province staff renewed connections and formed new relationships at this past summer's "Meet and Greet," hosted by Holy Child Associates and coordinated by Holy Child Associate Dian Taylor-Pringle. Despite the 101-degree temperature, 14 Sisters, Associates, and Province staff attended.

After introductions, Dian creatively facilitated conversation by inviting each participant to pick a question from a box of prepared questions. In response to the questions, the group heard about the Sisters' ministries, important lessons learned from former students, favorite travel destinations, book preferences, and more. From light-hearted to heartfelt, the resulting conversation was a joyful experience for all who attended!

This event flowed from the Holy Child Associates **desire to grow together as a community**, getting to know the Sisters, each other, and the larger Holy Child family. Associates—who seek to **support each other in the joys and challenges of discipleship and life**—hope to make the "Meet and Greet" a recurring event that deepens the bonds between the retired Sisters and Associates.

"The Sisters are amazing, and to hear them share their experiences is a gift. They are a remarkable group of people, truly a blessing."

— Patty Wechsler, Holy Child Associate

"It was such a gift to be part of this event and to witness the SHCJ charism alive in such a beautifully diverse group. I especially loved the intergenerational conversations that took place."

— Lori Tedjeske, Executive Director of Operations for the American Province



Holy Child Associate Patty Wechsler (left) and Barbara Bartlett, SHCJ, attend the "Meet and Greet."



Lori Tedjeske, American Province Executive Director of Operations, connects with Jeanne Marie Guerin, SHCJ, at the Holy Child Associates "Meet and Greet."



Holy Child Associate Dian Taylor-Pringle leads the participants of the "Meet and Greet" in prayer and conversation. Also pictured is Holy Child Associate Desmond Pringle and Jeanne Marie Hatch, SHCJ.

Commitment Ceremony

God has chosen to need women and men in every age to reveal God's love...

– Venerable Cornelia Connelly

This past fall, Joanne Ainsworth, Shalonda Neeley Gutierrez, Jeanne Mackin, and Mary Sciarillo made their commitments as Holy Child Associates in the American Province.

Guided by Christ and the Incarnation of God and inspired by the foundational insights of Venerable Cornelia Connelly, Foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Holy Child Associates are men and women who participate in prayer, service, spiritual development, and fellowship. They align themselves with Cornelia's values— simplicity, humility, charity, and joy—and embrace the Society's mission "to help others believe that God lives and acts in them and in the world and to rejoice in God's presence."

Our Holy Child community extends heartfelt blessings to Joanne, Shalonda, Jeanne, and Mary. With deep gratitude to all who organized and led the ceremonies, we joyfully look forward to the Associates continued journey.



"Being an Associate allows me not only to feel part of the Society, but also provides opportunities to develop spiritually."

– Joanne Ainsworth



"Being a part of Holy Child helped me not only be a better teacher but also a better person. And I believe that Associates are among those who will carry the spirit of Cornelia Connelly into the future."

– Jeanne Mackin



"When you know that God's presence is in all things and people, you begin to understand your worth ... I hope the Sisters have a sense of peace that they can trust us with the next chapter of their story."

– Shalonda Neeley Gutierrez



As an Associate, Mary is more mindful about sharing her faith and her passion for educating and empowering young women.

"I want to help spread the SHCJ mission and charisma to assure the Sisters that they have my support."

– Mary Sciarillo

If the Holy Child mission and values inspire you, consider becoming a Holy Child Associate. All are welcome. For more information, please get in touch with us at Associates-USA@shcj.org.

HOLY CHILD SISTERS *Celebrate Advent*

Holy Child Associates, friends, family, alumni/ae, and supporters celebrated the Advent season at New Sharon's campus in Rosemont, Pennsylvania. Guests explored the Sisters' collections of Nativity scenes from around the world. Afterwards, many joined the Sisters living at Holy Child Center and the local community for Mass at Holy Child Chapel.

The Nativity scenes remained on display for Holy Child Schools and ministries, including Holy Child Academy in Drexel Hill and Holy Child School at Rosemont.

We are very grateful to the Holy Child Associates for organizing the events! Given their continued success and the participants' desire to stay connected, plans are underway for a 2026 Advent celebration. Stay tuned for more details!



Care of Creation UPDATE

We, the Sisters in the American Province of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Holy Child Associates, and employees commit ourselves to the Laudato Si' Goals by "Caring for Our Common Home," including our natural environment and all people, and reflecting on our deep connection to all creation. Please join us in caring and respecting all creation!



Sisters from Holy Child Center and the surrounding communities create snack bags for a local organization serving people in need of food. In photos are Marie Ursino, SHCJ, and Elizabeth (Mel) Loomis, SHCJ.

Mayfield Senior School of the Holy Child in Pasadena, California, organizes its annual Christmas toy drive for South Central Los Angeles Ministry Program (SC LAMP), a co-sponsored ministry of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. The toy drive will benefit 80 children and their mothers.



With a grant from the American Province SHCJ Social Justice Fund, Rosemont College repairs its greenhouse for a vegetable garden, October 2025.



Holy Child Center employee Kevin Ruth submitted this photo for a province-wide project in which Sisters, Associates, and staff share images capturing moments of God in creation. Here, Kevin is enjoying a nature hike in Pennsylvania.

Reunions

HOLY CHILD ACADEMY, SHARON HILL, PENNSYLVANIA

All-Class Reunion

Sunday, October 12, 2025



SAINT IGNATIUS SCHOOL, ROGERS PARK, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

All-Class & Parish Reunion

September 28, 2025



HOLY CHILD ACADEMY, SHARON HILL, PENNSYLVANIA

Class of 1965 – 60th Reunion

September 13, 2025



HOLY CHILD ACADEMY, PORTLAND, OREGON

Class of 1971 Reunion

Saturday, June 7, 2025



SAINT LEONARD'S ACADEMY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Class of 1975 – 50th Reunion

Saturday, August 23, 2025



Planning a Reunion?

Need a class list? Have reunion photos or memories to share?

Contact Sandy Lovascio, Mission Advancement Associate, at 610.626.1400, ext. 1301, or slovascio@shcj.org.

Pilgrims of Hope



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1341 Montgomery Avenue
Rosemont, PA 19010
www.shcj.org/american/donate

IRA Rollovers and Donor-Advised Fund

Contact your financial adviser or fund administrator.

Donate Stocks and Securities

View instructions for wiring securities on the Society's website at www.shcj.org/american/giving/ways-you-can-support-the-society.

Create a Legacy Gift

Name the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, American Province as a beneficiary in your Will or Trust, Life Insurance, or Retirement Plan Assets.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit the Society's website at www.shcj.org/american/giving/ways-you-can-support-the-society.



Our hope begins with you!

Please support our Holy Child Ministries.

Your gift makes an impact.

Thank you!

THE CORNELIAN SOCIETY

The Society of the Holy Child Jesus is thankful to the members of the Cornelian Society – family members, graduates, and friends – for their planned gifts.

Anonymous (18)

Marguerite Bader and John Foundos

Richard and Mary Bienvenue

Susan Mongiello Bocchetti

Mary Boetgerkelle

Marilyn Buckley

Dr. Melissa A. Butler

Sharon Haberski Carmody

Barbara A. Chap

Susan Collins

Debbie Cotter

Janice Hudecheck Davis

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Kathleen M. Spencer

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Linda Walsh and Terrell Dixon

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Eva Marie Wolfe

Susan Wolstenholme, Ph.D.

Ora Wry, Ph.D.

2025 BEQUESTS

William Downey

Helen Grunke

Joseph Mulvaney

George Omas

Frederick Peters

† Denotes donor is deceased

Create a **LASTING LEGACY**

Has a Sister of the Holy Child Jesus made a difference in your life?

Does the mission of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus resonate with you?

Are you looking for ways to continue your charitable giving for the Sisters and their mission now and beyond your lifetime?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, we invite you to join the **82 members of the Cornelian Society** and partner in mission with the Sisters to:

- Educate the poor and marginalized;
- Advocate for Social Justice; and
- Provide loving care for the retired Sisters.

"St. Leonard's Academy had such a formative effect on me. I treasure those years and the ways in which the Society has influenced my life. My husband has also experienced the Holy Child spirit at events he has attended with me. He always feels welcome and embraced. We are happy to provide a gift that will allow the legacy of Cornelia Connelly to continue into the future to meet the wants of the age."

*Judy Talvacchia
St. Leonard's Academy, Philadelphia, PA*



For more information about membership into the Cornelian Society, contact the Mission Advancement Office at 610-626-1400 x1301 or slovascio@shcj.org.

MEMORIAL TO VENERABLE CORNELIA CONNELLY

AND

THE SHRINE OF THE HOLY CHILD

Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Come, Visit and Pray!

Venerable Cornelia Connelly, born in Philadelphia in 1809, is the foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. She offers inspiration to all who seek the presence of God in their vocations, especially those in difficult marriages and/or who have suffered the death of children.

Notification of any favors through the prayerful intercession of Cornelia may be sent to Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Rector of the Cathedral Basilica, at info@cathedralphila.org.



Sisters Remembered

ELIZABETH ANN (LIZ) CLARKE, SHCJ (MOTHER EMMANUEL MARY)

September 26, 1935 – June 29, 2025

Sister Liz, known for her quiet and gentle disposition, was strong in faith, fiercely loyal, and possessed a remarkable memory and sense of humor.

Sister Liz deeply believed in the power of prayer. If she promised to pray for someone, she did so faithfully and would later check in on the person, never forgetting the details of her or his prayer request. Many who knew Sister Liz considered their relationship with her a precious gift.

Throughout her 25 years as an educator and school administrator, Sister Liz served at her alma mater, Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child in Summit, New Jersey (1961-63; 1964-67; 1977-85); Holy Child Academy in Old Westbury, New York (1963-64 and 1967-71); and Saint Elizabeth School in New York City (1971-77).

In 1988, she began teaching at the Armenian Sisters Academy in Lexington, Massachusetts, and cared for her parents until their passing. After a sabbatical in 1998, Sister Liz moved to Rockport, Massachusetts, where she volunteered in the healthcare ministry at her parish. The Archdiocese of Boston recognized her service with the Chevrus Award for her contributions to the parish in a “quiet, unassuming, and perhaps unrecognized fashion.”



VIRGINIA (GINNY) GAINE, SHCJ (MOTHER PATRICK MARY)

February 2, 1931 – June 27, 2025

Sister Ginny cherished her family, friends, former students, colleagues, and fellow Holy Child Sisters. She was known for her kindness, sense of humor, and love of puzzles and books, particularly those related to Ireland or spiritual life. Sister Ginny had a peaceful presence that she shared with everyone she met. Her intelligence and mathematical skills were instrumental in making and analyzing many financial decisions that advanced the Society’s mission for over 40 years.

After college, Sister Ginny moved to Maryland to work as a mathematician at the Army Map Service of the Department of Defense. While working there, she enrolled in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where she earned a Master of Education degree.

Early in her vocation, Sister Ginny taught at Holy Child Academy in Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania (1960-64), and at Connelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac, Maryland, from (1964-70).

In 1971, after earning a Master of Arts in Mathematics from the University of Notre Dame, Sister Ginny began working in province administration. She held several positions, including provincial councilor, finance councilor, financial advisor, and investment officer. To address the declining finances of the Society in the 1970s, she founded the American Province’s Investment Advisory Committee, which included both lay men and women to assist with investment strategies. The province’s committee still operates today. On an international level, she served as the Society’s treasurer and investment officer. Her gift with numbers, planning, and practicality significantly benefited the Society and its ministries.



ELIZABETH MARY STRUB, SHCJ (MOTHER ELIZABETH MARY)

March 30, 1930 – July 25, 2025

Sister Elizabeth's legendary contributions to the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and the Church were marked by intelligence, leadership, and humility. Reflecting on her journey, she wrote, "I've been a high school teacher, a head of school, a director of novices, a permanent student, an SHCJ leader, a missionary, a pastoral worker, a giver of retreats, a spiritual director, and a not-very-good cook." She added, "The thread sewing all this together: call and answer. It's been a lifelong adventure with great Sisters and a faithful God. St. Paul once said, 'Let us go forward on the road that has brought us to where we are.' That's what I hope to do."



Sister Elizabeth served at Mayfield Junior School of the Holy Child Jesus in Pasadena, California, (1954-55) and Mayfield Senior School of the Holy Child Jesus in Pasadena, California (1955-65). In the following years, she studied at the Pontifical Institute Regina Mundi in Rome, Italy, taught at Rosemont College, and pursued further studies at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri.

In 1970, Sister Elizabeth began a 16-year ministry in Society Leadership in Rome, Italy, first as a team member and then as Society Leader for two terms totaling 12 years.

After her second term as Society Leader, Sister Elizabeth stayed in Rome to work on the beatification of the Society's foundress, Cornelia Connelly. She wrote a biographical synopsis, the *Informatio*, for review by the Sacred Congregation of the Causes of Saints.

Sister Elizabeth's work on the *Informatio* holds historical significance in the Church. As noted by Kenneth Woodward in his book *Making Saints*, he wrote, "Strub, it turned out, is a pioneer: the first woman to prepare a document for the congregation's judgement."

In 1989, Sister Elizabeth moved to the Holy Child community in Chile, serving there for nearly three decades. In 1995, she helped establish Centro Cornelia Connelly in Santiago to offer spiritual ministry.

In March 2018, Sister Elizabeth returned to the United States and joined a retirement community with other Holy Child Sisters near Rosemont, Pennsylvania. She remained engaged and active in SHCJ meetings and committees and continued her strong and loving connections with family, Holy Child Associates, and friends.

**To make a gift in memory or
honor of a Sister, visit
www.shcj.org/american/donate.**



HOLY CHILD SCHOOLS

Connelly School of the Holy Child
Potomac, Maryland

Cornelia Connelly Center
New York, New York

Holy Child Academy
Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania

Holy Child Academy
Old Westbury, New York

Holy Child School at Rosemont
Rosemont, Pennsylvania

Mayfield Junior School of the Holy Child Jesus
Pasadena, California

Mayfield Senior School
Pasadena, California

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child
Summit, New Jersey

School of the Holy Child
Rye, New York



Holy Child Network of Schools Leads the Way with Joy

Venerable Cornelia Connelly, foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, developed an educational system rooted in trust and reverence for the dignity of all human beings. Through her inspiring *Holy Child Book of Studies*, she set an enduring course for generations of Holy Child Sisters and educators, exhorting them to respond to “the wants of the age” and to educate every student with “love, joy, and respect.”

For 180 years, Holy Child educators have embraced Cornelia’s philosophy, helping their students to “grow strong in faith and live fully human lives,” to achieve at the highest academic levels, and to advocate for social responsibility.

Today, Holy Child schools continue to operate in all three of the Society’s provinces—African, American, and European. The American Province’s Holy Child Network of Schools is an association of nine independent, Catholic schools (list on left) sponsored by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus.

Under the leadership of the new director, Margaret Fox-Tully (see following page), the Holy Child Network of Schools office remains committed to:

- Educating the schools’ communities, including students, faculty, staff, and trustees, on the life, educational philosophy, and spirituality of Venerable Cornelia Connelly.
- Promoting Holy Child Goals and Criteria in the schools’ communities.
- Supporting the schools’ Mission Effectiveness process, where each school conducts a self-study and evaluation of its efforts to accomplish the Goals of Holy Child Schools.
- Instituting policies and programs that adhere to the education industry’s highest legal and professional standards.

With the motto “Actions Not Words,” the Network of Schools office will carry forward and build on Cornelia’s vision to develop mature persons capable of making choices that enrich their own lives and contribute to the lives of others in a joyful, active, and nurturing environment.



Heads of schools and administrators from Holy Child Schools pose with Margaret Fox-Tully (first row, center), Executive Director of the Holy Child Network of Schools, at Saint Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square, Louisiana.

BOARD OF HOLY CHILD NETWORK OF SCHOOLS NAMES NEW DIRECTOR

Dear Holy Child Community,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Holy Child Network of Schools, I am pleased to share that Margaret Fox-Tully started in her role as the Network's Executive Director on July 1, 2025. Following the recommendation of the search committee and with the support of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, the Board voted unanimously last spring to appoint her to the position. We are excited to welcome Margaret as the first layperson to serve in this important position and look forward to her leadership with great enthusiasm.

Margaret brings more than 40 years of educational leadership experience, including as Head of School at Holy Child Academy in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, from 2016 to 2023, and most recently as Sponsorship Coordinator for the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Her impressive experience, caring leadership, and deep passion for the Holy Child mission were evident during the interview process.

Margaret succeeds Eileen McDevitt, SHCJ, who devoted 40 years to establishing and nurturing our Network, and grounding it in the teachings of the Society's Foundress, Venerable Cornelia Connelly.

With the motto Actions Not Words, the Network comprises nine schools across the United States. A Holy Child education centers on several important criteria, including **joy in learning, trust and reverence for every person, academic excellence, personal responsibility, and "meeting the wants of the age."** Holy Child schools foster compassion, openness, critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and service.

The Board extends its heartfelt thanks to the Society, the Search Committee, and all our school communities for their ongoing support.

We invite you to join us in celebrating Margaret's return to our Network and in supporting her as she leads us into this exciting new chapter.

Sincerely,

Sean Glynn
Chair, Board of Directors
Holy Child Network of Schools



Margaret Fox-Tully, Executive Director of the Holy Child Network of Schools





Society of the Holy Child Jesus

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Holy Child Ministries

The Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus and their colleagues serve in educational, social justice, and spiritual and healing ministries. The Society of the Holy Child Jesus in the Americas sponsors and co-sponsors the ministries below:

Have you moved or changed your e-mail address?

Please send your updated information to actions@shcj.org.

CALIFORNIA

Casa Cornelia Law Center

(San Diego)

Mayfield Junior School
of the Holy Child Jesus

(Pasadena)

Mayfield Senior School
of the Holy Child Jesus

(Pasadena)

South Central Los Angeles
Ministry Project

(Los Angeles)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

African Faith and Justice Network

Washington School for Girls

ILLINOIS

Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep

(Waukegan)

MARYLAND

Connelly School of the Holy Child

(Potomac)

NEW JERSEY

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child

(Summit)

NEW YORK

Cornelia Connelly Center

(New York City)

Cristo Rey New York High School

(New York City)

Holy Child Academy

(Old Westbury)

School of the Holy Child

(Rye)

PENNSYLVANIA

African Sisters Education Collaborative

(Scranton)

Holy Child Academy

(Drexel Hill)

Holy Child School at Rosemont

(Rosemont)

Hope Partnership for Education

(Philadelphia)

Providence Center

(Philadelphia)

Rosemont College

(Rosemont)

CHILE

Pastoral Ministry in the Southern Zone
of the Archdiocese of Santiago

(Santiago)

SAVE THE DATE

Archives Open House
Thursday, March 19, 2026

Holy Child Collaborative
Launch

Saturday, April 18, 2026

St. Leonard's Academy
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

All-Class Reunion

Springfield Country Club

Saturday, April 18, 2026

Jubilee Celebration

Saturday, June 20, 2026