



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Mary Anne McCarthy, CSJ

The lazy, hazy days of summer can sometimes provide us with more time to read. One of the books I read was Ron Rolheiser's "Wrestling With God: Finding Hope and Meaning in our Daily Struggles To Be Human." In it he quotes Morris West who said that at age seventy five you need to have only one word left in your spiritual vocabulary – 'gratitude' – and that maturity is attained precisely at that moment when gratitude begins to drown out and cauterize the hurts in your life. As he describes it: "Life has served me as it serves everyone, sometimes well and sometimes ill, but I have learned to be grateful for the gift of it, for the love that began it and the other loves with which I have been so richly endowed."

As I reflected on what Morris said, two examples came to mind. Summer brings us, among other things the gift of the rest and relaxation of vacation time and the gift of celebration in our Congregational Jubilees.

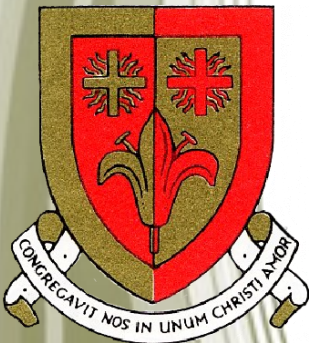
Joyce Rupp says that "summer is the season when nature comes into its fullness." During our "inner summer ...life has less struggle and we are likely to experience playfulness and lightness of heart."

An easy gratitude fills us because our work and relationships move along well.... Perhaps reading a book helps us develop a fuller dimension of ourselves. Our summer growth could be a retreat or a seminar that nudges us toward something deeper and more vibrant." Summers here in Canada are short and by the time you read this you may already be, as the song says, experiencing the fact that "it is time to dress for fall."

The Toronto Congregation celebrated Jubilees on Sunday, June 9. I welcomed the Sisters and gave a short reflection. I had found this beautiful quote from the Book of Sirach which says, "my daughter treat yourself well: do not deprive yourself of a happy day; let not your share of desired good pass by you." An apt thought for each of us, but especially to all the Jubilarians of the Federation. What more special event could there be in the life of a Sister of St. Joseph than remembering the year that the journey began in the way of life of a Sister of St. Joseph.

In a meeting with some religious that Pope Francis had in 2013, he invited them to recall "the moment when Jesus looked at you" and to recall the important and demanding, underlying meaning of our vocation: "it is a response to a call, a call of love." He goes on to say, "I want to say one word to you and this word is joy: wherever consecrated people are there is always joy! It is the joy of freshness, the joy of following Jesus; the joy that the Holy Spirit gives us." One of our maxims urges us to "have only one desire throughout your life: to be and become what God wants you to be in nature, in grace and glory, for time and eternity." May all of our Jubilarians experience this beautiful joy and desire.

Two reasons, among many, to be grateful: the gift of the fullness of life in summer and the celebration of our lives as Sisters of St. Joseph.





MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Loretta Manzara, CSJ

The years have certainly passed since September was the occasion for new pencils, new notebooks and new shoes! Yet the

energy of a new start is definitely in the air. I have had the wonderful opportunity to meet with our Vocation Animation Committee, our Blue Community Steering Committee, and the Executive. Later this month the Archivist Committee, and our Ecology Committee are gathering. The Federation Office for Systemic Justice has been busy helping us rev up for Climate Action activities and marking the World Day for Migrants and Refugees. Our Ecology Committee has created a wonderful environment and prayer for the Season of Creation. Across the Federation we have celebrated a variety of events, some marking birthdays of new centenarians: Sister Edith Arsenault (SSM), Sr. Alice Geneau (CSJ in Canada, Peterborough), and others - newly minted finally professed members: Sister Mary Anne Larocque (CSJ in Canada). Another new venture is the emergence of our long awaited "mended" web site, although the mending became somewhat of a new face lift. I am saving some of the September news for the web site, particularly Sister Mae Kierans' participation at the Archivists program in Le Puy.

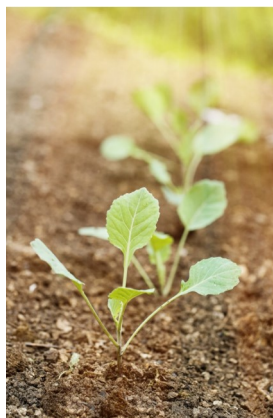
There have been so many natural tragedies over the past months, along with oppressive and tragic circumstances. As we intercede for persons affected by these tragedies, we need to hold on to the hope that has been given us. Our Interview Series "Currents of Hope and Grace" is a Federation project designed to explore the currents of grace today and to shine a spotlight on them. These conversations will not take away the pain of knowing how our sisters and brothers are suffering, but we expect they will deepen our unity and perhaps give us some clarity as to how to magnify our charism in our troubled world.

Each week as I prepare our prayer calendar missive I have tried to provide some recent news about the particular country. Searching for this information helps me to be more attentive to the life and work of the Sisters for whom we are praying. It brings another layer of clarity to how our charism is being lived out in this global village.

With Sister Marlene Roy I look forward to our journey to Le Puy, to once more breathe the air of the place where our first women gathered under the nudge of the Holy Spirit, and to take part in conversations of importance that reflect the continued living of our charism around the world. I didn't buy new shoes this September but my old ones are still strong enough to let you walk along with me!

Currents of Hope & Grace: For What Do We Yearn?

***An Internet
Interview Series***



October 1, 3 pm - **Krista Tippet**
BEARING THE BEAMS

November 4, 3 pm - **Angie Thurston & Caspar ter Kuile**
THE FORMATION PROJECT

December 2, 3 pm - **Katie Gordon and Adam Horowitz**
NUNS & NONES

December 16, 3 pm - **Mary Jo Nelson**
COLLECTIVE WISDOM

CAN THE U.N. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS “TRANSFORM OUR WORLD?”

Janet Speth, CSJ on behalf of the Federation Ecology Committee

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) broaden the scope of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which were established at the turn of the century with the goal to help developing countries reduce extreme poverty and hunger, prevent deadly diseases and expand primary education to all children by 2015. By 2013 many goals had noticeably been achieved such as combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and improving maternal and child health. However progress towards the MDGs was uneven and some were not able to be realized. Further action and global commitment was required!

From the experience and the partial successes of the MDGs, valuable lessons were learned to begin work on a new set of goals to build a more sustainable, safer, and prosperous planet for all humanity. At the U.N. Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio in 2012, 17 global goals were set to meet some of the most pressing challenges facing our world today. The SDG represent a more comprehensive, universal *Call to Action* which the 193 U.N. states, including Canada, have committed to making a reality by 2030. These goals address social, economic, and environmental areas of sustainable development.

This agenda of the SDGs is an important political consensus document declaring U.N. member states' intent to work collectively towards achieving people-centered sustainable development over the next 15 years. The MDG were targeted at developing countries, the SDG are applicable to all countries and were designed to be integrative and call for collaboration among the developed and developing countries. Today's challenges of forced migration, protracted conflicts, the climate crisis and rising inequalities cannot be dealt with in isolation.

These goals were a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all – they address the global challenges we are facing including those related to economic inequality, climate action, sustainable consumption, peace, justice and life on land and below water. Quite an admirable list of goals but as William Blake and others have said, “If your reach does not exceed your grasp, what’s a heaven for?”

The SDGs reaffirm the responsibility of all states and all peoples to respect, protect, and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind. This sounds like a re-wording of our charism

statement, to serve the dear neighbour without distinction.

There has been concern expressed about trying to do everything at once and possibly achieving little and that priority should be placed on the most urgent or fundamental priorities. Certainly an issue of great concern to us as women is the call to end discrimination and eliminate violence against women and girls as well as harmful practices such as child and forced early marriages and female genital mutilation. And as a member of the Blue Communities, we are committed to act both personally and communally to protect and care for water. There is much to pray about and work towards as we move closer to the year 2030.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals can be found at: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>



FEDERATION OF SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CANADA MARK WORLD DAY FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Sue Wilson, CSJ on behalf of the Office for Systemic Justice

Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada and around the world have spent many years working and forming relationships with migrants, refugees, and trafficked persons. In that time, we've learned much about the gift of each person's life, the hardships they've endured, the exploitation they've encountered, and the strength with which they begin to make a new life for themselves.

According to UNHCR, the U.N. Refugee Agency, one person is forcibly displaced every two seconds. An estimated 70.8 million people are now forcibly displaced from their home by conflict, persecution, natural disasters (some of which are linked to the climate emergency) and severe economic exclusion. Their journeys are filled with risks, threats, exploitation and violence. And, as a small percentage make their way to Canada, they open our eyes to what's happening beyond our borders.

In his 2019 letter marking the September 29th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis laments the "globalization of indifference" and highlights migrants, refugees, displaced and trafficked persons as "emblems of exclusion." His call urges us to reflect critically on our response to people in precarious situations and puts the spotlight on the harmful social, political and economic structures which result from collective indifference.

We have too easily ignored our complicity in creating the factors which lead to forced displacement, be it natural disasters related to the climate emergency (to which, per capita, we are some of the highest contributors), the sale of armoured vehicles to oppressive countries, or a refusal to meet our agreed-upon financial responsibilities for international development. We have overlooked the way temporary work permits for migrant workers makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, unsafe working conditions, inadequate housing, sexual abuse and unfair pay. We have created structural discrimination through policies which reduce migrant access to health care, legal services, and educational opportunities.

To move beyond this indifference as a nation, we call on the Government of Canada.

The full text of this statement will be made public closer to September 29.

Migration issues are complex and multifaceted but the need to respond with policies of compassion and justice is clear. Global solidarity deepens our humanity and helps to create a world in which everyone has an opportunity to flourish .



FOOD FOR THOUGHT - A Harvest of Communion **Linda Gregg, CSJ**

Recently at Villa St. Joseph we held our annual Harvest Barbecue for the gardeners of our Organic Community Gardens. We supply the burgers & hotdogs, they all bring something from their garden plot for the feast. We had people arriving bearing lovely plates with sliced red and yellow tomatoes, colourful onions, a spaghetti squash bean bowl, delectable pickles, and wonderful dessert delights with lots of lovely zucchini cake. On the verandah we all prayed in thanksgiving for the bounty of our harvest from all God's good creation. As we gathered with our plates of garden food there were lovely stories that gardeners shared of the wonder they felt when working with the soil, sowing little seeds that become stocky plants, bearing nourishing food - and the scents & colour, wind and sun that were their companions during the months of nurturing their crops – and of the human friendships they made, born of sharing gardener's tips, commiserating about the weather and family struggles and joys.

There was a moment when looking over the folks gathered to share the meal, that amongst the laughter, enjoyable food, some tall stories, the sun sparkling upon us that I felt a sense of "holy communion" of the moment. It was in the shared celebration of harvest amongst us, feeling the connections between our human story and the garden where we know that we are intimately joined with the warm sun, sparkling water, the bountiful earth – it is a moment of shared



harvest and a "wholly" communion.

In this challenging time of climate change we can often feel discouraged with the "littleness" of our efforts. At times I have felt that here, thinking what a small contribution 80 organic community garden plots is going to make in the grand scheme of healing our planet. But it is in moments that happen - as at our Harvest Barbecue, that I know and remember that it is only with all the small moments of accomplishment that together our efforts can add up to the big moments of planetary conversion and change. It is



only with these small moments, and the little efforts we do, that we can accomplish, with God's grace, the healing of our earth. These, all together, can lead to healing of our culture's greed & consumerism. I know that at the Villa it is only by our shared commitment to each other, our Congregational mission and vision that we make a significant, but yes small, contribution to healing of our earth and one another.

Each one's gifts and efforts lead to the healing of the whole, no matter how small. I close with an excerpt from the beautiful Season of Creation prayer that we recently received:

Don't ask, "Will my acts save the world?"
Maybe they won't. But ask, "Are my actions consistent with what I most deeply believe is right and good?" This is our calling.... To celebrate and care for the world, Even if it breaks our heart. - Kathleen Dean Moore

*Images from Villa St. Joseph website
www.villastjoseph.ca*

NUTURING OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Mary Rowell CSJ on behalf of the Federation Vocation Committee

There are two women who have been key gifts in my life as nurturers in the last few years: Sister Sandra Schneiders and Mary Oliver. I would like to share with you how they have enriched my life.

On April 25, 2014

Sister Sandra Schneiders, IHM presented her reflection at the COR Conference in Ireland on the following topic:

“The Ongoing Challenge of Renewal in Contemporary Religious Life.” I have re-read her article several times since then. I quote part of it here.

“...whatever might have been some of the secondary motivations that brought us into Religious Life thirty, forty, fifty years ago, there is only one reason in the present to stay... ‘Religious’ denotes *a way of being*, not a role or function in an institution. Religious Life *is a free response to a personal and compelling vocation to a particular kind of relationship with Jesus Christ.*

...Suffering has wrought a kind of maturity in those who have stayed that is neither self-satisfied on the one hand, nor apologetic on the other... we ... know in whom we have placed our trust...This identity

is deeply rooted in a *mature spirituality, nourished by personal and communal prayer*, and expressed in personally and communally discerned corporate, ministry.”¹



Sister Sandra’s reminder to me that “*Religious*” is *a way of being* has been a source of comfort and challenge. As a *comfort*, I think that our presence

in any encounter might invite a question about God’s role in the world. Our commitment expresses our belief that God is so important that we make public vows. Her article reminded me that I have a responsibility to have my “way of being” be an expression of my values and my choice of Religious Life. For this to be authentic, I look for ways to nurture this aspect of my life. As a *challenge*, it has made my commitment to personal prayer and spiritual reading even more significant. I know that morphic resonance is at work; there is a ripple effect that can radiate God’s healing presence in the world.

Along with many sources of prayer, a favourite of mine is Mary Oliver’s poem on prayer:

Praying . .

It doesn’t have to be the blue iris,
it could be weeds in a vacant lot,
or a few small stones.

Just pay attention.

Then patch a few words together
and don’t try to make them
elaborate; this isn’t a contest,
but a doorway into thanks
and a silence

in which another voice may speak.²

Her phrase, “just pay attention” has stopped me in my tracks innumerable times. I hear God saying, “Bonnie, just pay attention to this moment, this feeling, this thought, this encounter. I am present.” It brings me to that silence in which this “other voice” may speak.

We are privileged to be living at this time in history of the Church and our world, to know that our contribution to the healing of the universe, just by “being,” is significant.

1. “The Ongoing Challenge of Renewal in Contemporary Religious Life,” Paper delivered at the COR conference, Ireland, April 25, 2014, pages 5-6.

2. “Prayer,” Mary Oliver <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/414333-praying-it-doesn-t-have-to-be-the-blue-iris-it> (3 July 2019).

HONOURING OUR BEAUTIFUL ROLES IN SOCIAL CHANGE

Paul Baines, CSJ Blue Community Coordinator

With another season cycling through us, how are we preparing for the upcoming elections, campaigns, and gatherings that offer us choices for the various social, ecological, and spiritual crises we face?

Our individual and collective participation in these fall events is important, but it is also critical to look at which role(s) we feel most safe or most alive in.

In Deepa Iyer's article called "My Role in a Social Change Ecosystem: a mid-year check in" she describes the beautiful contributions needed to address system changes. Let's explore her ideas a little more and see how water justice issues and the CSJ Blue Community project can benefit from them.

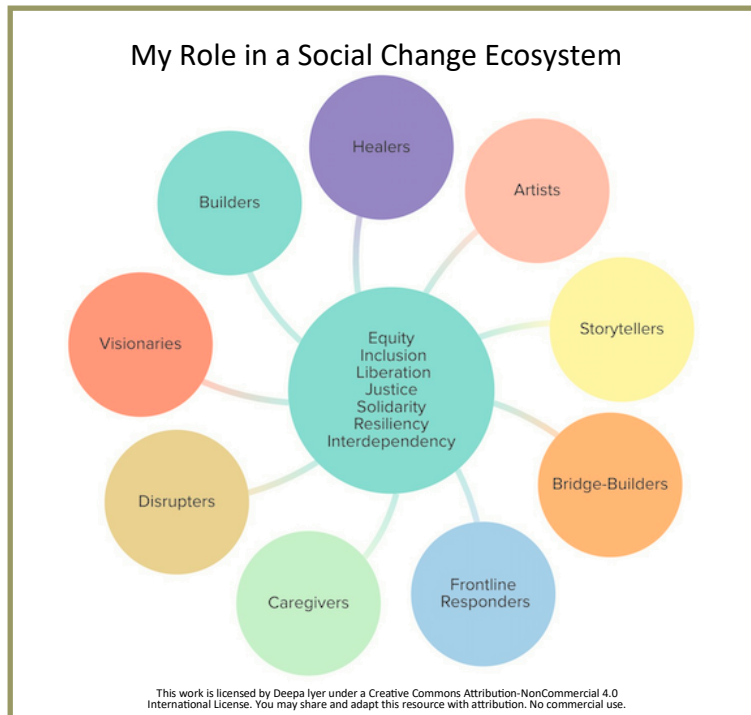
When working towards equity, inclusion, interdependence, justice, liberation, solidarity, and resiliency, Deepa asks which of the following eight roles are we celebrating or developing within this magnificent ecosystem of change?

Elections, campaigns, and gatherings often focus on the current issues and big ideas, with usually less time and resources to build our capacities in one or more of these key roles.

Our Blue Communities project stresses water as a human right, a shared commons, and a sacred gift.

We offer learning and reflection resources on the major issues and host, collaborate on, and promote events and actions that we think give people pathways for action and impact.

*Some of us are community **story-tellers and artists**, binding the past and the present, channeling the histories and experiences of our ancestors to shed light on what is possible today.*



*Some of us are **bridge builders** who can work across divisions with patience and compassion.*

*Some of us are **proud disruptors** who speak up and take action — especially when it is uncomfortable and risky.*

*Some are **caregivers** who provide nourishment to organizers, exude concern and love, and create a community of care.*

But are we making invites that recognize all the ways people co-create change? Which of these roles come to you more naturally? Which ones make you come alive?

From Deepa's article: *Some of us are **frontline responders** who quickly and ably transition into rapid-response mode instinctively and organize resources, networks, and messages.*

*Some of us are **healers** who tend to the individual and intergenerational traumas of white supremacy, racism, colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and nativism.*

*Some of us are **visionaries**, with the ability to find, articulate, and reconnect us to our north star, even when we cannot clearly see the sky.*

*Others of us are **builders** who actively develop the ideas, the structures, and the scaffolding for our organizations and movements.*

How incredibly more effective do you think our system changes would be if we better understood, supported, and maximized this diversity of people's roles?

To date, the Blue Community project has been bridge building between Ontario

continued over

HONOURING OUR BEAUTIFUL ROLES IN SOCIAL CHANGE - CONTINUED

and Great Lakes communities on the issues of bottled water and lack of access to safe and affordable drinking water. We have partnered with frontline responders, storytellers, and disruptors who affirm the human right to water and water

for life, not for profit.

But as we plan for 2020, how can we raise up the visionaries and healers in this movement? How are we seeding ideas and building structures for justice across watersheds and generations?

To honour your role(s) in this system change, let our Blue Community coordinator know what pathways best suit your Congregation and you.

www.bluecommunitycsi.org/

REFUGEE AND NEWCOMER MINISTRY



Sisters Paula Rose and Wendy in the El Paso Airport, waiting to greet the Refugees

Sister Wendy Cotter (CSJ in Canada) recently completed two weeks of volunteer service along with her friend Sr. Paula Rose (Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Kansas) at the Casa de Refugiados in El Paso. They met about 100 refugees a day, assessing their immediate needs, helping them contact their sponsors

and getting them on their way. As each person arrived they offered them personal water bottles and snacks. Always introducing themselves as friends so as to ease the stress, Sister Paula would offer the refugees her phone to connect with their sponsors. At the Casa, as well as providing accommodation and toiletries, new outfits were given to each person: adults, children and infants. Daily meals were provided by the Salvation Army who are contracted by the Shelter.

Once the travelers had received a confirmation number from their sponsors Sisters Wendy and Paula Rose would assist in getting their tickets or boarding passes at the airport or bus station. Sister Wendy spoke highly of the patience and care exhibited by the agents at both places. Sometimes tickets had not yet been paid for by the sponsors. Other times information about legal surnames was inaccurate. Other

times the travelers were just not accustomed to large airports and escalators. Sisters Wendy and Paula Rose assisted with whatever challenge prevailed.

Along with the experience of walking with these travelers, Sister Wendy wished to acknowledge the many Sister volunteers: Dominicans from Sinsinawa Wisconsin, and Adrian Michigan, also School Sisters of Notre Dame from two different provinces, and the Loretto Sisters who provided accommodation at their former Motherhouse as their contribution to caring for the mass of refugees.

Sister Wendy mentioned her great admiration for the young women coordinators who continue at the shelter, welcoming and organizing with all their heart. We of the Federation are ever grateful to Wendy for being our presence with the dear neighbour with all her heart!

HOW GOD IS WORKING IN OUR WORLD!

Occasionally one or more of our Sisters in the Federation receive acknowledgement for the ministry in which they are engaged. We recognize their commitment and openness to being an instrument for our CSJ charism. And we thank them for revealing God's abundant inclusive love.



Sister Anne Schenk (Toronto) received the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers, from the Governor General's Office. The award recognizes the exceptional volunteer achievements of Canadians from across the country in a wide range of fields. Passion, dedication and a commitment to community are the driving forces behind the volunteers who receive the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers, and Sister Anne certainly exceeds these criteria. In 1998 Sister Anne founded the Furniture Bank after seeing families new to Toronto with empty

apartments. The mission is to "enable the effective transfer of gently used household furnishings from donors to families and individuals in need." We congratulate Sister Anne!



Sister Bonnie MacLellan (Sault Ste. Marie) Alumna of the Year

In June, Sister Bonnie was acknowledged for her advocacy for quality health care – especially for the most vulnerable and needy, the outcast and the marginal.

"Sister Bonnie has made outstanding contributions to her field since obtaining her first diploma from Saint Paul University in 2003, and has helped guide transformation within the Church and society. She exemplifies an engaged, passionate individual who is dedicated to making the world a better, more human place." We thank God for instilling Sister Bonnie with this passion.

Sister Margaret Anne Beaudette (CSJ in Canada)

With help of many contributors, Maggie of Hay River, NWT has developed a very "lucrative" recycling program, raising funds for various projects which she supports. In the Spring CBC news north featured an [interview with her](#).

Mark Perkins in Wainwright AB read the CBC recycling story. He remembered the Sisters of St. Joseph from Peterborough who taught him in his early piano lesson days. He was so impressed by the story that he made a donation to the children's music program, for the purchase of guitars for students to learn to play.

Eight new guitars arrived in May, just in time to be played in the music gala. What a creative way to lift up the hearts of the young!



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Congratulations to **Sister Donna Smith** (CSJ in Canada) who graduated on June 6, 2019 from Fanshawe College, London, with her diploma as a Developmental Services Worker. Donna has been appreciated for her work with children experiencing developmental challenges. She became “the go to person” among her classmates for any additional help!

Sister Mary Anne Larocque (CSJ in Canada) joined the ranks of the perpetually professed, September 15. The liturgy booklet expressed her gratitude and desire with the words of Psalm 51: “Creator, reshape my heart.” Thank you Mary Anne for your generous response to God’s call.



IN MEMORY – Past President of Federation



Sister Margaret Myatt went home to God August 1. She served as President of the Federation from 2002 to 2004 leading us with gracious dignity and clarity of purpose. She facilitated the restructuring of the Federation and put in place the supports needed: hiring Sister Veronica O’Reilly as Executive Director and Margaret Magee as Executive Assistant. The new structure helped to implement the newly defined mission strategy of 2003: *to develop a public voice and to act together on specific issues of justice in order to participate in the transformation of our world.* We are ever grateful for her legacy in the Federation family.

Retirement

This summer marked the retirement of **Sister Betty Berrigan** from 21 years of ministry at *Stillpoint House of Prayer*. We express gratitude to Betty for providing the space to listen attentively to God’s unfolding love and call to service. The celebration was woven into the 30th anniversary of Stillpoint with over 100 people gathering to share memories and offer good wishes.



Medaille Spirituality Book Series

Sister Rosemary O’Toole’s book launch takes place in Ottawa November 9.

Reports are that sales are going well.

Congratulations on such a fine production! Perhaps some of our members can join in the festivities.

For more information or to place an order, email Sister Rosemary O’Toole, CSJ at upperroom@sympatico.ca

WORDS OF GRATITUDE - Associate/Companion Leaders



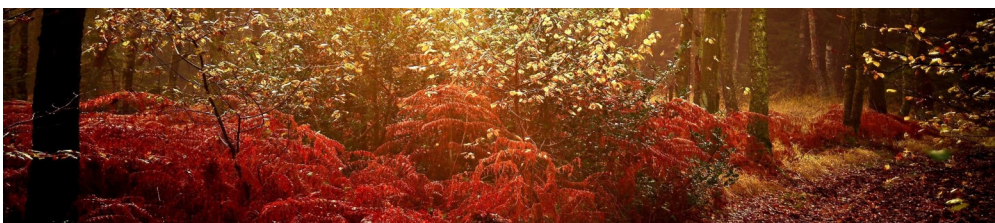
We thank all the members of the CSJ of Canada Federation Board for your generous financial support of our Federation Associate Leadership Committee annual gathering on May 27 – 29 at Invermara.

Our time together was filled with work, conversation, prayer, reflection, learning and laughter. The beautiful setting and hospitality of the Toronto Sisters gave us opportunities to grow more deeply as one, united in our desire to live the charism.

DATES TO REMEMBER

2019

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| October 1-4 | Federation Board meeting at Invermara |
| October 12–14 | Global Coordinating Group meeting, Le Puy |
| October 15–17 | International Centre Board Meeting, Le Puy |
| November 6–9 | US Federation Leadership Assembly, Latham, New York |
| November 22 | Anniversary of death: Mother St. John Fontbonne |
| December 30 | 350th Anniversary of death: Father Médaille (1669) |



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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.**

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