



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Mary Anne McCarthy, CSJ**

As we journeyed more and more into the mystery of Covid, it became obvious to me that this was not going to be a short trip. I began to make connections to Mother Delphine who came to Toronto in 1851 in the midst of an epidemic in the city. And what did she do? In 1856, she went out and ministered to a sick woman and as a result she became ill and died a few weeks later. As I thought about her and her response I could feel the guilt begin to rise in me. What was I doing? In the Toronto of 2020, I was staying home, maintaining social distancing, wearing a mask when I must venture outdoors, in short following all the directives of Toronto Health. Mother Delphine responded to God's Spirit by ministering to that sick woman in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and we, in our 21<sup>st</sup> century world, were responding by 'staying home.' In both cases, we were and are loving the neighbour in our midst.

But I didn't feel quite right doing the right thing. For one thing there were aspects of this 'lockdown' that I was enjoying. I love reading and what a pleasure to have time to indulge my hobby.

I have taken consolation in reading an interview that Pope Francis' gave to *The Guardian* (April 8, 2020) where he "admits to moments of selfishness while living in lockdown at the Vatican" and that "he struggled with self-preoccupation in a largely solitary existence." He went on to say, "how am I living this spirituality? I'm praying more, because I feel I should. And I think of people. That's what concerns me; people. Thinking of people anoints me, it does me good, it takes me out of my self preoccupation. I'm living this as a time of great uncertainty. It is a time for inventing,

for creativity. People could either get depressed and alienated... or we can get creative."

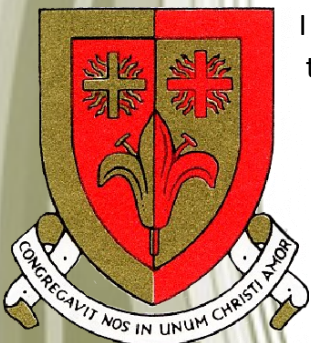
We have seen the creativity that Francis speaks about. People making masks, delivering food, playing musical instruments in their front yards to thank the front line workers, teachers teaching on line; so many ways that people showed goodness and care for others.

Francis refers to such people as "the saints next door" (Holy Thursday Homily). And what a beautiful image that is.

When I would hear 'we are all in this together' I began to feel that there was something not right about this saying. We were not all together. I thought about the parents trying to juggle working from home while looking after their children; those with little in the way of financial resources to see them through this time; those who suffer from anxiety and other forms of mental illness for whom staying inside without social contact was debilitating; those with physical difficulties who were afraid to go and see their doctor (if they could get an appointment) or go to hospital for fear of contracting the virus.

Joyce Rupp's reflection for July 2020 shed some light on my conflicted feelings and questions. She says

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Loretta Manzara, CSJ**

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As you well know, the song of the church's praise feeds my soul. Recently I have been pondering the refrain of the hymn *Eye Has Not*

*Seen* by Marty Haugen. *Eye has not seen, ear has not heard what God has ready for those who love him.*

*Spirit of love, come give us the mind of Jesus; teach us the wisdom of God. (CBW 482) Refrain reprinted under OneLicense.net #A711091*

Our April Newsletter provided articles that resonated with the start of the Corona Virus, and here we are 6 months later still holding this fragile time before our ever loving God. Many of this month's writers strive to offer learnings from this experience, cite powerful quotes, and bid us perseverance and steadfastness in the ensuing days.

*Teach us the wisdom of God.*

The **Green Window** grounds us with a challenge in purchasing clothes and fabric, even identifying some "alternative threads," **Food for Thought** shakes us to the core citing that the lungs of our earthly home are being destroyed to allow cattle to be raised for human consumption. Covid did not raise this awareness about Amazonia, nor prescribe "alternate threads," but Covid has made the crisis of our planet all the more evident.

*Teach us the wisdom of God.*

Paul Baines has been researching "water declarations" and points us to the distinguishing features of the Vatican document *Aqua fons vitae*, affirming water's role in ceremony, healing, beauty, wonder, peace, and vitality across our common home.

*Give us the mind of Jesus.*

Pilgrimages and Professions have been held for the "first" time in the Federation, virtually! And other news

speaks of the "last" times – the closure of missions in Vancouver and Thunder Bay. First and last are singular moments, but we well know the shared life and growth of planning pilgrimages, opening oneself to our journey of ongoing formation, pouring energy into years of creating home and mission. Singular moments are filled with the richness of encounter, surrender, and engagement.

*What God has ready for those who love God (him).*

The Federation Board will meet by Zoom October 6 and 7. Reports will be received from all five committees: Archives and Heritage, Associates, Ecology, Office for Systemic Justice, Vocation Animation, and from Paul Baines our Blue Community Coordinator. These reports always fill me with the energy of our Federation. So much is being created to advance the healing of our world and its peoples in the ways we have at hand.

Two sisters from the US Federation will also join us for the Board meetings, updating us on what is happening among the CSJ's across the border. The new Executive Director of the US Federation will join us for the first time: Sr. Maryellen Kane, a Brentwood Sister of St. Joseph.

Following our meeting we will be distributing the latest project from our Archives and Heritage Committee – a perpetual calendar. This identifies significant events, missions, unique endeavours cherished by each of our congregations. It will serve as an excellent conversation started and educational resource.

As we wade through these next uncertain days, let's hold on to the revelation of God's constant presence in our everyday life.

*We sing a mystery from the past in halls where saints have trod, yet ever new the music rings to Jesus, living song of God. (v. 4) Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A711091*

## **FROM THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH IN CANADA**

### **Sister Donna Smith's Final Vows — An Ending & A Beginning**

Who would have imagined a live-streamed final vow ceremony? We as a Congregation celebrate with Donna her commitment with us. She has thrown in her lot with us hook, line and sinker committing to face with us whatever the future may bring. She will bring her gifts of creativity and generosity to standing with us in creating our shared future.

While the Sisters in London will miss her, the Sisters in Peterborough and Cobourg look forward to having Donna with them. Donna headed out for Cobourg on September 15, 2020. Blessings Donna!



Did you miss the viewing?  
Sister Donna Smith's Final Profession, broadcast from the chapel in the London Motherhouse can be see here.

To view the broadcast click the link:

<https://www.csjcanada.org/donna-smith-profession>

### **NEWS FROM CHICAGO**

Sister Wendy Cotter continues to be active in raising awareness of seniors needs in her area. As a member of the Jane Adams Senior Caucus group she recently shared news of their success in advocating for a new Ordinance for Seniors' Safety. This ordinance provides seniors in subsidized and privately owned seniors' apartment buildings with services to protect them from things such as Covid-19. At first the owners of the buildings were content to put up educational posters. However, the ordinance demands staff to be on the doors to monitor those entering, disinfection, health checks of residents and more. After four months of lobbying the Chicago City Council voted it into law. Now the caucus group is focusing on ensuring inspections are occurring in nursing homes.

Thanks Wendy for being with the *dear neighbour*.

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Continued**

“when painful experiences happen, there's always a choice in how to respond. Some people choose to slam their heart's door shut, tightly containing bitterness, self-orientation, blame and caustic anger. Others let their hearts break open, becoming a fountain of sympathy and compassion with ever growing love spilling out.”

Our hurting world presents us with similar options, whether the distressing events we experience are related to Covid 19, racism, food insecurity, political strife, or the great divide between the haves and have nots. How we respond will decide whether our hearts build a brick wall around them or if they widen to give actual credence to the maxim that ‘we are all in this together.’

May we choose each day to have expansive hearts.



## CHOOSING ALTERNATIVE THREADS: THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY AND CLIMATE CHANGE



We all love a bargain! But what is the real cost of the clothes we wear? The drop in prices of clothing has allowed us to

buy more and more clothes - in general our closets hold five times what our grandparents had. But what is the cost of that new top or skirt? Today's "fast fashion" with its constantly changing designs, styles, colours and materials has become the enticing model for the fashion industry - allowing it to ramp up profits.

We now produce 400% more clothes than only 20 years ago. Clothing is cheap and disposable. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, less than 1% of clothing is recycled into new garments. They estimate that \$500 billion (USD) is lost in disposing of clothing that is hardly worn, not donated or recycled and dumped in landfills. It is a linear system that is mining the planet and our souls.

In reality, the only way we can have cheap, disposable clothes, is by lowering production costs. These currently "expendable costs" include our own health from toxic fabrics, plundering our earth, and risking garment worker's lives. Last year the UN launched a drive

to highlight the environmental cost of staying fashionable. And the UN Conference on Trade and Development rates the fashion industry as the second most polluting industry in the world. Even the World Bank is saying the industry needs to reinvent itself into a more sustainable industry - while recognizing that the industry employs 75 million people and is the third largest manufacturing sector after automobile and technology industries.

Environmental impact of the fashion industry:

- 2,000 gallons of water needed to make one pair of jeans (from cotton field to store)
- 93 billion cubic metres of water, enough for 5 million people to survive, is used by the fashion industry every year
- Fashion industry produces 20 per cent of global wastewater (toxic dyes, lead, mercury, microfibres)
- Clothing and footwear production is responsible for 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions
- Every second, the equivalent of one garbage truck of textiles is landfilled or burned.

But what can we do? From several sources, a summary of suggestions:

- Choose organic fibres, natural fibres where possible or semi-synthetic blends

- Before buying, ask if the manufacturers used sustainable criteria to make the clothing
- Be creative in combining garments and recycle them after they wear out
- Repair clothing (or find a good seamstress!)
- Donate what you no longer use
- Buy only what you need. In some countries, 40% of purchased clothing is never used
- Consider quality over quantity. Every additional year a garment is worn means less pollution
- Buy second hand clothing.
- Wash wise - full loads, eco - detergents and low water temperature
- Plant a tree - rayon is made from wood pulp. Polyester & nylon are oil sourced

There are hopeful emerging trends such as separate collections for end-of-life textiles in some EU communities with Germany the most committed, recycling up to 75% of textiles. Clothing can be made from recycled polyester, nylon, plastic bottles, and even fishing nets at reduced environmental impact. But sustainable cotton, bamboo, and wool are best. Most of these are not produced sustainably now, but still the best choice.

*Continued on page 5*

## GREEN WINDOW - Continued

Continued from page 3



And there are encouraging signs from younger entrepreneurs such as Kaya Dorey of Vancouver B.C. who has won the Young Champions of Earth award, the UN's highest honour in recognition of her efforts to create a clothing production model that respects the earth. See the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-rpmq6XVrU&feature=youtu.be>

Closing thoughts to reflect on:

- The most environmentally sustainable jacket is the one that's already in your closet...Lisa Williams
- Maxim 9 - Avoid like the plague the compulsions of the unaware self.

I ask to become more conscious of how I use Earth's resources?

What's Wrong with the Fashion Industry <https://www.sustainyourstyle.org/en/whats-wrong-with-the-fashion-industry>, Accessed August 15, 2020.

"A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning Fashion's Future," Ellen MacArthur Foundation. <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/A-New-Textiles-Economy-Full-Report-Updated-1-12-17.pdf>. Accessed August 15, 2020.

UN Launches Drive to Highlight Environmental Cost of Staying Fashionable," UN News, March 25, 2019. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/03/1035161>. Accessed August 16, 2020.

"How Much Do Our Wardrobes Cost to the Environment?" Feature Story: Who We Are, World Bank September 23, 2019. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/09/23/costo-moda-medio-ambiente#:~:text=The%20fashion%20industry%20is%20responsible,more%20than%2050%20%25%20by%202030>. Accessed August 16, 2020.

UN "Launches Drive."

SSJ Philadelphia Ecological Maxims

*Photo from YouTube of Kaya Dorey*

## NEWS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

Eluiza and Olga write: The new website is finished and ready to see!

<https://www.centreinternationalssj.org/>

Many thanks to the translators: Simone, Pepis, Bete, and Nicoletta. Many thanks to the Chambéry Congregation who financed the site. Many thanks to Patty Johnson who helped us find the host (eCatholic.com). Many thanks to Loretta Manzara and Kathleen Robbins who helped with the design of the site.

Most of all, a big thank you to Cindy Russell of e-Catholic, who provided us with her technical assistance and expertise.



*photo of our celebration via ZOOM*

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT– What Skills do I have?**

**Sister Mary Mettler, CSJ on behalf of the Federation Ecology Committee**

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In a recent TED talk by Dr. Carolyn Myss, titled “When your soul begins to talk to you,” she raised the question: “what skills do I have, to adapt to life as it is changing with this virus?” What needs to change in me as I live into an emerging unknown? Covid did not raise this awareness but has made the crisis our planet is experiencing ever more glaringly evident. In the very first lines of Chapter 6 in *Laudato Si* we read, “many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change...a great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us”(LS202). It is a change of lifestyle that is being called for, based on the awareness that we all inhabit a common home. It is our capacity to adapt to new realities, to be creative in meeting new problems, to learn and work in new ways that mark the consciously reflective human person. Can we choose the lifestyle changes that will keep our earthly home with all her creatures alive and healthy?

The choice of eating less meat, especially beef, of moving toward plant-based food is one that is speaking to many people. Does that mean eating only beans and rice which is the diet for millions of people? No, a plant based diet consists of vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds, legumes and fruits. This does not necessarily mean vegetarian, but less protein from animal sources and particularly from beef which requires the greatest amount of land use and water to be processed. Changing our eating habits is not easily done and it is a challenge to be entered into with awareness and patience. Choosing to eat primarily plant based food will positively impact the environment and improve the general health of most people.

Is there enough protein in vegetables and grains? Most everything we consume has a certain amount of protein

and nutritionists do agree that plant based protein supports a healthy diet. Benefits include such things as lower saturated fats and little cholesterol, an abundance of vitamin, minerals, fiber and it lowers the risk of diabetes, heart disease and a number of cancers. And it definitely lowers the carbon footprint which in North America is very large.

We became very aware of the situation in the Amazon when Pope Francis called a synod to address many issues affecting their people. The huge forests of the amazon – the lungs of our earthly home are being destroyed to allow cattle to be raised for human consumption while the people there are being deprived of their way of life and sustenance and even threatened with genocide. Many in our own country are deeply distressed and are physically challenging the methods of transporting and slaughtering animals to bring meat to our tables.



Our whole social system has been fractured and requires of us a transformation in our behaviour, in our ways of choosing, of making decisions. The global impact of Covid-19 is challenging us to be changed by what some are calling the “new normal.”

How do we ground ourselves in these disturbingly uncertain times? Do we live in “grateful contemplation of God’s world, in responsible simplicity of life and in concern for the needs of the poor and protection of the environment” (LS 214). A conversion of heart, the awakening to the reality of our oneness with all creation is needed (LS226). Do I have the willingness and the love of neighbour to respond to this call? Our choices do matter!

Carolyn Myss: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDy\\_3K1L3iE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDy_3K1L3iE)

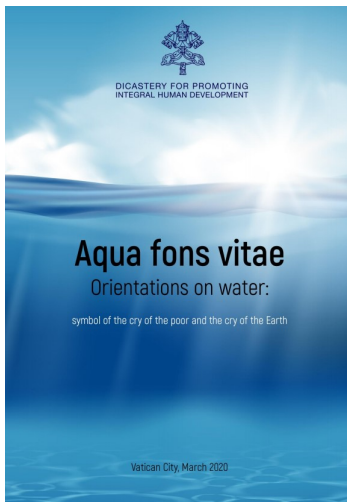
*Photo from google images*



## Blue Community Updates

Paul Baines, CSJ Blue Community Coordinator

This year, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development published *Aqua fons vitae*, “**Water is a source of life.**” They looked at our relationship to water so that evangelical principles could be animated by concrete action and not just abstractions. They use Catholic Social Teachings about human dignity, the common good, solidarity, and justice to inform a new development paradigm.



This 2020 document braids teachings of the Popes with the experiences of local churches, dioceses, associations, and Catholic schools. [You can read the entire work here.](#)

There is deep concern about the slow progress for the Universal Right to

Water and Sanitation, passed by the United Nations General Assembly 10 years ago. With 884 million people still without clean drinking water, a greater effort is desperately needed.

The document is well researched with data and insight about climate change factors, privatization challenges, pollution of freshwaters and oceans, and the unjust distribution of water and democratic control.

What distinguishes this water declaration from most others is its affirmation for water’s role in ceremony, healing, beauty, wonder, peace, and vitality across our common home. While it values the utility of water for human use, the Dicastery authors prefer to help readers understand a deeper and soulful relationship to water.

**Aqua fons vitae** details dozens of action proposals that

are also critical components of the CSJ Blue Community project.

### Key proposals include:

- ◆ Abandon the use of disposable plastic bottles and support public clean up efforts.
- ◆ Inform people about the human right to water and about those who are denied this right.
- ◆ Pay special attention to the needs of society’s most marginal.
- ◆ Encourage people’s participation in water decision-making and the need for ‘free, prior, and informed consent.’
- ◆ Allow water issues to open up new dialogue and to unite people in peace-making.

The CSJ Blue Community project remains active on these proposals and a relevant voice promoting ‘water is a source of life.’ We are a key contributor to the [People’s Water Campaign](#) with participation in the Advisory Committee, an upcoming webinar (September 21<sup>st</sup>), and the culminating Watershed 2020 convention on September 26<sup>th</sup>. From the Wellington Water Watcher’s website: *The People’s Water Campaign is a broad-based campaign to restore environmental protections for water security and help build the movement for water justice in Ontario.*

See our project website to learn how we are animating the **Aqua fons vitae** document and putting principles into action ([www.BlueCommunityCSJ.org](http://www.BlueCommunityCSJ.org)).

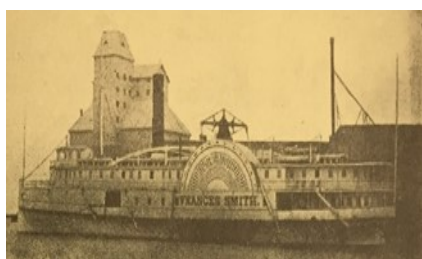


Photos - left: from [humandevlopment.va/](http://humandevlopment.va/) website  
right: from [BlueCommunityCSJ.org](http://BlueCommunityCSJ.org) website

## SAULT STE. MARIE SISTERS LEAVE THUNDER BAY.

### Sister Mary Jo Radey, csj

And it came to pass, that in the 140<sup>th</sup> year of their presence, the Sisters of St. Joseph in Thunder Bay were no more. The story of that presence spans political realities, geographical boundaries, and ecclesial decisions but has always been grounded in the love of the “dear neighbour.” The story is also a living embodiment of how our Congregational crest of the Gold and Red representing the Education and Health Care lives on in The More.



The Sisters set out from Toronto in August of 1881 on the steamship Frances Smith amidst a party of nine including Archbishop Lynch of Toronto and Bishop

Jamot of the Vicarate Apostolic of Northern Canada, whose visit a year earlier had heard the pleas of the people of Prince Arthur’s Landing for a community of Sisters to assume responsibility for the established separate school...the gold of the crest.

Of that nine, five would remain to begin the apostolic works that would span these many years: Mother de Pazzi, Sisters Gertrude, Monica, Vincent and Beatrice. On September 2, 1881 school opened with 62 students, with Sister Gertrude in charge of the boys’ class and Sister Vincent teaching the girls. That same year, the official name of the community became Port Arthur and the diocesan boundary grew to extend all the way to the Manitoba border. Within four years, the Sisters would assume responsibility for the work among the First Nations three miles up the Kaministiquia River. Further, by 1902 the expansion of the railway displaced the Anishnabe and the Sisters were called to discern a further move to the foot of Mount McKay in Fort William, living and teaching in St. Stanislaus school.

Meanwhile, the red portion of the crest in Health

Care was also quickly established with Mother Monica, originally assigned to be the housekeeper amidst the five first pioneers. Industrial accidents amidst the



building of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway expanded her ministry to invite the injured right into their convent home...expansions considered for more classrooms had to be reimagined to include the care of the sick. By 1885 the new Hospital was built so that the patients could finally be brought to an actual hospital rather than the convent itself; a building that would have two more wings added to it in the next ten years.

During this same decade, in 1889, the new Diocese of Peterborough was established and Bishop O’Connor made the canonical arrangement for a number of the Sisters to separate from the Toronto community. Toronto Sisters were asked to remain in the North West for one more year, and two of them stayed. The bonds of the Federation were being formed based on the love of the dear neighbour. This same bond would be sorely tested in 1937, when another diocesan community was



formed under the impetus of Bishop R. H. Dignan...and the Peterborough Sisters continued to be responsible for St. Patrick School and remained in the Myles Street convent for

another nine years, amidst the Sisters who were now known as the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.

*Continued on page 9*



## LEAVING THUNDER BAY - Continued

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By 1952, this same area would become the Diocese of Fort William, and later, renamed as the Diocese of Thunder Bay when Port Arthur and Fort William amalgamated in 1970.

The same mission had gone through four geographic names, had been part of four dioceses, and was a hub of industry and innovation as one of the gateways to the West and included the work of every Congregation now present in this Federation. On the northern shore of Lake Superior the CSJ presence providing the “red and gold” of health care and education, which quickly burst into a kaleidoscope of ministries with First Nations peoples, with music schools and retreat centres, with boarding schools and homes for the aged, with parish work from soup kitchens to youth groups, with rehabilitation for prisoners and a “place for all seasons” in Senior Care and community outreach. We would be hard pressed to list all the ministries which blossomed here, including the number of lunches handed out at the back door. Hundreds of Sisters have ministered on these shores of Lake Superior; hundreds of thousands have been ministered to as the “dear neighbour.”



This past year various life circumstances saw the last three Sisters leave the Lakehead. The gold and red of the crest are still shining as lay people continue the care for the “dear neighbour” in eighteen elementary schools and two high schools; in St. Joseph’s Care group across eight sites offering a broad range of programs and services in Addictions & Mental Health, Rehabilitative Care, and Seniors’ Health. The myriad of other apostolates all taken on by others...all of this born out of the generosity of the five who came in 1881.

It came to pass that in the 140<sup>th</sup> year of their presence in Thunder Bay, we remember the Sisters of Toronto, the Sisters of Peterborough and the Sisters of Sault Ste. Marie and in their leave-taking the Sisters of St. Joseph were seen to embody the Mission of this Federation:

*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.*

## TORONTO SISTERS LEAVE VANCOUVER

*Linda Wicks on behalf of the Archives Committee*

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The Vancouver foundation was opened by the Toronto Sisters of St. Joseph in 1922; Vancouver was our fourth mission along Canada’s west coast. It followed the 1913 opening of St. Joseph’s General Hospital in Comox on Vancouver Island and with the establishment of the Prince Rupert mission in 1916 and the Ladysmith mission in 1917. With the appointment of Mother Alberta Martin, (general superior, 1914-1920) and five other Sisters, they arrived on August 4<sup>th</sup> to teach in the

newly-built elementary school in St. Patrick’s Parish.

Their first home was in the parish rectory, vacated by Father Louis Forget and his assistant and then later they moved into two houses on the north side of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Those two houses were demolished and a new convent was officially blessed by the Apostolic Delegate in 1927. This convent residence remained their home until the property was sold to the Archdiocese of Vancouver in 1995.

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## LEAVING VANCOUVER - Continued

School construction began in April 1922 and by September, eight rooms were completed, blessed by the Archbishop and ready for the school year. In the Sisters' centenary history, Sister Mary Agnes wrote that "opening day put an end to dreams of an ideal school in which no room would have more than forty pupils. Each teacher reported having registered 50, 60, even 90 children. An extra class had to be opened at once and a lay teacher engaged, ... and then another had to be added.

With the completion of a third floor in 1924, Grades 9 and 10 were added and, in 1925, a science room and commercial department as well. A separate high school on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue was built in 1938. Both elementary and high schools prospered, supported by enthusiastic Catholic families, many of Irish origin. St. Patrick's Catholic High School became well known in the city for academic excellence, sports, public speaking and dramatics. In later years, the students took high honours in the Commonwealth Assembly of the lower mainland.

Over the years, the Sisters taught in 11 archdiocesan schools and were founding Sister-teachers for most of them, including: St. Francis de Sales, St. Andrew's in South Vancouver, St. Paul's in North Vancouver, Holy Trinity in Richmond and St. Augustine's. Scripture classes, prayer groups and RCIA classes were all held at the convent. For a number of years, the Sisters conducted music lessons in the convent as well as

training the organists for the parish.

From the beginning, the Sisters were asked to prepare the children for First Communion and Confirmation. The annals note that Sister Clara O'Byrne prepared seven classes for First Communion in one year, and most were in parishes other than St. Patrick's. Later, the Sisters would reach out to work as parish assistants in St. Patrick's and the neighbouring parishes of Helen's, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Peter's and St. Augustine's. They would serve in pastoral ministry, PRH (Personality and Human Relations) education,

religious education and work with and for Latin-American refugee claimant among other forms of ministry.

Over 140 Toronto Sisters lived at St. Patrick's Convent and worked primarily as educators in the parish community and beyond. Vocations to the congregation included 29 members from the parish community. In 1995, the convent was closed and the remaining Sisters moved into apartments in Vancouver to continue individual ministries. For example, Sister Mary Ellen

Burns served as coordinator of religious education programs in the Archdiocese from 1981 to 1994 and in 1995 became the director of the Holy Childhood Association as well as serving as the director of the English Program for Japanese homestay students from Nanzan University in Nagoya. She continued working for the Archdiocese of Vancouver until her retirement in January of this year which was followed by her departure to Toronto, becoming the last of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto who have served in the Archdiocese for nearly a century.



1936-37 Grade 8 Class, St. Patrick's School, Vancouver  
with Sister St. Cletus (center) and Father Forget (top right)

CSJT Archives

## **PILGRIMAGE - LIVING THE BEAUTY**

### **Sister Costanza, CSJ on behalf of the Federation Vocation Animation Committee**

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Every two years, the Federation Vocation Animation Committee works in conjunction with Fontbonne Ministries Faith Connections to host an event for a pilgrimage with young adults, ages 18 to 30.

As we began planning this event a year ago, the idea was to hold the pilgrimage at Villa St. Joseph, a spirituality and ecology centre of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada. Due to Covid however, it was decided to hold the event virtually. This year's theme was "Living Beauty," a perfect theme as we were going to very shortly be entering the Season of Creation. We spent time in prayer, contemplation, sharing and hearing about Living Beauty.

Sister Mary Rowell was our first speaker as we journeyed through Catholic Social Teaching. She reminded us that we are called to live an all encompassing ethic of life. It is important that we encompass integral ecology as we remember that we are to value the dignity of all life and provide support to each and every person as well as all of Creation.

We then had some time for contemplating creation. We remembered the words of St. Ignatius *"Reflect how God dwells in creatures: in elements given them existence, in the plants given them life, in the animals conferring upon them sensation, in human beings bestowing understanding."*

We then took time to hear Sabrina Chiefari speak on "The Space Between Two – Francis-es: 2020". Sabrina reminded us that we are called to remember that faith and person need to come together as we hope to live out of a hope narrative. She also called us to remember that the Creator appears in his creations.

We are hopeful that next year we can gather in person

at Villa St. Joseph and share the experience of Living Beauty surrounded by the beautiful grounds. Click on the link below to learn more about this beautiful centre and about Faith Connections.

We leave you with a beautiful reflection – **The Tree** by Sister Mary Alban Bouchard, CSJ

*Once upon a time there was a seed. The seed was planted in a little space in the earth and the soil surrounded it. And the seed waited. It felt the rain and the sun's warmth.*

*Then, according to the form and life within it, the seed began to unfold and grow.*

*One day, like an answer to a call, it came out above the ground and appeared in the daylight as if to say, "Here I am!"*

*It grew and grew, constantly nourished by the rain and the nutrients in the soil. And it became a tree. It branched out and put out leaves and buds. The buds flowered and were pollinated and with time the tree bore fruit. People came and ate the fruit, which made them healthy. In the centre of*

*the fruit they found a new seed of life.*

*The tree was a sheltering tree as well. Birds came and nested. Among them was the dove that rested there.*

*And God looked at the tree and said:*

*"This is a good tree, the tree of my choice."*

*And the tree became a parable of the Reign of God on earth.*

*And you are the tree.*

Links: [Faith Connections](#); [Villa St. Joseph](#)

*Photo from Villa St. Joseph website*





# **VOCATION ALIVE: Animating Faith in the Covid Times**

## **Sister Costanza Romano, CSJ on behalf of the Federation Vocation Animation Committee**

We all know by now that Covid has had many implications for each of us in our personal lives as well as our ministries.

The Vocation Animation Committee is no exception. We have had to cancel programs and attend to the different times and the various tasks to ensure that we and our sisters, families and friends remain safe.

The LCWR sent out some wonderful reflections and one of the reflection questions was *Our call in these times includes working to see the deeper invitation that the pandemic and the social unrest are providing. How might we be conscious of the transformation occurring within ourselves, our communities, the nation, and the global community as we live through this time?*

This is a question that we as a committee are looking to explore as we begin this year in these times of uncertainty. Technology is a great asset and we will be meeting to explore how we can meet the needs of people who are looking for spiritual/faith nourishment. We however are also very aware that the personal contact which we used to have is something we crave. There is an energy in the group when we meet in person and are able to give each other a hug or pass a tissue or laugh at a joke that is not the same using Zoom.

Pray us on as we explore new means and ways to carry out our ministry in meaningful ways so that we can always know that God is with us even in the most trying of circumstances which in this time go even beyond Covid. God bless.

### **Events to Remember**

September 2020 to April 2021 –	Chapter meetings for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
September 23	<b>Ecology Committee</b> meeting
October 6, 7	<b>Federation Board</b> meeting
October 10 - 12	<b>International Centre Board</b> meeting
October 15	The Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto begin their 170 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations
November 4 - 6	U.S. CSJ Leaders Assembly, Scottsdale, Arizona
<b>November 22</b>	<b>Anniversary of the death of Mother St. John Fontbonne</b>
<b>December 30</b>	<b>Anniversary of death of Father Médaille (1669)</b>

#### **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.**

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