



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Trina Bottos, CSJ

“Precisely because it is such a deep mystery, the cross is not easy to grasp intellectually. The deeper things in life, love, fidelity, morality and faith are not mathematics, but mysteries whose unfathomable depths always leave more to be understood. We never quite arrive at an adequate understanding of them.

But that doesn't mean we don't know them. Knowing is different from understanding, and we intuit a lot more than we can intellectually imagine or express.”
The Passion and the Cross, Ronald Rolheiser, p. 27-28.

Each Holy Week we have an opportunity to “know” the meaning of the cross in a deeper way as we re - experience the days of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection.

Each year of our lives we have concrete experiences of the cross in our own lives: as we age, experience physical and/or cognitive limitations, general health challenges, the death of loved ones, the grief that comes from leaving a beloved ministry or familiar home, the diminishment evident in our Congregations and/or families. Do we blithely skip over these dark days and proceed immediately to the brightness of Easter or do we allow ourselves to enter into these experiences of personal or communal suffering and unite them to those of Jesus? Every human life has its share of “Good Fridays” with inescapable brokenness, suffering and pain that are part of being mortal and we all have our various

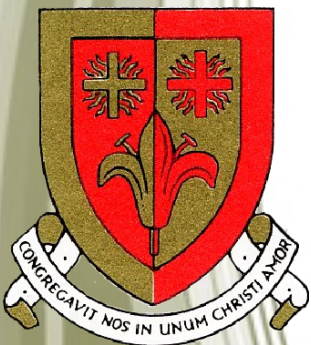
ways of trying to evade our crosses rather than embrace them.

I remember a young man who had a terminal cancer telling me that he had been asked what he had learned through his experience with the disease. His response –“I didn't know how much I was loved.” He died peacefully comforted by that knowledge. He allowed his experience of suffering to be redemptive for him and others as he expressed gratitude to those who cared for him.

St. Paul tells us, “The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing but it is the power of God to those who are being saved.” Cor. 1:18. Such paradoxical passages, taken to heart, challenge us to trust.

Resurrection will follow death; eternal life is our inheritance. Each Easter Sunday reminds us that, as profound and painful as death may be, it is not the end of the story. The journey to eternal life goes **through** death. The triumph of Easter comes **after** Good Friday.

May we have the courage to live this Paschal mystery with renewed faith and hope this Easter, **Alleluia, Alleluia!**



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR –

Loretta Manzara, CSJ



As to be expected these past few months

our Executive and all of our Federation Committees have been busy with meetings and planning events.

In this issue our President, Trina, draws us into the mystery and reality of Holy Week. Also you will read about a conference that two of our Vocation Committee members attended in Ottawa. Our Ecology Committee offers words of encouragement about being a Blue Community, and trying out a new ‘blue’ fruit! And don’t forget the *Faith and Ecology* retreat at the end of May!

In April, our Archives Committee will meet in Hamilton where they will share the ‘fruits’ of digging into our historical patrimony.

The Associate/Companions Committee is moving full steam ahead to a gathering of their leaders at the end of May at Invermara where they will continue to

converse about the ‘fruit’ of living the charism in their neighbourhoods.

Sue Wilson, CSJ from our Office for Systemic Justice attended a meeting of the Commission on Social Development in New York in January/February. The Commission agreed on the importance of establishing social protection systems that are tailored for each particular nation (child benefits, family benefits, unemployment benefits, ongoing training and education, old age security). Her project for us: “challenge our respective governments to strengthen social protections, rather than letting them erode through austerity measures.” Let’s take up that challenge wherever we can.

True to our Mission Statement, many of us have been *listening to the heart of the world*, through our Global Coordinating Group Prayer calendar, in this issue we also read about a number of ways our Sisters have *listened to the heart of the world* in real time and space.

As I write this message, a representative group of us are preparing to interview candidates for our Blue Communities Coordinator position. Look for an announcement in the next few weeks. And in keeping with the hiring theme, we are pleased to acknowledge the good work accomplished by Sister Justine Gitanjali Senapati at the UN and announce our two new staff for the fall of 2018: Sister Barbara Bozak CSJ, Coordinator, and Kristen Whitney Daniels for web and social media.

Well, I am off to France on Easter Monday for the International Centre Board meeting. I hope to carry a few bottles of maple syrup to share the spirit of our Canadian spring. Syrup is not really a ‘fruit’, but it sure tastes good on ‘fruit’! Meanwhile – all of you – Sisters and Associates/Companions may you know the depth of God’s love revealed in the Risen One over these **Great 50 Days of Easter**. That is the true ‘fruit’ for which we all long!

He is Risen...

Alleluia!

THE GREEN WINDOW - WHEN GREEN BECOMES BLUE - Mary Mettler, CSJ on behalf of the Federation Ecology Committee



Through the Federation, we CSJs have become the 29th Blue Community in the world, joining with many others whose goals are: to have water and sanitation recognized as human rights, to phase out and then ban the sale of bottled water at municipal events and public facilities, and to promote publicly financed, owned and operated water and waste water services.

These communities are provided with the tools to fight the privatization of water and promote the human right to water. This project builds on nearly two decades of **Water Watch** work, in coalition with many other groups to promote and protect public water. Blue Communities in Canada, there are now 13 of them, is an initiative of the Council of Canadians and CUPE.

When Paris joined the Blue Communities Project on World Water day, 2016, Maude Barlow congratulated them saying “the global water crisis is getting more

serious by the day and it is being made worse by the corporate theft and abuse of water.” And we all know of the problems our Aboriginal communities are experiencing with water that is not safe for drinking. Over 100 communities are under water advisory and need to boil water for drinking. And mercury contaminated water is major news and is a shame for Canada.

Indeed water scarcity is a global concern! In my recent awareness visit to India at the invitation of SOPAR, I came to a deep appreciation of water which we in Canada take so much for granted. In India, water is not lacking so much as it’s not potable and the contaminants lead to serious illnesses. Small village communities have built filtration plants to purify the water. Doctors were asked if this was really necessary. Their conclusion was that a village that had 5 doctors now only needed one. (see www.sopar-balavikasa.org)

During her time in South Sudan on an awareness trip with Canadian Aid for South Sudan, Sister Joan Atkinson found similar realities. There they also have to deal with water-borne diseases causing illness and death. Taught by a Canadian scientist, they fill specific types of plastic bottles with water and let the ultra-violet rays of the sun

purify the water. Families using this system are free of water-borne illnesses and are much healthier. I saw this same process being used while I was in Bolivia.

In a recent newsletter from the Office of Systemic Justice, Sister Sue Wilson writes “Water is indeed for our use and to sustain life but from an integral ecological perspective it is more than an “object for human use.”

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH WATER?

Sister Sue quotes Denise Nadeau who writes “my journey to unlearn this objectification of water and experience water as a living relative continues to be a long one.” Our CSJ charism calls us into deep relationship with all creation, and I think of St. Francis of Assisi who addressed water as “Sister Water.”



STEP ASIDE BLUEBERRIES. HERE COMES HASKAPS

Rita Godon CSJ on behalf of the Federation Ecology Committee

A new Canadian species of fruit has shown up in our Farmers Market last summer—haskap berries. Haskap is the Japanese name of the Ainu people of Northern Japan for fruit meaning “berry of long life and good



vision.” The berry has a very high anti-oxidant level (higher than blueberry), high in vitamin C and A, and also high in fibre and potassium.

The species is native to the boreal forests of Asia, Europe, and North America. When the fruit was introduced to Alberta, Canada in the 1950’s the fruit was very bitter and not palatable. The University of Saskatchewan took on a big initiative of perfecting the species and making it more adaptable for Canadian growing and usage. Today the berry has a unique raspberry/ blueberry flavour with a bit of zing to it. The fruit of the haskap plant is oblong in shape with a dusty indigo colour. Besides home usage like juicing, baking, and berry preserving,

the food industry is also interested in getting in on the prize for their marketing. It can be used as food colouring, for textile dyes and perhaps someday you may even find it sold as a really good burgundy wine.

The plant attracts few pests, has no thorns, no suckers, tends to fruit when young and ripens very early in the spring even before strawberries. What is interesting about haskap is that it is drought and cold

climate friendly. There are at least five varieties of haskap seedlings available on the open market. It is important to know that when planting haskap there must be a pollinator plant close by. For example, say you want to plant five plants of the Tundra variety. There must be a different variety like Boreallis to act as the pollinator for the other five plants. Bees and insects will carry pollen from one flower to another once that arrangement is in place. Because haskaps are the first spring plants to flower they provide a major source of food for bees, flies and other insects.

It is hopeful that someday this berry can grow as plentiful as the blueberry. Wouldn’t that be great if

this new species could grow in areas most needed where good nutrition is lacking.

HASKAP VINAIGRETTE

- *½ cup crushed berries
- *3 tbsp. cider vinegar
- *½ cup olive oil
- *½ tsp. sugar
- *1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- *Salt to taste

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend well. Pour into a container and serve on greens of any kind or try it on a wild rice and walnut salad.



Costanza Romano, CSJ on behalf of the Vocation Committee

Rise Up – Ottawa 2017

The following is Sister Costanza Romano's report from the Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) event she attended in Ottawa.

CCO hosts *Rise Up* every year starting December 28 and ending January 1 hosting young persons seeking a closer relationship

with God as well as creating an environment to "inspire and motivate leaders for the renewal of the world." During that time, speakers present on various topics to aid the young to discern the will of God in their lives. As sponsors, we are available to speak

to the young people regarding discernment as well, not only to religious life but to the vocation to which God is calling them. As the president of CCO wrote "May you encounter God's love for you: His forgiveness, His mercy, and His freedom. May He have dominion in each of your lives."

Speakers ranged from Lisa Canning who spoke of balancing work with family; Immaculeé Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan Holocaust; Father Mark Goring: Primacy of the Heart; Archbishop Paul-André

Durocher: the culture and history of our faith in Canada; Father Raymond de Souza: how the Gospel needs to be part of our everyday lives; and Bishop McCaig: how we are agents of dominion. Several workshops were offered ranging on multiple topics from relationships to prayer.



This event hosted 900+ persons. The music, Masses, prayers, adoration, etc. were always a part of our gathering. Sisters also hosted a vocation session, where we gathered with young women who had questions about religious life. For our display, we assembled the Le Puy Kitchen and offered an opportunity for persons to have their photo taken.

As religious, we can be aids to young people who are discerning God's will for them in their lives.

AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT

US Federation – Canada Formation Initiative

Sister Mary Rowell was recently appointed by the U. S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph to their Life Long Formation Committee. The goals of the committee are to produce ideas about best practice in formation, integrate formation in all ages and stages, and to brainstorm how to prepare for future shifts in the church, our demographics, and in the evolution of religious life for the sake of our CSJ mission in the world.

This year and for the next few years the U.S. Federation Novitiate, which Canadian novices attend, will be held in Rochester, N.Y. across Lake Ontario from Cobourg. This Fall the novices will come to Cobourg to the Villa for an 8 day program of Eco-theology spirituality as it relates to our charism. What a wonderful first time opportunity for collaboration across the border!

OUR WALK WITH JESUS—A MESSAGE TO PERSONS DISCERNING A CALL

Costanza Romano, CSJ

The Road to Emmaus is a familiar story many of us know. Two disciples are walking and are joined by a stranger. They did not recognize that this person was Jesus in their midst. Their discussion turns to recent events and they are in the midst of a crisis of faith. They speak of all that had happened, their hopes, their dreams, and their disappointment. The disciples fail to understand the true meaning of Jesus' time with them.

How often do we fail to notice Jesus in our midst? How often do we go through a crisis of faith? How often do we judge a situation without fully understanding what has happened? During the season of Lent, we are called to grow, we are called to renewal, and we are called to remember that Jesus walks with us in our everyday lives. Pope Emeritus Benedict tells us that the road to Emmaus "is the path of renewal and maturation in faith for all

Christians." In 2nd Corinthians we are reminded to walk by faith. At times in our lives, we may feel lonely, abandoned, betrayed by others, and we may even feel betrayed by God. We long to hear God's voice, to hear assurance that all will be well. We must remain open to hear our guide walking with us during the difficult times.

How often do we forget that Jesus is also part of our joys? We forget that Jesus rejoices with us and we must remember to be grateful for those moments. We are called to live everyday as Jesus' hands and feet. We are called to remember that we are all brothers and sisters. We are called to live a life of love and joy.

What a wonderful image when we remember that Jesus is walking with us through our days. What a precious gift we have when we remember that Jesus, who loves us

beyond question, even when we doubt it, shares our joys and sorrows.

Let us pray today that we have a stronger faith in the power and depth of God's love for us.

Let us pray that we can trust in Jesus who walks with us always, especially in our darkest hours.

Let us pray for grateful hearts in the joys and sorrows which fill all the moments in our lives.

Let us pray that we will always respond in love by truly loving God and each other.

Let us pray to be as Jesus in the midst of all that happens in us and around us each day.

Let us pray that we can be witnesses to the love and joy of God in our lives.

Most of all, let us remember that we are a resurrection people!

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Recently a number of our Federation members visited places afar, growing more deeply aware of the power of being a presence where hope abounds.

JANUARY TRIP TO SOUTH SUDAN

Sisters Joan Driscoll, Teresa Ryan, and

Joan Atkinson visited South Sudan with a team of 8 others from a small NGO group, **CASS** (Canadian Aid to South Sudan) that has been attentive to South Sudan for almost 20 years. The group stayed in a rural area, about an hour from the city of Aweil in the north

western part of South Sudan, in a compound with Father Emmanuel Malou, the parish priest. This compound was formerly owned by the Camboni Missionaries, who had to leave during the civil war in 2003.

Each year CASS makes a visit to

assess the projects they have been supporting, provide an art and music camp for nearly 500 children, and to let the people of the area know they are not forgotten in other parts of the world. CASS brings much needed medicine to the area and offers scholarships to students to continue



their elementary and secondary school. Over 70% of children do not go to school because of poverty and illness, so the scholarships and medicine are greatly appreciated.



CASS was warmly welcomed and came home with a deep sense of how presence and attentiveness to the “dear neighbour” is always important in every part of the world - especially the very poor.

JANUARY TRIP TO INDIA

In response to the invitation to congregations who support **SOPAR** (Société Partager) to go and see the work in India, Sisters Georgette Gregory, Janet Speth, Mary Mettler, and Pat Boucher went in January. SOPAR was founded by Angele and Andre Gingras forty years ago. Initially

they worked on providing water in the villages in the state of Telangana. They built bore wells and then built water purification systems with the people helping with the cost and taking responsibility for the maintenance.

Twenty-five years ago Bala Vikasa (little development) was founded as the sister organization in India to SOPAR. The Sisters stayed at Bala Vikasa’s People Development Training Centre where the leaders come



from the villages for regular training and support and where they offer courses for local people as well as international NGOs and others, teaching their Asset Based Community Development model. The assets are in the people themselves.



Nothing is free but SOPAR’s funds augment the limited financial resources in the villages and help to pay the many employees who are doing unbelievable work.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Continued

Each day the Sisters went out to a village to see a different program: the women's program, the widow's program, the solidarity day where the women celebrate the birthdays of the orphans that Bala Vikasa supports, the day where the women support the elderly and indigent. Even though they are poor, they give a day's wages (usually from working in the rice paddies) and a large bag of rice. One day the Sisters attended a water convention where the leaders of the water program in each village came together for encouragement and support. Another day they visited a "model village" where the leaders of each committee spoke about what they were doing to improve education, health, cleanliness, the water program, the stop bad habits program (discouraging drinking homemade alcohol etc.), care and share, food security, widow's and village protection. The children from the school did skits to reinforce such things as using the new toilets and washing their hands and coming home from their studies or jobs elsewhere when a parent is ill and dying.

Having already been well informed of the work of SOPAR/BALA VIKASA what the Sisters saw was mind-boggling. The influence of this organization throughout the state and beyond and recognized by the government is huge. The Sisters returned home with a very special place in their hearts for the people they met.

ANNUAL FEBRUARY TRIP TO PERU

Each February Sister Pauline Coulterman returns to Peru to Chincha Alta, visiting our two Sisters Maria



Chóquez-Céspedes and Gloria Muchaypiña Salhuana and being attentive to the 297 children who receive scholarships provided by Canadian funders. This year's report highlighted the

donations of plants, animals, and clothing given to families who lost their farm crops in the mud-slide of March 2017.

MARCH TRIP TO HAITI

The U.S. and Canadian Federation JPIC has spearheaded a wonderful project involving the education of 10 girls at Annunciation School in Leogane, Haiti, a school sponsored by Missison Haiti, Inc., based in Minneapolis. Sisters and Associates were invited to experience this wonderful work, as well as other ministries taking place in Haiti today. We are waiting on Sister Ann Delaney to return to Canada and share some news with us. This photo of meal time is from an earlier report.



CONGRATULATIONS TO...



Sister Nancy Sullivan who received the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* medal of honour on March 4, 2018 at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton, for distinguished service in Health Care Administration, Pastoral Care, Ministry in the Congregation, and service to the most vulnerable as Executive Director of Hamilton Out of the Cold.

Sister Deenie Farenzena was presented with the *Dick Dinnes Volunteer Appreciation Award* by Amber Livingston, manager of the North Bay Food Bank. Deenie's service at the Food Bank began in 2005 and she has been a faithful volunteer ever since. The award given to her as the volunteer of the year for 2017 is named after one of the original founders of the Food Bank.



Sister Mary Carmen McLean was presented with a Legend Award for her dedication to St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto.

We remember and pray for the communities engaged in Chapter:

Sault Ste Marie April 16 – 21

Toronto May 1 – 8

May Spirit and wisdom abound!

Retreat Opportunities:

Little Design Communities Rebirthing Retreat July 2 – 11, 2018, directors: Sr. Rosemary O'Toole, Sr. Monica Hartnett, Galilee Centre, Arnprior contact info@galileecentre.com

Federation Faith and Ecology Retreat: *Discipleship for the 21st Century, Living in the Spirit of Laudato Si'*, May 28 – June 3, 2018, Villa St. Joseph, Cobourg. Contact Federation office: can.csj-fed@bellnet.ca

FEDERATION OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CANADA

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

**United by a common story
and charism, we Sisters of
St. Joseph of Canada, form a
Federation to empower one
another in the passionate living
of our charism of active and
inclusive love.**

**Urged by God's spirit, we
collaborate with Sisters of
St. Joseph globally and
respond to the evolving
reality of our world,
bringing healing and hope
to all creation.**