

Mission

Volume 18 Number 6

January 10, 2007

A Publication of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield

Advent speaker blends biblical, chapter themes

Paula Misitano, ssj

Sisters and Associates embarked upon an Advent journey accompanied by Mary and her cousin, Elizabeth, Hannah and other brave women of the Old Testament, Mother St. John Fontbonne, and the courageous early sisters of our community. Led on this day's journey by Kitty Hanley, Sister of Saint Joseph of Albany, the group came to understand the *Magnificat* in a different way. December 2.



In Mary's *Magnificat*, her words were aligned with her courageous ancestors, Hannah, Miriam, Judith, Ruth, Esther. Through her *Magnificat*, Mary identified with these holy women of her ancestry: Miriam who led her people to the Promised Land, Ruth who enabled people on the point of extinction to survive, Judith who showed strength to save her people, and Esther, an intercessor on behalf of her people. Mary knew the strength of Hannah of the Old Testament who first uttered the words, "My soul proclaims the greatness of God..." Mary grew into the

Magnificat, for as Kitty stated, "As we grow, we become the Scripture we cherish."

Citing this time in the Church's year as an occasion when "times" meet, Kitty expanded on three areas: the end of *Ordinary* time, a time of letting go; the start of *Advent*, a time of expectation; and our *now* time, a time of the moment. She asked the question: What time is it for us, for the world, for the Church? To help us answer her question, Kitty correlated the sense and meaning of the *Magnificat* with our Chapter commitments.

The Chapter commitments are prophetic and real, active yet contemplative, inspired by the lives of Mother St. John Fontbonne, and the courageous first Sisters of Saint Joseph. Holding forth a statue of Mother St. John with veil flying, beads swinging and foot properly going forward, ready to step off the pedestal, Kitty challenged us by asking: Are there any pedestals we need to step off of? Mother St. John Fontbonne was ready for the next step, she was on the go. Our own words from Chapter, "our path will be intentional.....our step will be deliberate...." position us to be on the go, to take the next step, to be in the *now* time.

In the afternoon session, Kitty concentrated on the story of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and their re-founding. Using stories of the Old Testament women, of Mary, of Mother St. John, and of our early Sisters, Kitty paralleled their courage

Continued on page 10

Letters -- Letters -- Letters -- Letters

Dear Sisters and Associates,

On behalf of our family, we would like to thank you for the many expressions of sympathy you shared with us at the time of the loss of our father and brother. The support, cards, Masses, donations and especially prayers were greatly appreciated. We assure you of our prayers and ask you to continue praying for us in the difficult days ahead.

Gratefully, The Magnani Family Joe, Gina, George, Edward and Joan

Thank you so much for your outpouring of sympathy at the time of my mother's death. Your presence at the wake and funeral, donations to the Sisters of St. Joseph, cards, and spiritual enrollments are greatly appreciated by our family.

Sr. Bette Gould

Thank you so much for the Masses, enrollments and beautiful cards you sent

In Memoriam

Please remember the following in prayer:

- Sister Maria Purissima Flanders
- Sister Therese Nolan
- Sister Rose Burns
- Sister Marie Daniel Taylor
- Jack Magnani, brother of Sr. Joan Magnani
- Mildred Hughes, aunt of Sr. Mary Kate Birge
- Helen Gould, mother of Sr. Bette Gould
- Helen Connolly, sister of Sr. Rita Morey
- Florence Ferguson, mother of Sr. Mary Ferguson
- John Creed, husband of Mary Ann Creed, Associate; brother-in-law of Sister Margaret McDevit
- Marie Gauthier, aunt of Sr. Christine Lavoie, Patricia Keating, sister-in-law of Sr. Kathleen Keating
- Emma Christine Haskins, granddaughter of Jim Willemain
- Antoinette Mello, sister of Sisters Dorothy and Estelle Santarpia

at the time of my sister Helen's death.

Your kindness and expressions of sympathy meant so much to me and my family.

God bless you all for helping us with your compassion and prayers.

Lovingly,
Sr. Rita Morey

Words can not adequately express my deep gratitude for your concern, presence, flowers, donations, gifts, Mass offerings, and cards, offered at the death of my mother, Florence. Someone said they did not know how I could do it alone. My immediate response was that I had not felt alone, even for a second, and for that I am most grateful to all of you. I pray God will continuously bless you for your great kindness.

With love and gratitude,
Sr. Mary Ferguson

It is with deepest gratitude that Sisters Estelle and Dorithy Santarpia wish to thank you for your prayers, cards. etc., on behalf of our dear sister Antoinette who passed away on December 12.

We believe that she is now at peace and among the family members who preceded her.

Mission is published by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield as a source of communication within the Congregation. Readers are encouraged to submit articles which should be typed and sent to Mont Marie, Holyoke, MA 01040. E-mail acl@ssjspringfield.com

Ann Lynch, SSJ, editor

Communications Committee: Sisters Angela Deady, Mary E. Harvey, Mary Lou Lacey, Ann Lynch, Elizabeth Matuszek, Paula Misitano, Patricia James Sweeney and Jeanne O'Shea.

Team Talk

Roots, heritage come alive through journey

Mary Quinn, ssj

The symbol of journey, so central to our chapter commitments and to our Christian tradition, took on a deeper meaning for me during my recent trip to France with members of the Elms College community.

So many sacred places and beautiful images remain in my heart and memory. In Paris, the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the Cathedral of Sacre-Coeur, the boat ride along the Seine, the beautiful baroque music heard at Sainte-Chapelle, the artistic wonders of the Louvre, call me to reflect on the wonder, the mystery, the journey to God that inspired these men and women to create buildings, art and music as a means to understand and worship the Divine.

In Lyon, we visited the Heritage Center, viewed the life-size figure of Mother St. John, and journeyed to her place of rest, where we prayed in gratitude both for her dream, and for each Sister and Associate of St. Joseph from Springfield. Walking some of the streets she walked, seeing both some of her clothing, and a replica of her small bedroom helped bring her to life for me. Hearing more of her history from Kitty Hanley this week-end, I appreciate

more deeply her humanness, her faithfulness to take the "next step" in spite of fear and uncertainty.

Arriving in LePuy, we prayed to the Black Virgin at the Cathedral, and learned that Marian devo-

tion has been central in the area since the 6th century. From our International Centre, we could look out toward the statue of Our Lady of France which was made from canons from the Crimean War in 1860.

Some 1500 years later, as we have recently completed this season of Advent, we, too, honor Mary as our model of courage and faithfulness. And we continue to be inspired by her example, as in our time we "journey in hope with the People of God... toward the day when all will be one."

*Sisters
Maureen Broughan,
Maureen
Kervick, Eleanor
Dooley and Mary
Quinn at Mother
St. John's
Grave.*



*Mother St. John's
Bedroom (left)
Lacemaking (far left)*

*Sisters Eleanor Dooley,
Mary Quinn, Maureen
Broughan and
Maureen Kervick at the
International Centre.
(below)*



Pilgrims find 'sacred space' in Le Puy kitchen

Sr. Barbara Faille, ssj

Posted on our community news notes in early Spring was an invitation from our Boston Sisters to join them on a CSSJ Pilgrimage to LePuy and Lyon with opportunities also to visit Taize, Cluny and Paris.

On October 10 four pilgrims from Springfield, Sisters Mary Pat Carr, Barbara Faille, Kathryn Flanagan and Lorraine Villemaire set out to join twenty CSSJs and four Associates from Boston. We preceded the Elms pilgrims only by a few days and our journey took us to many of the same sacred sites.

The following, therefore, is not a trip narrative but, rather, a simple reflection commonly shared by the four of us as we stood in the deep quiet of the kitchen at Le Puy. A hush came over us as if we were listening for the voices of our first Sisters as well as the widows and orphans who gathered with them.

There is a lovely Disney song that Cinderella sings. It begins, "A dream is a wish your heart makes when you're fast asleep." As we, 28 Sisters and Associates of Saint Joseph, entered into the kitchen of our first Sisters in Le Puy a sacred hush came over us. There, to our right stood the original fireplace around which the Sisters, Associates, widows and orphans gathered to pray, to learn and to share the great love of God. Truly, this was a dream come true and one that existed only in our hearts but one we never thought possible.

Prior to this time in LePuy we had journeyed to Lyon and stood in awe at all the places so relevant to our history at the time of Mother St. John Fontbonne: the home of her birth, the meadows of her early life in Bas en Basset, the church and cobblestone walk of her ministry in Monistrol, and even her place of imprisonment at St. Didier. Finally, in profound silence we prayed and sang our tribute to her at her gravesite in Lyon.

But here, here in this ancient kitchen was the timeless moment where we were one with our first sisters. Touching the fireplace,

standing on the rough stones, sharing community with those who gathered in the name of Saint Joseph we transcended time.

After personal reflection time our wonderful guide, Sr. Sheila Kelly, SSJ from the International Centre (and Philadelphia), brought us into a circle by extending to us a long piece of delicate lace. Grasping it firmly we prayed together and then shared our reflections.

Our hearts found a voice as we prayed, "May the spirit of each Sister of Saint Joseph be gathered in this sacred space; those who gave us shoulders on which to stand, those who have shared our life in community and those who will follow in faith and share the mission that 'all will be one.' "

Deeply rooted in our minds and hearts we praised the extraordinary vision and commitment of these first women of the Gospel. The spiritual energy of Father Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ was fresh in our minds as we had just viewed his writing and the content of the Eucharistic Letter while visiting the archives.

This great union of Sisters and Associates in the place where community all began was without time. Together we shared the fulfillment of the dream only our hearts could have envisioned. It was more than imagination that energized our prayers and our thoughts, it was a sacred blessing and one to be shared by all those who have touched our lives from our first Sisters to our family, friends, benefactors and, especially, those united as one in the community of the great love of God.

[Our Boston Sisters are planning to repeat this pilgrimage next fall and have plans of extending an invitation to our Springfield community. In every way it was the SSJ dream of a lifetime come true. Remember Cinderella sweeping the ashes from the fireplace

. . .ours is a wonderful fireplace waiting for your visit]

Diocese honors sister for diverse ministries

Mary E. Harvey, ssj

Sister Grace Mary Klenchik, Pastoral Assistant at St. John the Baptist Parish in North Bennington, VT since 1994, received a "Recognition of Women in Ministry Award" from the Diocese of Burlington, November 5, at the Church of St. Augustine in Montpelier.



Bishop Salvatore R. Matano conferred honors on 26 special women for their extraordinary service to their parishes and to the diocese. He presented them with blessed salt and a lighted candle that symbolized their gifts and service.

Prior to the celebration, Bishop Matano said, "The spirituality and dedication of these women deems them worthy to be called the 'Light of the World and Salt of the Earth.' We cannot thank them enough for their self-sacrificing service to the Church in Vermont. They are truly to be admired and emulated. We are most indebted to these outstanding women of faith."

Monsignor Wendell S. Searles, Director of the Recognition of Women in Ministry Program, said, "It is always a pleasure to recognize, thank, and honor women who have contributed generously to their parish communities. Over these past six years we have honored 160 women in ministry. Their contributions have been immense."

In letters of recommendation, parishioners described Sister Grace Mary's gifts. One wrote, "During our transition period after our pastor retired, the one reassurance the parish community had was the presence of Sister Grace Mary as our

Pastoral Assistant. We knew that our beloved sick members in nursing homes and hospital would be taken care of spiritually with visits from Sister Grace.

Sister Grace lives up to her name – the grace that she shares with those who are unable to attend Mass – in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and in her manner and movement. She is known throughout the hospital community for her solace and understanding as families turn to her when their relatives are hospitalized. Sister has brought some folks back to church with patient understanding of their problems, good listening skills, and advice that the Lord welcomes all.... It would be a wonderful tribute not only to Sister Grace, but also to the Sisters of St. Joseph Community, should Sister be chosen to be one of the recognized Women in Ministry of the Diocese of Burlington."

Another wrote, "Sister Grace Mary was a teacher for over 35 years in various Catholic schools in the southern area of our Diocese. She was very active in Prison Ministry for many years in the Rutland area and Director of Novices for the SSJ Community in Rutland. Grace's Christian example is beautiful to behold."

From Massachusetts Sisters Patty Murphy, Kathleen Imbruno, Mary Ferguson and Jane Morrissey attended the November 5 celebration. Sisters Pat Kane, Shirley Davis, Judith Levins, Miriam Francis Predom, Mary Harvey, Associate Evelyn Harvey and Sister Ann Marshall, SP, a friend of the Rutland Sisters, attended from Vermont.

Other Sisters of St. Joseph receiving "Women in Ministry" awards previously are Sisters Shirley Davis and Margaret McDevitt.

Sister Grace Mary receives gifts of salt and light from Bishop Matano. Photo by Mary E. Harvey, ssj

Associate members live out SSJ charism

Mary Lou Lacey, ssj

A brochure recently printed to explain the Associate program begins by asking, "What are you searching for?" A "computer bar" suggests a search for goodness, spirituality, and peace. Text accompanying photos of Associates explains that the program is a way to work for the common good, to connect with your spirituality, and to promote forgiveness and peace.

Associates have been part of the Sisters of St. Joseph since 1979. During these years, what has changed? What has endured? What is happening now?

In the beginning there was Mary Creighton McDowell, the pioneer associate. At present there are 86 Associates, both women and men, from Vermont and Rhode Island, and spanning Massachusetts from Adams to Fall River. In addition, associates live in Indiana, Louisiana, and North Carolina. As the new brochure says, "Associates are involved in living simply and working for a more just and peaceful world in prayer and in action. They seek to deepen their baptismal commitment by striving for personal holiness and praying daily."

At present, Associate Susan Lavoie is Co-Director of Associates. From her office at Mont Marie she represents the program at meetings of the Team for Ministry and Association and at other gatherings. She sends a letter to Associates with the publication of *Mission*, and she recently updated files and the computer listings of associates. Director of Public Relations Wendy Hammerle, Associate Anne Sousa Martens, and Sue worked on the new associate flyer.

Carol Lareau, ssj, a member of the Associate Advisory Board, has been active

in the associate movement since its beginning. Carol notes that groups of associates develop their own characteristics and practices as they grow together. Several Associates were part of a group for their preparation for their covenant. "When this was 'finished' they wanted the group to continue," she noted. Some meet monthly; others attend as they are able; Sisters sometimes belong to a group.

Many Associates come to various congregational meetings and have taken part in efforts such as summer programs while others support the congregation through prayer. Associates carry the charism and spirit of the congregation to those they meet in their work or other daily activities. It should be noted that an associate is responsible only for what is stipulated in her covenant.

In the coming months additional articles will look at a variety of Associates and their ways of living out their commitments.



As the Community explores a new form of membership *Agregee candidates Marissa Brown-Ludwig, Patricia Christopher and Sherry Enserro look through SSJ archives at a recent gathering. Also during that day at the Mont Sisters Mary E. Harvey told of the history of the Rutland Community and Sister Rhea Quintin spoke on the history of the Fall River Community.*

Photo by Mary Ferguson

Festival spirit lives on in generous donors

Connie Quinlan ssj

For 21 years the Sisters of St. Joseph, associates and friends rolled up their sleeves to raise money for the Congregation's retirement fund. That joyful and spirit filled event, called the Craft Festival, became a symbol around these parts and resulted not only in raising money but in bringing thousands of people together in celebration and community.

Since the Festival's closing two years ago, those same sisters, associates and friends have continued rolling up their sleeves in order to maintain the original intent of the Festival. Situations change but the financial need goes on.

Once again this year the Columbus Day Weekend money raffle and the 500 Club, which were so successful during fiscal year 2005/2006, have proven to be

both profitable and effective.

It would be impossible for us to adequately thank the thousands of people from Vermont to Rhode Island who bought and sold raffle tickets, the nearly one thousand people who have responded to our 500 Club are making it possible for the congregation to reach the annual \$100,000 fundraising goal.

If our figures are correct these two drives along with the spaghetti suppers sponsored by the generous Knights of Columbus Council 69 of Chicopee this year, should bring the Sisters of St. Joseph over the top in fundraising in 2006/2007.

There is a saying: "If the only prayer uttered during one's lifetime is 'thank you,' that would suffice."

To all who generously and faithfully support the Sisters of St. Joseph: Thank You!

SRI suggests handshake with Sam

Roberta Mulcahy, ssj

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in St. Louis have creatively responded to their Socially Responsible Investing commitment by joining with others across the country to challenge Wal-Mart to reform its business practices and improve the wages and benefits of its employees. Launched last May, the "handshake" campaign gathers signatures that support a proposal that the company voluntarily reform its business practices so they better reflect the values of Sam Walton, the retailer's late founder.

Sam Walton advocated a business practice that was "correct and moral" in order to improve one's quality of life. Wal-Mart is the nation's most financially successful corporation. However, it continues

to be involved with sexual discrimination and workers' rights cases. Examining Sam Walton's business values and bringing them to the attention of the present CEO and other managers will hopefully compel the company to be better citizens of those communities where they have stores. The "Handshake With Sam" also asks for a commitment to quality and affordable health care and a sustaining wage.

To learn more about "A Handshake With Sam," visit <http://walmartwatch.com/handshake>

Our own SRI work this proxy season (08-07) involves co-filing resolutions at ConocoPhillips on Indigenous Rights, McDonald's Corp. on Genetically Engineered Food and Wal-Mart on Health Benefits and Pay Disparity.

Hope emerges as protestors gather for SOA vigil

Jane Morrissey, ssj

It was good to return to the annual SOA Watch vigil at the gates of Fort Benning in Columbus, GA, from November 17 to 19. It was good to protest the SOA and the machinery of violence in our world and to pray there. It was good to go in your name and in the particular names of our persecuted Latin American brothers and sisters.

Victor Jara's name may be new to you. Yet the reasons we as a community became committed to the SOA Watch are the very reasons I think you may care deeply about him, however new his name may be to you. In the 70s he was the most famous folk singer and guitarist in Chile.

In that same decade he was brutally killed after the butt end of a gun crushed the bones in his hands poised to play before the crowd of thousands forcibly detained in Santiago's main stadium. Recently Fr. Roy Bourgeois, Maryknoll priest and founder of SOA Watch, and Lisa Sullivan Rodriguez, head of the Watch's Latin American Office, interviewed Joan Jara, Victor's widow for more than three decades. Lisa told another crowd of thousands gathered in the SOA Watch vigil about their visit with Joan.

She was encouraged to hear that this year three South American countries—Argentina, Uruguay, and Venezuela—had cut their ties to the SOA, now officially titled the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation though still commonly called the “School of Assassins.” She shared videos with Fr. Roy and Lisa. They showed her the video of the crowds at the gate of Fort Benning (this year's estimated at 22,000). (She told them that just months ago her husband's assassin had been identified as another graduate of the infamous SOA.)

In Joan Jara's video, one could see a very different crowd from that assembled at the gates of Fort Benning, but

one closely allied with them. Lisa recounted how on Joan's TV screen she and Father Roy watched the Chilean poor, armed with brooms, mops, and dust-rags, lining the streets on their recent procession to that same Santiago stadium in which the US-engineered Pinochet coup began its bloody reign with the deaths and disappearances of thousands of Chilean protesters, among them, Victor Jara. They saw the people in this humble procession ritually cleanse the vaunted building of the demons that had once claimed it in the name of the now defamed President Pinochet. Then they celebrated the stadium's reclaiming and renaming, *Estadio Victor Jara*.

The story of Victor and Joan Jara, news of the opening of the SOA Watch Latin American Office and its success in stemming the flow of South American soldiers to the SOA, and the results of November's US elections generated hope at this year's gathering. Here in our country 35 staunch supporters of the SOA have been voted out of the House of Representatives after Jim McGovern's bill calling for its close lost by only seven votes in June. The prospects of the House Bill, initiated by Rep. Jim McGovern from central Massachusetts, look better than they have for a long while.

So too does hope emanate from the

Continued on page 9



CSSJs on the way to the gates at Fort Benning, November 19. Jane Morrissey, ssj, is in the first row, third from the left.

Photo by Verne McArthur

Associate shares joys of clowning

Mary E. Harvey, ssj

Some Vermont Associates and Sisters gathered in Fontbonne Hall Chapel November 12 for a presentation on the ministry of clowning given by Susan Roland, Associate. Congregational Representative at St. Joseph/Kervick Residence, she has engaged in clowning ministry for nearly 17 years.

Susan ("Sus" is her clown name) delighted participants with a silent routine. They drew humorous items from bags. Last was a paper with this passage from Matthew's Gospel. "Suffer the little children to come unto me. Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Removing her gloves so a silent clown can speak, she said; "What Jesus is teaching us is there is a child in all of us. ..God lives in each of us. Unless we become like little children, we cannot enter the kingdom of God... Jesus was a happy man who laughed and smiled so much."

"Every one can be a clown.... Just laugh and smile and make other people happy. All you need is to know that God loves you, and God gives you the best gift ever... Be filled with the Holy Spirit and be happy.... Christ is really like a clown. The clown is a symbol of one who accepts pain to oneself and returns joy and light." She told of a young refugee girl in Central America in 1984. One of 2,000,000 refugees in that war torn area, she was with women and children at a Mass. Love and peace were its themes. In the dialogue homily she answered the question, "Who is God?" with "God is joy."

Susan said the Sisters of St. Joseph of Nazareth and Kalamazoo, Michigan who sponsor hospitals and nursing homes began a clown ministry. Sister Mary Bader said, "As Sisters of St. Joseph, we experience sadness when we see injustice, suf-

fering, misery in the lives of our brothers and sisters. We try to live in such a way that people can be reconciled with God, and then all that pain will be relieved. We are even willing to suffer so that can happen." (*The Joyful Christ: The Healing Power of Humor* by Cal Samra).

Susan has clowning in churches, CCD classes, nursing homes and hospitals.



At refreshment time Sr. Gertrude Conway, Associates Patricia Dwinell and Ada Pezzetti line up with "Sus" (Susan Roland).

Photo by Mary E. Harvey, ssj

SOA - Continued from page 8

presence of thousands of young people who now vastly outnumber the more seasoned, including the 94 year old grandmother who addressed us from the stage. I would estimate that a few thousand of those young people came from Jesuit high schools, colleges, and universities for the Ignatian Family Teach-In and liturgy. The two-hour Eucharistic liturgy, celebrated with a standing room only crowd in a space that accommodated close to 2000, sparked and sparkled, reminding us whence comes our hope. As I went to Communion, I saw Sisters of Saint Joseph whom I know from our Federation coming toward the same college student serving as Eucharistic minister. A kiss of peace.

Hope emerges from communion, from solidarity. More and more, I realize we do not stand alone. Consciousness of our mission shapes us and our world "that all may be one."

Advent day: continued from page one

and humanness. “The early Sisters came to the new country, not to build a French foundation,” she stated, “but to do whatever needed to be done.”

We know through research and stories that the early sisters were extraordinarily human, thus posing many problems and generating many questions and doubt. At times, the new group almost gave up and disbanded, yet they survived and grew. “Like our early Sisters,” said Kitty, “we have questions.” What are our questions?

Like Mother St. John poised on the pedestal and ready for the next step, we ask the question: what is the next step? As Kitty shared, “taking the next step means leaving something.” It could be a living situation, a ministry. Whatever the next step, it requires deep humility and willingness to run the risk. We must journey into the heart of God.

Seized by Love for Justice & Peace

Roberta Mulcahy, ssj

The annual Federation Justice Coordinators gathering this year brought together over thirty representatives from CSSJ Congregations through out the U.S. Inspired by the Federation Event a few months ago, we seized the opportunity to explore the possibility of making connections with our International Sisters a reality. After discernment and dialogue, Mary Ellen Gondeck, ssj Nazareth, and Diana Oleskevich, Carondolet/ St. Louis agreed to be the two justice coordinators from the U.S. who will represent us at an international meeting in LePuy, April 2007.

Some objectives for our presence in the LePuy meeting with our international communities are:

-To partner with the global CSSJ

These times are the days of holy women just as in the time of Hannah, the time of Mary, and the time of Mother St. John. We need only take one step at a time, but we must journey together to go forward. Thus, our path will be intentional.....our step will be deliberate. With Mary, we sing and pray the *Magnificat*. With our early sisters and all holy women of the *now* moment in time, we live the *Magnificat*.

Kitty Hanley, ssj, is a Sister of Saint Joseph from the Albany Diocese and is no stranger to our community. She has been a speaker at several of our community meetings. Kitty has held numerous administrative positions, both in her community and in national religious organizations. Kitty holds a PhD in *Renaissance Poetry* from Notre Dame and presently serves as Dean at St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry in Albany.

Joseph family in mutually beneficial ways.

-To learn about the Global Neighborhood by listening to our Sisters, Associates and Friends across the planet.

-To create ideas to address global injustices together.

-To articulate a vision/plan of action for our CSSJ ministry of Justice and Peace.

Participants in the LePuy gathering are invited to come with their passion for the gospel, their compassion for a just and peaceful world, and their creative energies for building partnerships that we might all continue to be “Seized by Love for Justice & Peace.”

The full annual meeting report is on the following web site:

www.federationofthesistersofsaintjoseph.org.

What makes human beings illegal?

Roberta Mulcahy, ssj

An undocumented immigrant who was part of a panel concerned with the justice issue of immigration posed the question in the title of this article. Shared conversation around this question resulted in an acknowledgment that most of us have little understanding of the plight of those who seek asylum in the United States and elsewhere.

Many people who are now considered



Sisters in St. Joseph Residence held their annual Orange Bowl, January 2, Sister Mary Shea sets up the pins as Sister Veronica Brown gets ready. They raised over \$100 for victims of a fire. *Photo by Ann Lynch, ssj*

Sharing Federation material

Many Sisters and Associates are taking advantage of the DVDs of the Federation Event in Milwaukee this past summer. Nearly 20 of us were in attendance, and are sharing the experience. Perhaps through “kitchen gatherings” to view and discuss the material, or other creative ideas for coming together, the event could become a reality for an even wider range of the community.

The DVDs are available in Pam’s office. Getting together to experience the event, and seeing what the next steps may be, could be a great way to begin the New Year!

undocumented immigrants came to this country as small children. They have lived and worked here and have experienced the sufferings of immigrants — double identity, fears of being discovered and deported, no medical insurance and for the most part, subject to low paying jobs and discrimination. Years of trying to become “legal” have been increasingly difficult since 9-11.

The Justice and Peace Committee has chosen to focus on the issue of Immigration over the next few months. Through education and shared experiences we will join with others such as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious who have spoken publicly through their “Welcoming the Stranger Among Us”, and “Resolutions To Action” papers on Immigration. These very informative articles along with others provide an opportunity for reflection and action.

May our readings and conversations on this issue of immigration remind us that members of our own families were once immigrant people. Our Church not only calls us to “welcome the stranger among us,” but also reminds us that we too were a refugee people (Old Testament). In today’s context the “stranger” includes not only the people unknown to us, those who are poor and the exploited, but also those who are ethnically, culturally and religiously “others” to us.

The pain-filled voice of the man who asked, “What makes a human being illegal?” continues to remain with those of us who were present at the panel. How would we answer the question? We invite all to join us in reflection, prayer and action as we educate and share experiences on the issue of Immigration.

Film demonstrates reality of global warming

Cathy Coyne, ssj

An Inconvenient Truth by former Vice President Al Gore is being publicized as the must-see documentary of the year. In this movie Gore presents an “eye-opening and compelling view of the future of our planet and our civilization” (Roger Ebert, CHICAGO-SUN TIMES). Ebert goes on to say that the documentary is a wake-up call that cuts through myths and misconceptions to deliver the message that global warming is a real and present danger. Many scientists and environmental groups know how urgent global warming is and are asking Americans to help fight against it. They realize education is the key in creating climate change. So what can we do?

First, we need to understand what global warming is and how it is affecting the planet. Carbon dioxide and other gases warm the surface of the planet naturally by trapping solar heat in the atmosphere. This is a good thing because it keeps our planet habitable. However, by burning fossil fuels such as coal, gas and oil and by clearing forests, we have dramatically increased the amount of carbon dioxide in the Earth’s atmosphere and temperatures are rising.

Rising temperatures, due to more carbon dioxide in the air, are already creating changes. Glaciers are melting, plants and animals are being forced from their habitat, and the number of severe storms and droughts is increasing.



The number of Category 4 and 5 hurricanes has almost doubled in the last 30 years.



Malaria has spread to higher altitudes in places like the Colombian Andes, 7,000 feet above sea level.



The flow of ice from glaciers in Greenland has more than doubled over the past decade.



At least 279 species of plants and animals are already responding to global warming, moving closer to the poles.

If the warming continues, we can expect disruptions of entire ecosystems and that will change our lives forever. There is no doubt we can solve this problem. In fact, we have a moral obligation to do so.

What can the average citizen do? Small changes to your daily routine can add up to big differences in helping to stop global warming. Choose to change to a CFL light, drive less, recycle more, use less hot water and adjust your thermostat. On the Oprah Winfrey show last month, Al Gore called for thousands of house parties across the nation on global warming. So invite friends and family to your home, rent *An Inconvenient Truth*, cook some popcorn and make a choice to reduce your contribution to global warming.

Websites to explore:

www.climatecrisis.net

www.climatechoices.org

