

imagine
ONE

SPRING/SUMMER 2009 ■ VOL. 1 ■ NO. 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. JOSEPH

An
extraordinary
moment

IS A NEW ERA EMERGING FROM TODAY'S CONCERNS?

Our mission as Sisters of St. Joseph flows from the purpose for which the congregation exists: We live and work that all people may be united with God and with one another.

We, the Congregation of St. Joseph, living out of our common tradition, witness to God's love transforming us and our world. Recognizing that we are called to incarnate our mission and charism in our world in fidelity to God's call in the Gospel, we commit ourselves to these Generous Promises through 2013.

- ⊕ We, the Congregation of St. Joseph, promise to take the risk to surrender our lives and resources to work for specific systemic change in collaboration with others so that the hungers of the world might be fed.
- ⊕ We, the Congregation of St. Joseph, promise to recognize the reality that Earth is dying, to claim our oneness with Earth and to take steps now to strengthen, heal and renew the face of Earth.
- ⊕ We, the Congregation of St. Joseph, promise to network with others across the world to bring about a shift in the global culture from institutionalized power and privilege to a culture of inclusivity and mutuality.
- ⊕ We, as the Congregation of St. Joseph, promise to be mutually responsible and accountable for leadership in the congregation.

ON OUR COVER:

Humans throughout the world are beginning to realize that we live not for ourselves, but for the universal common good. Reflected in the eye pictured on the cover, Sister Theresa MacIntyre, CSJ, lives and prays our congregation's mission, "That all may be one."

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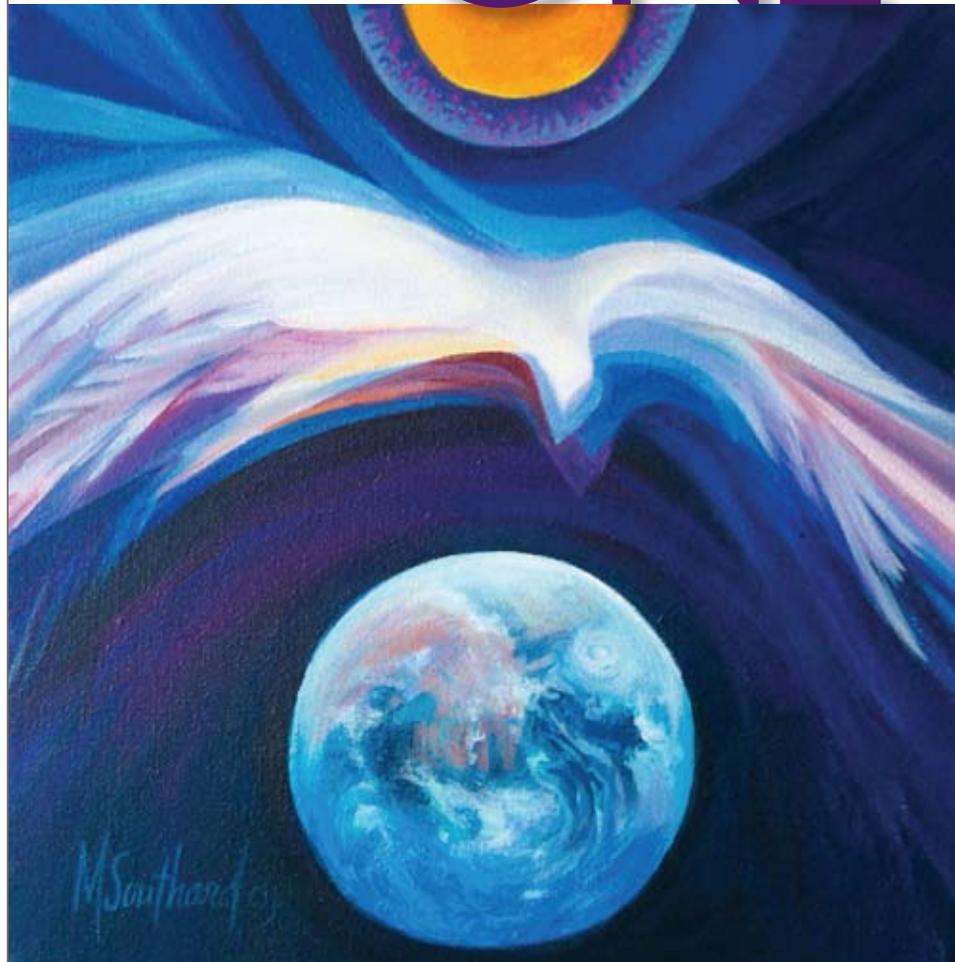
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An extraordinary moment

It is, isn't it? Can you feel it? All around us is evidence that our priorities, our beliefs and our world are changing dramatically. The difficulties that we are living through today – economically, politically and personally – make us more and more aware that everyone and everything in life is interconnected: What happens in one part of the world affects the entire world. That is the good news, because it stirs our creative energy to find big solutions to big problems for the common good.

In this spirit of change, I would like to welcome you on behalf of the entire Congregation of St. Joseph, to this inaugural edition of *imagineONE*, our new bi-annual magazine. We hope you will find it an exciting, dynamic and thought-provoking publication, and that you find the new look both pleasing and easy to follow.

In this first issue, we explore this extraordinary new moment of realization, first with our cover story on Page 12 by Sister Pat Bergen, CSJ, a member of our leadership team. In it she describes this new consciousness of oneness and what it means for our congregation and the world. She relates many social, personal and religious examples, most recently and powerfully the election and inauguration of our new president, Barack Obama, and the unity and hope felt by so many as a result.

Applying Charles Dickens' opening line of "A Tale of Two Cities" to today, Sister Marie Schwan, CSJ, reflects on Page 20 how our times seem at once to be the worst of times – yet the best of times – because we are making a global leap in consciousness that we need to live for the common good. And, Sister Mary Ellen Gondeck, CSJ, shows how different cultures approach that on Page 18 in "A gift from the global south." She tells her story of meeting with sisters who represent St. Joseph congregations' justice teams from around the world who are working for the common good of the people they serve.

We also have a wonderful story on Page 22 by Sister Marty McEntee, CSJ, "Growing Old(er) Ain't for Sissies," on how our CSJ sisters never really retire, serving the "dear neighbor" well into their 70s and 80s. On Page 27, you can read examples of sisters, associates and employees of the congregation who are living our mission every day in "Let your light . . . shine." And don't miss our "Upfront" section with news and updates on what is going on with our sisters, our ministries and our congregation.

As you browse this new publication, we hope you will see how big our world, along with yours, has become and how many opportunities there are for you to become engaged with us. We welcome your involvement and participation as we continue to journey in mission and service of the "dear neighbor."

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Conway CSJ".

Sister Nancy Conway, CSJ
President
Congregation of St. Joseph Leadership Team

upfront

Congregation to launch

St. Joseph Worker House!

The Congregation is in the midst of planning for the launch of our new St. Joseph Worker (SJW) program. It is based on the St. Joseph Worker program the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet began six years ago in St. Paul, Minnesota, that has grown now to two very successful houses in the Twin Cities.

St. Joseph Worker House trains, supports and mentors single women between the ages of 21-35 to be agents of change as they provide direct services in the communities they serve. The women live in community in what is aptly named a St. Joseph Worker House.

Our congregation has chosen New Orleans as our first SJW site because the need for continued community rehabilitation there is so great and because we have a long history of service in this region. Numerous sisters in the New Orleans area will work with and support the program throughout the year.

SJW is a yearlong program grounded in the values of justice, leadership, spirituality, community living and living simply.

St. Joseph Workers will serve in a variety of ministry placements, including healthcare, education, advocacy, social services, spirituality and community organizing. In addition, the program integrates training and development components such as leadership training, workshops, community nights, spiritual direction and mentoring relationships for the participants to gain leadership skills and to explore our congregational core values.

Our vocation team is spearheading the SJW program. It is an exciting way we can build new relationships while partnering with women who share our mission and charism. We invite interested single women between the ages of 21-35 to contact Karen Salsbery, CSJ, (ksalsbery@csjoseph.org) for more information.

The congregation is seeking funding to support this program. If you would like more information or can partner with us in supporting St. Joseph Worker, please contact: Pat Milenius, Director of Mission Advancement, 3430 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland, OH 44111; 216-688-3477; pmilenius@csjoseph.org. ●

CSJ Ministries names executive director and associate director



Sister Janet Fleischhacker



Bill Gress

In October 2008, the CSJ Ministries Board of Directors named Janet Fleischhacker its first executive director and, in January 2009, approved Bill Gress as associate director.

Sister Janet brings to her position extensive experience in both creating and transitioning organizations. She was instrumental in creating the partnership merger between the Sisters of St. Joseph Health System and the Daughters of Charity National Health System to create Ascension Health, one of the two health systems the Congregation of St. Joseph sponsors. As past president of the founding Nazareth congregation, she was on the Interim Leadership Team that laid the groundwork for creating the Congregation of St. Joseph and CSJ Ministries. Sister Janet will work from the congregation's Nazareth Center.

Bill has been the executive director of the Congregation of St. Joseph's Wichita-based Dear Neighbor Ministries, Inc., since 2005 and has a 25-year history of knowing and working with the congregation. Earlier in his career, he worked for the Diocese of Wichita and Catholic Charities and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Romania and Macedonia. He assumed his new position on February 9th and works from the congregation's Wichita Center. ●

CSJ Ministries – *growing the vision*

by Janet Fleischhacker, CSJ

In all new moments, the potential for creativity is immense. This is certainly true as CSJ Ministries, the new way for the congregation to exercise its sponsorship of ministries, begins to take shape.

Energy and enthusiasm are growing in this time of spinning large visions and attending to myriad details. In many ways, the ministries follow in the footsteps of our congregational reconfiguration. It is a formative time for a new culture, new networks of relationships and new organizational designs for the more than thirty-five sponsored ministries of the Congregation of St. Joseph. Many of the steps and stages that transformed congregational members and structures into a new reality are occurring within the life of the ministries.

Since their first meeting in June of 2008, the CSJ Ministries board has been working diligently in multiple areas. Whether they are identifying needed staff positions and people, discussing the impact of the country's financial situation, or setting their initial goals and priorities, they examine every conversation, decision and action expressly through the lens of what will be best for the ministries. The board members desire to know more about each ministry and the people involved, and are planning a variety of ways to become more familiar with and connected to the ministries.



As executive director, I also am very eager to become familiar with the incredible work being done every day by people committed to furthering the CSJ mission of active, inclusive, reconciling love. I am visiting each ministry to have conversations with people about their vision, questions and hopes for CSJ Ministries, as well as to hear what we can do or what services we can provide that will be of value. These conversations are an important part of participating together in the creation and formation of CSJ Ministries.

In addition to the congregation's mission, its Generous Promises reflect the most urgent needs of our day. Generating a deeper understanding of and commitment to them among all involved in the ministries can have an incredible impact in the world. As an initial step, in collaboration with Congregational Leadership Team members Pat Bergen and Kathleen Durkin, we are planning local gatherings for board members of the ministries to be introduced to and become familiar with the Generous Promises. Ministry leaders have also been introduced to the Generous Promises and are in the process of providing experiences related to them for their staff members.

There is much to be proud of as our sponsored ministries and the people who serve in them express wholehearted commitment to the "dear neighbor" through a vast array of services too extensive to list here. They span the life cycle and touch the minds and hearts and bodies of countless women, men and children each day. In my travels so far, I have held an eleven-day-old child in our Holy



Sister Janet visits Holy Family Child Care and Development Center in Wheeling, WV.



Sister Janet meets the staff of River's Edge in Cleveland, one of the Congregation's spirituality, wellness, and conference centers. From left, Olivia Yokie, Kim Schroeder, Elizabeth Almeida, Sister Janet, and River's Edge Executive Director, Sister Rita Petruziello, CSJ.

Family Child Care and Development Center and talked with people well into their nineties who live in one of our senior housing complexes. Each ministry brings its own wonderful history of life and service to this moment of an emerging reality within our new congregation. And, as we take our place in the even wider consciousness – the growing culture of communion on the planet – we look toward the continuing vitality of each ministry and the dreams of what new realities can be born through networking and partnering among them for the life of the world. ●

CSJ Associates part of a larger, unified whole

by Kathy Sherman, CSJ

As members of the Congregation of St. Joseph continue to shape its evolution, the CSJ Associates are actively involved and eager to contribute their energy and ideas to furthering the mission and helping fulfill the Generous Promises.

Associates are women and men who are non-vowed members of the CSJ community. They share a passion for the mission of unity and are committed to the Gospel values expressed in the charism and spirituality of the congregation. They give generously of their time, talent and treasure to support the ministries of the congregation. Associates undertake no binding financial or legal commitments to the sisters and continue to live the lifestyle to which they have been called by God.

Since March of 2007, the Associate Board, comprised of directors from each of the congregation's centers, has been meeting to study, imagine and plan for ways that associates can "live and act more as one," while still honoring the uniqueness of each geographical location.

Some of the issues and initiatives include:

- creating a common course of study and prayer for all new associates, but one that leaves room for creative possibilities;
- exploring ways for associates to embody the Generous Promises;
- brainstorming new ways for associates throughout the congregation to collaborate in ministries and projects;
- developing an associate handbook and an associate photo directory to make it easier for associates to get to know one another and for sisters to get to know associates; and
- exploring new forms of relationship and additional ways a person might be a "companion in the charism" of the congregation.

The congregation is richly blessed by its relationship and friendship with associates. They are valued partners in the great work of unity and reconciliation. Together, sisters and associates live and work "that all may be one." Together, we are "the Congregation of the Great Love of God" for the world! ●

Check out our discussion forum online



The congregation invites you to join sisters, associates, employees and other friends in our online forum via our website at www.csjoseph.org. The purpose of the forum is to provide a place to discuss topics that are important to us and our CSJ mission with people who are interested in deepening relationships with us. For example, topics might include environment and sustainability, peace and justice, spirituality or books. The possibilities are endless. You can choose to simply read participants' comments, sorted by topic; or, if you want to join the discussion, you can register with the forum administrator.

To access the forum, log on to www.csjoseph.org. At the bottom of the homepage, click on the discussion forum link. To browse through the current discussions, click on "your first forum." You will see a list of topics you can click on, depending on your interests.

The forum is a protected feature, so only those who are confirmed by a forum administrator can participate in the conversation. If you want to participate, go back to the "discussion forum" page and find the button marked "register." Click on that and follow the prompts.

We look forward to hearing from you online! ●



Congregation launches WEBSITE FOR DONORS AND ADVISORS

If you are in need of more information about estate planning and charitable giving options, the Congregation of St. Joseph's new gift planning website provides helpful information. Here are just some of the site's key features:

- **Weekly Articles** covering estate planning alternatives, including wills and trusts, that can work for you.
- **Savvy Senior** to answer your questions about Medicare, prescription drugs, Social Security, your retirement accounts and more.
- **Donor Stories** to show how a gift to the congregation can lead to greater income for you and your family, a tax deduction and a lasting legacy to the sisters.
- A **Personal Web Presentation** to show the income and tax benefits of setting up a gift plan and help you compare the benefits of setting up a unitrust, annuity trust, gift annuity, or gift and sale.
- The **Washington Hotline** highlighting tax changes that could affect your financial future, including ways to save tax, and major political stories.
- **Financial Update** giving you current market quotes for DOW, NASDAQ and S&P 500, plus the latest news on stocks, bonds and interest rates.

On our **Professional Advisors'** tab, advisors will find:

- **Washington Hotline**, giving information about changes in legislation and updates on the latest tax planning news and events.
- Summaries of recent tax-related **Private Letter Rulings**.
- **GiftLaw Pro Tax Reference**, a powerful service including more than 100 chapters and links to Revenue Rulings, Revenue Procedures, PLRs, Tax Court cases, Regulations and other important IRS documents.
- The **GiftLaw Deductions Calculator** for printable IRS-qualified charitable deduction worksheets for unitrusts, annuity and lead trusts.

Gary Mulhern, *Gift Planning Specialist*, is responsible for maintaining the site and is available at 304-232-8160, ext. 148, or gmulhern@csjoseph.org to assist you. ●

WWW.CSJGIFTPLANNING.ORG

Global collaboration for *Unity*

The Congregation of St. Joseph is a member of the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph, which is comprised of more than 7,000 sisters. As part of that dynamic union, the congregation works within this structure to create a vision of all people united in one community of love, unity and reconciliation. Sisters and Associates gather for collaborative programs, interaction, prayer and ministry, knowing that uniting their creativity and passion for the poor is helping to bring sustainable, systemic change.

In this new moment, the U.S. Federation is currently collaborating with other Federations of St. Joseph around the world to create a Global Coordinating Group to address issues of concern to all sisters, associates and partners. Representatives from Italy, France, Argentina, Canada and the United States met recently to consider a future of deeper relationships that will allow for greater service to the *dear neighbor*. As ambassadors for their respective congregations, these women envision global unity as an act of mission, a strong witness and agent of the oneness of all creation. A simple mission statement gives words to the energy and grace of this moment in the history of the "Congregation of the great love of God:"

*In the spirit of our Founder and
Co-Foundresses, we leaders of the four Federations:
Italian, United States, Canadian, and French; along with
Lyon, Annecy, Chambéry, and Argentina, and in
response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, wholeheartedly
agree to accompany the unfolding and emerging global
relationships as we coordinate new
and diverse expressions of our CSSJ
mission and charism.*

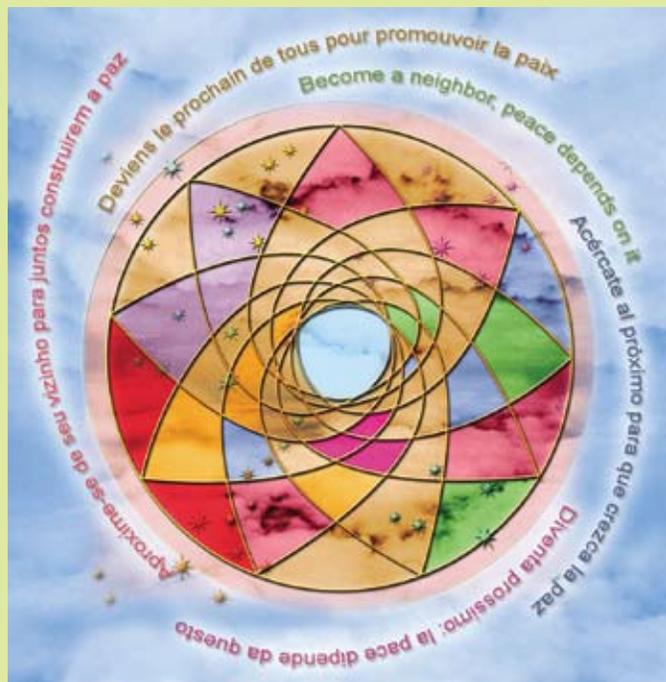
The women serving in this group will give specific attention to transition for the CSSJ United Nations Non-Governmental Organization representative and issues of justice affecting peoples of the world. They will also focus on creating international volunteer mission programs to involve vowed and lay people. Additionally, the group will explore ways the International Center in LePuy, France, can engage in programs that will create opportunities for people from around the world to reflect on the sisters' mission and charism. An area of great excitement requires deep conversation and exploration in shared personnel and finances for Formation.

This movement into oneness among the Sisters of St. Joseph comes at a time in which unifying love and reconciliation as an example of how creation might live together may be needed now more than ever before. Throughout the past centuries, sisters and their mission partners have acted sacrificially in order to serve the "dear neighbor" wherever and however possible. In this new time, Sisters of St. Joseph will continue to serve with each other and friends throughout the world as they pledge to explore ways to live their mission. This remarkable act of collaboration demonstrates for all peoples one way through which the hungers of the world might be met.

If you would like to learn more about the U.S. Federation of Sisters of Saint Joseph, visit their website:
www.sistersofsaintjoseph.org. ●



Sisters invite international youth for discussion in France



The Sisters of St. Joseph International Center in LePuy, France, invites young adults, ages 21-30, from around the world who know Sisters of St. Joseph to take part in an extraordinary experience. They will meet and live at the Center for ten days, August 2-12, in a multicultural and multilingual community. This opportunity to take a risk, to leave the familiar behind, to embrace something new and different doesn't always come within such a safe and nurturing environment. These thoughtful and dynamic young people will offer their understanding and perceptions of the world and their place in it. They will share their hopes and dreams, their questions and their faith. They will open themselves up to new ways of communicating and participate in a mutual exchange of ideas. They will be challenged to look for innovative and better ways to make the world more humane and more respectful of the environment — in hopes of building a world where peace is possible.

Cost: €500 (approximately \$657). Does not include travel expenses.

Registration due: March 20, 2009. For more information or to receive registration materials, email: centre.international@wanadoo.fr ●



NEW RESIDENCE UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN BATON ROUGE

The congregation broke ground near the Catholic Life Center in Baton Rouge, LA, last November for a new residence for sisters. The previous residence in New Orleans, known as Mirabeau, was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and a subsequent fire and had to be razed. Here, workers prepared for pouring the building's slab in January. When completed this summer, the residence will house up to 23 sisters and guests. It will also include a chapel, dining room, parlor and parking for 33 vehicles. ●



*People across the world are becoming more aware than ever of the need to connect.
We are living in an...*

AN EXTRAORDINARY *moment* by Pat Bergen, CSJ

An extraordinary moment is dawning. Can you feel its increased energy, hope and enthusiasm? This energy seems paradoxical in the midst of global economic deflation, wars, genocide and the devastation that is happening to our planet. However, even the global breakdowns of present systems seem to be announcing a breakthrough of newness filled with possibility.

In looking at human history, breakdowns of the past seem to have occurred when our way of thinking was too small to address the emerging situations of the present. For instance, a human-centered world view is no longer big enough to ensure the future of the planet. Breakdown, it appears, can be considered the flip side of breakthrough! If so, what is the breakthrough that is occurring in our time? What could be big enough to evoke such positive energy in the face of such suffering? The answer: A leap of consciousness is occurring in the human race! We are awakening to the realization that we are not only connected – via the computer and the media – but we are interconnected. Scientists, for example, tell us they can prove that the movement of butterfly wings in one part of the world affects weather across the globe. The whole universe is interconnected, and everything in it is the dwelling place of God. So, the breakdowns of the present are announcing the end of an era of separation and a breakthrough of communion!

Futurists have long foretold the coming of this new consciousness. A substantial group in the human race has already crossed the threshold. Many more stand poised to take the leap into this consciousness. Jesus proclaimed it, lived and died for it and rose, filling the universe with longing for it. In John's Gospel we find him praying, "That all may be one..." (Jn. 17). Spiritual people of every religion have made their home in this consciousness:

*Earth is crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God:
But only he who
sees takes off his shoes...
(Elizabeth Browning)*

*The universe is the
Self-expression of God
(St. Bonaventure)*

*Wherever I go – only Thou!
Wherever I stand – only Thou!
Always Thou!
(Hasidic song)*

*Look deeply:
I arrive in every second
To be a bud on a spring branch,
To be a tiny bird,
with wings still fragile,...
To be a caterpillar...
I am the child in Uganda,
all skin and bones,...
I am the 12 year old girl refugee...
Please call me by my true names,
So I can wake up...
(Thich Nhat Hanh)*

Since 1650, Sisters of St. Joseph have spent their lives working and praying "that all may be one." No wonder we are so excited about this new dawn.

People around the world are feeling the effects of this transformation. The present breakdown of systems – economic, environmental, government, health, etc. – rocks every corner of the globe. However, crises are not alone in rocking the world. Take for instance the increase in energy, passion and hope evidenced around the world at the time of the last U.S. election. A powerful example of this was offered by photographer Peter Turnley, who told on CNN's web page about his experience covering President Barack Obama's

inauguration this past January. "Many people expressed this to me: that this was a collective moment. It was a moment not really about Obama. But, it was a moment about us, and it was a moment about each individual and how we are all tied together."

This transformation of consciousness is the work of the Spirit of the Living God, who has been transforming the entire universe since the beginning of time. With every breakthrough of Spirit, more consciousness, more freedom emerges. In our time, this unfolding of consciousness is happening in humanity. We get a glimpse of how consciousness emerges in humanity as we look at the development of consciousness in a child. At two years old the child comes to know, "I can do it myself."

Later, the two-year-old child grows to see how things are supposed to be. When a vast number of humans, as a whole, grew into this consciousness between 600 B.C. and 600 A.D., the human race gave birth to the great religions of the world. Next, as humanity came to realize that we could make things happen, the scientific level of consciousness began to emerge. The amazing thing is that even though it took generations for the scientific level to emerge, children born into the context of this consciousness quickly claimed it as their own. It no longer takes generations to grow into it. Look at how easily children develop their computer expertise. That is a common example of a leap of consciousness. It is not taking them generations to learn. With every leap of consciousness, our inner world grows bigger and new energy emerges for creativity.

In the 1960s, we drew on the energy of the scientific era as we made plans to go to the moon. We transformed the energy of the dream long imagined into action. An increase of positive energy emerged as people drew on their scientific knowledge to invent new technology and address the hungers of the world.

It was this scientific energy that gave birth to the technological age. With the invention of the Internet, consciousness began evolving at a rapid pace as information became accessible instantly around the globe. We began to realize that we are connected, technologically, economically, socially. Our eyes opened to see global climate change and environmental issues regarding energy, food and medicine. The quick global information flow also



The fire rising from the bottom center of the image, the burning bush, reminds us that we are on holy ground. A medieval symbol for the Holy One is at the top center, reminding us that it is Divine energy which brings all this into existence ... permeates the whole intricately woven web of life, and binds all together into One Sacred Community.

— Mary Southard, CSJ

Art: "One Sacred Community" by Mary Southard, CSJ. Courtesy of Ministry of the Arts.



The amazing thing is that even though it took generations for the scientific level to emerge, children born into the context of this consciousness quickly claimed it as their own. It no longer takes generations to grow into it. Look at how easily children develop their computer expertise.



digitally, and it's become second nature for us to automatically think of how technology can perform tasks that previous generations had to do manually. For example, today we can visually check the security of a distant site from an iPhone instead of having to drive to that site. A new consciousness is on the rise.

So how does the evolution of consciousness relate to spirituality? Bringing this new consciousness into our experience of the sacred in nature and our reading of sacred scripture together reveals new insights previously invisible to us. God is revealed as "the pearl of great price (Mt. 13:44-46)" within all that is. And we begin to notice God revealed in the communion of creation.

I will never forget an experience as a young adult. At the time, I was

having a very difficult time believing in God. To add to the complication, I was a sister! I was canoeing out to the sunrise in Northern Wisconsin. All of a sudden the color of dawn started transforming the color of the river. The leaves of the trees seemed to be playing a symphony, and the sound of the loon was an intimate part of that music. As the fog parted, similar to a curtain on a stage, it revealed a huge sun seeming to rise out of the river. And I, drawn into the whole experience, began to rise from my seat in the canoe in rhythm with the rising sun. I knew at that moment that we were one—the river, the trees, the fog, the loons, the breeze, the color, the sun, the movement, the canoe. It was as if the Divine Artist was birthing this once-in-a-life-time art piece from the inside of all of us and we were all interconnected. I knew if any one piece was missing from the scene none of us would exist. The moment seemed to last forever. This experience changed my life forever. Communion is reality.

The communion of creation consists of past, present and future. This awareness unleashes unbounded energy for creativity in the world. In addition, we see evidence that our thoughts, words, feelings, decisions and actions influence everything that is, was or ever will be. This evokes a whole new level of human responsibility and accountability. What happens in our hearts and

helped humanity awaken to the devastation taking place as a result of our previous way of thinking and acting in the world. We believed everything was separate from everything else, including ourselves and God! We are awakening to the fact that we all interconnected.

Stream Of Life

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

— Rabindranath Tagore

Not only are we interconnected, not only is the world smaller than we previously thought, but the world is becoming smarter. Our world has moved into the digital age. Transistors are its building block, each costing a tiny fraction of a cent. We are embedding sensors across entire ecosystems, cities, healthcare systems and more. Computers can translate this data into actionable information, making our systems and processes much more efficient. Furthermore, in this digitalized and computerized world, systems can "speak" to one another. Almost everything can communicate



mind and what our hands produce affect the whole universe forever. This is huge! Remember when a person's joy or depression changed the energy in a whole room. Pay attention to the energy you bring into an environment. It is affecting every generation to come.

What function do religious communities play in all of this? The purpose of the religious communities is to contemplate the world in order to notice the "newness" emerging in cultures and in the world at large. They are to discern and to name the blessing (and the disorder) emerging in that newness, in light of the particular aspect of the Gospel each community is called to reveal. This is what we call the religious community's charism. Religious communities are commissioned to



Sister Pat Bergen, CSJ

give their whole being, energy, time, talent and treasure to cooperate with the Spirit in midwifing the emerging blessing. Sisters of St. Joseph have been doing this since 1650 France. Over and over again we have been called to give ourselves as gift to further the

emerging vision of "unity." That is our charism in the world. In doing this, the Sisters of St. Joseph have been prophetic in every age.

Listening deeply to the Spirit of God revealed in our time, we awakened to the realization that all creation is one with God. We know that separation is an illusion.

A few years ago, seven congregations of Sisters of St. Joseph, listening to the Holy Spirit, knew that we could no longer live as separate congregations. We were called to surrender our separate lives to become a communion of the Congregation of St. Joseph. We did this "for the sake of the mission." Yes, we did it to deepen communion in the world, knowing a ripple of energy would flow into the universe

contributing to the deepening consciousness of communion emerging in the human race. Whenever communion deepens, a release of new creative energy emerges. That is happening among the sisters and our associated laity. An attitude of “we can” is emerging.

Humans are noticing that this new level of consciousness contains all previous levels of consciousness. A glimpse of what this means is seen in Russian nesting dolls. You may have seen them — a small doll nests within a larger doll and this doll nests within an even larger doll and so on. In this new level of consciousness, the energy of all previous levels is available within oneself and within the whole race. This new level of consciousness asserts that we live not for ourselves but for the universal common good. When this new level of consciousness grows strong enough,

it will be the context into which every child on the planet will be born. It will be the prevailing spirit which every child will catch. Nothing is more contagious than spirit. Very quickly in life children will realize that, “All is one.” They will know that unless every being flourishes, no being flourishes.

Those who study these things tell us that our time — right now — is a major “watershed” moment of transformation. At such times, the universe and everything in it is highly responsive to even subtle changes in values, beliefs, and aspirations. There is no time to lose. Every decision in times of breakdown and breakthrough has an effect on everything. Complaint, ridicule and blaming diminish positive energy. We enhance positive energy with conversations that lead to creative action to birth the vision.

The Sisters of the Congregation of St. Joseph live and work, giving all their creative energy to birthing and midwifing this emerging consciousness of oneness with God and every being in the world. We commit our whole being to working with others to change systems to feed the hungers of the world, to restore a flourishing Earth and to provide an atmosphere of inclusiveness and mutuality into which every child can be born. We do this so that the children of the future will be born knowing that “All is One.” The children of the future will know they have within themselves the capacity (the “we can”) to live this communion so that a future full of hope will flourish. This sacred endeavor is a privilege which fills our lives with meaning and gives us great joy. We know there are others of you with this same desire. Please join us! ●





a Gift from the global south

by Mary Ellen Gondeck, CSJ

New beginnings, new insights, new ways of working and new ways of seeing, all bring an excitement and energy to one's life. As a new congregation, we are now surrounded with this reality. It is kind of like getting married, having a child, starting a new job, buying a new house, or even entering religious life. The possibilities are beyond counting. The energy is beyond measuring. The joy is absolutely electric.

Within the congregation, the parts that make it up are also moving with newness. One of those "parts" is the Justice Team. Besides the individual peace and justice staff members coming together to look at our work with new eyes, we are part of the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph, 19 other congregations of Sisters of St. Joseph and associates across the United States.

In the last two years, we have also become closer with the global "Joseph Family" through the International Justice Team comprised of two members of each of the nine Federations/groups of Sisters of St. Joseph around the world. It is that entity that has brought about a transforming moment for us: We see ourselves as part of a larger whole, but have felt the gift of our sisters from the global south in a way that we could have never imagined.

One of the most significant moments in the life of this global "Joseph Family" happened in the spring of 2008. We had gathered in Lyon, France, for our second meeting. The first gathering was in LePuy, France, in the spring of 2007.

We were situated in view of the French Alps atop the hill where Mother St. John walked to the Cathedral chapel to spend some quiet time with her God, a short

distance from her final resting place, and within walking distance (long walk) of the provincial house of the Lyon Congregation.

One of our tasks during those five glorious days was to fashion a plan to eliminate poverty by the year 2015. We were working in three language groups: Spanish, French, and English, a formidable and new task in itself. The English-speaking were, as you would expect, the Canadian, Australian, and United States groups. We struggled for the hour and a half time frame to come up with a plan. In good global north and western mindset, we talked about the grants that we give to people in need. We talked about the many plans that we have put on page after page of paper. We talked about the projects that we are so adept at formulating. It was very cut and dried. There was no great enthusiasm or passion in what would become our final report.

I should also note that during our time of work there were definite sounds of laughter and joy coming from the Spanish- and French-speaking tables — much different from the serious tone of the English-speaking crowd.

The time came for our sharing. First the French-speaking made their presentation. The French,

Senegalese, and Italians spoke about how sharing stories and building relationships brought success in their places of ministry. But their perspective was different – not large areas that we in the north feel compelled to “change.” These sisters were talking about small villages, even the “bush.” Then the Spanish-speaking from Brazil, Argentina, India and Mexico shared a very similar scenario with passion and joy and equal energy.

We were next, and with great difficulty started to speak about our projects, our funding, our pages of plans. It was a struggle. Then one of us said that it was obvious that we really had nothing to offer that was as profound as what we had heard from our French- and Spanish-speaking sisters. We were powerless in this momentous task. Coming from the most powerful nations we were definitely not as alive as our sisters who had already shared, nor did we have any of the joy and energy that they had.

It was a moment of truth. One of our sisters from Mexico stood up and simply said, “We love you.” Another from Argentina said, “Now that your poverty has met our poverty we can work together.”

We sat in silence and absorbed that profound moment of recognition and acceptance and insight.

It was not the knowledge and planning of the north, but the love and acceptance of the South that brought us together in a new moment of working together. We all brought something to the table that everyone recognized and accepted as a way to move forward – the importance of relationships and stories and the importance of acknowledging powerlessness and poverty of a kind other than material poverty. That moment changed all of us and, in turn, all those with whom we have shared the experience.

The new consciousness is that there is great richness in the values and cultures of all of our sisters in a way that our western measurements of GDP and efficiency cannot touch. There is a “success,” if you will, in the human heart touching another human heart that can’t happen when one grant proposal lands on a pile of other grant proposals that must be processed in five days.

The relationship has spread. In October, the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph Peace and Justice coordinators met in Brentwood, NY, for our annual meeting. Four of our international sisters joined us. So now, instead of two of us learning from the giftedness of Griselda, Marie Ines, Dorothy and Marie Pierre, 19 of us were part of sharing stories and wisdom. Extending even beyond Brentwood, we were blessed to have our international sisters visit our motherhouses and places of ministry in Baden, PA; St. Augustine, FL; St. Louis, MO; Cleveland, OH; LaGrange Park, IL; and Nazareth, MI.



One of several working groups, clockwise from left, included: Sue Wilson (Canada), Jeanne Poncin (France), Graziella Marie Zocchi (Italy), Marie Ines Coelho Rosa (Brazil) and translator Simone Saugues (France).

At one point, Marie Ines said, “More important than your money is your walking with us in our ministry.” They said that our dollars were important, but what would be most beneficial was for us to walk with them, accompany them, understand their reality and share ourselves with them.

We can never go back, only forward. This is a turning point. Part of the difficulty is that we are working with years of practice in another model. We know that change needs to be made, but the walking is difficult. We have been invited on a journey by our sisters from the global south who love us and will accompany us. Can we walk with each other and accompany each other and love each other on the way...the north with the north and the north with the south?

The world will certainly look different. We will have new relationships and new stories to tell from walking with each other. ●

Reflection

‘It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,...’

by Marie Schwan, CSJ

FOR ME, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES.



Several years ago I found myself sad and disappointed. I confided in a friend, telling him how it felt as if the world was crumbling around me. I talked about the scandals in our church and the subsequent loss of its credibility in the minds of many. I spoke of the pain, after the stellar hopes we had post-Vatican Council II, of what seemed like the death of religious life. I detailed the breakdown of the ideals that had shaped our country, and the loss of trust in our elected leadership.

My friend listened and quietly reminded me that if our vision were deeper and broader we would see that what is happening here and now, as painful as it may be, is part of a wave of change shaping the future. In the midst of my grief, his words were not particularly consoling. My response was “So?” He smiled and said, “I will say to you what you tell others, ‘Live from your Center.’”

During these past months we have been bombarded with the financial crisis and the greed that spawns such atrocities and causes so much suffering to people who are disenfranchised; we continue to grieve



the slaughter of innocent victims of war in so many parts of our planet and the death and maiming of soldiers; we read of biomedical experimentation that will explore the development of human-animal hybrids; we are aware that the polar ice is melting, the polar bears are facing extinction, that our planet is dying, and the list goes on.

I have again felt myself feeling as if our world is crumbling around us.

But this time, I hear, in a new way, those wise words that something more than is apparent is happening. I want to believe that the breakdown in credibility in our church is part of a movement of a renewal of a Gospel-centered community. I want to believe that the breakdown in what we call our democratic way of life may be preparing us for a breakthrough of a world vision and a reconfiguring of government structures that articulate that vision.

In other words, I want to believe that new things can happen, that our God is a God of surprises, and that the pain and suffering and death and breakdown that always seem to be a part of the human experience do not define life.

I want to believe; I do believe!

I am remembering that in the first chapter of the book of Genesis, the Creating Spirit hovered over the chaos, and brought forth light out of darkness, human life out of the dust of the earth.

I am remembering that in the first chapter of the book of Genesis, the Creating Spirit hovered over the chaos, and brought forth light out of darkness, human life out of the dust of the earth.



Art: "Bright Wings" by Mary Southard, CSJ. Courtesy of Ministry of the Arts.

The story of salvation is the story of breakdown leading to breakthrough. The foundation of our faith is that "nothing is impossible with God." (Gen. 18:14; Lk 2:37), that a new thing can happen.

It wasn't so long ago that we celebrated Christmas, the feast of the God of Surprises come among

us as one of us, born in a stable, embracing all that is human in a quite definitive way.

It was the worst of times for the shepherds. Without the luxury of knowing the law, they were considered to be sinners. In addition, they were burdened with the Roman occupation of their land and the consequent blood-letting taxation levied against the poor.

Suddenly, the song of the angels burst through the darkened sky and they were led to a stable where they found a newborn child. And they saw in the child the fulfillment of a promise, and hope.

In the other articles in this issue, we are invited to be aware that there is a new wave of renewal at work in the universe, and that we are part of that rising consciousness. It is for us to hear the voice of the angels in the darkness, and to find our way — and to lead others — to the stable where we will find all we have hoped for or could ever imagine.

And so, though in some ways it may seem like the worst of times, it is always also the best of times. ●

According to Bette Davis...

Growing old(er)

AIN'T FOR SISSIES!

by Marty McEntee, CSJ

Those of us who are “news junkies” can be found most evenings settled comfortably before the TV, eager to learn the events of the day, the current status of the economy, the situation in Iraq or Afghanistan, how the Obama daughters (and dog?) are adjusting to the White House, and so on! Thirty minutes of fast-paced stories and pictures that leave us breathless — and often a bit depressed!

But wait! The above (and much more) is really presented in about fifteen minutes. The other fifteen describe the products we “seniors” need to keep us healthy, active and gorgeous. There’s something to keep us breathing so that we can play with our grandchildren, something for our “going” problem, the once-a-month pill that keeps joints healthy and us active, something to help us fall asleep and stay asleep and, of course, something to hide the wrinkles!

Now admittedly, age does slow us down a bit and, once in a while, we do need a little something to keep the ol’ motor running smoothly. HOWEVER, there’s something far more effective, something that motivates, energizes, propels and enables us to be of service to others. It’s called “mission,” and it doesn’t come in a bottle. It comes in hearts eager to be of service to the “dear neighbor,” and there are many such hearts within the Congregation of St. Joseph. For example:



Sister Mary Francis Harrington, 77 years young, has been involved with the “Lost Boys” since they came to Cleveland in 2001. These young men from the Sudan described to Mary Francis the suffering, disease and death in their villages due to the lack of clean water. With the determination of a true Sister of St. Joseph and with vitality and creativity, she responded. Read her amazing story in greater detail on Page 24.



Sister Dorothy Gall, 86 years young, established the first home health care program in Kokomo, IN, and served in congregational leadership before “retiring.” She is now

actively involved with programs in her parish; serves as a liaison to CSJ associates in the Tipton, IN area; is involved in justice and peace issues; and is a member of several coordinating groups within the congregation!



Sister Josephine O’Gorman, 77 years young, moved some six years ago from the comfort of the Wichita, KS, Motherhouse into a duplex apartment which is part of StepStone transitional

housing for survivors of domestic violence. Josephine says she wanted to move beyond her own comfort zone while her health would allow. She is called to a variety of tasks by those she serves: a distressed mother whose child is crying non-stop, a neighbor in need of a cup of sugar or a comforting word, or the women with whom she attends twice-monthly support group meetings. Most of the women who live in the adjoining apartments are in their mid- to late-20s and benefit greatly from the steady influence which “Sister” brings to them. She helps them learn basic skills like cooking, socializing and being a friend.

In addition to her supportive presence with the young women, Josephine also serves on two Via Christi Health System senior services boards: Westminster in Ponca City, OK, and St. John’s in Victoria-Hays, KS.



Sister Marybeth McDermott, 76 years young, was the founder and director of the School on Wheels, a mobile adult literacy program for immigrants in two Illinois counties for some fifteen years before transitioning to her new role as an advocate for immigrants. Marybeth works with “Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants,” an organization composed of women and men religious committed

to action on behalf of immigrants, most of whom have been arrested at their place of employment for being unable to produce the needed “green card.” Marybeth explains that the families of persons so arrested have no idea where their loved ones are, and those arrested are allowed only one phone call the night before they are to be deported, which is usually on a Friday. Sisters and Brothers are present the day of deportation, praying with the families as their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands or wives are taken from the jails where they have been held, loaded on buses and taken “home” on army planes that simply leave them at a border of their country of origin. Sister Marybeth also tutors students in an after-school program, and helps out at St. Joseph Press, a sister-run printing company in LaGrange Park, IL.

These “valiant women” are but representative of so many others who, like them, exemplify the truth that “growing older ain’t for sissies.” Their lives have been focused on the “dear neighbor,” and while they may, indeed, need “a little something to keep the ‘ole motor running smoothly,” they have little time to spend on their own aches and pains.

To the women mentioned in this brief glimpse of those we admire, and to all the great women who have gone before us and those who still set the pace for the “younger generation,” we salute you and thank you profoundly for your example.

So the next time you’re deeply involved in the evening news, don’t leave before the section entitled “People Making a Difference.” You might be surprised to see one of our Sisters of St. Joseph among them. ●

Your birthday is now

January 1st

by Gina Sullivan

Imagine not knowing your birthday, or even how old you are. Imagine surviving civil war, disease and famine, then escaping to a foreign country where you know no one and nothing about the culture, including the language. Imagine your age being estimated and your birthday assigned.



Lost boy Issac Malong Mabior and villagers of Dului Bol in the Sudan, Africa.

That's just a small part of what The Lost Boys of the Sudan went through when they began to enter this country from Africa in the early part of this decade in a humanitarian initiative sponsored by Catholic Charities and the United Nations.

Sister Mary Frances Harrington, CSJ, has been involved with the Lost Boys, as they are commonly referred to, in Cleveland since their arrival in 2001. She welcomed, tutored and mentored them, helping them to assimilate into our culture, a culture that is very different from their own. Along the way, she recruited many others, including the media, to help, and has made a vast difference in their lives here in the U.S. In December of 2006, one of the Lost Boys, Isaac Malong Mabior, went back to his village of Dului Bol in the Sudan to visit his family. He was shocked at the conditions he found. The suffering, disease and death due to the lack of clean water were much worse than when he left a few years earlier. The villagers begged him to try to get his friends in America to help.

Upon returning, he immediately told Sister Mary Francis the story. His alarm inspired her to get involved, and "Isaac's Wells" was born.

Clean water is a right, not a privilege



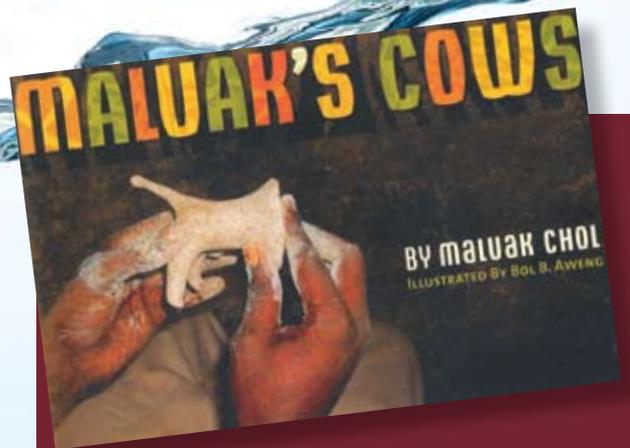
Isaac's Wells is a project whose goal is to bring safe, clean drinking water to the people of the Sudan. Currently, the village of Dului Bol has only one water pump. Barely 300 of the 41,000 people who live there have access to the pump and, therefore, clean water. The rest are forced to use contaminated river water, and they must travel great distances even to get that.

Isaac's Wells is trying to raise \$60,000 to drill four new wells in the Sudan (each costs \$15,000). With the help of Catholic Charities, which is acting as the project's fiscal agent, and the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Foundation, Mary Frances has already raised over \$30,000 of this figure. \$5,000 of this came



from a grant she applied for and received from the Change for Global Change initiative. Ironically, the Congregation of St. Joseph in Cleveland had collected for this charity about a year ago (before the Isaac's Wells project began), so we are amazed and blessed to now see those efforts being returned to us one hundredfold! Even St. Joseph Academy students in Cleveland are involved. They erected a decorative well in the school to help fundraise for the cause.

St. Joseph Academy students in Cleveland erected this pump in support of the CSJ charism and to help foster awareness of the right to clean water for all.



BUY A BOOK, HELP A VILLAGE

As another fundraising effort, one of the Lost Boys, Maluak Chol, wrote a book called *Maluak's Cows*, and it is available for purchase. It is a beautiful story of hope and courage, both in prose and illustration. All proceeds will go to Isaac's Wells. For more information on Isaac's Wells, to make a tax-deductible contribution, or to purchase a copy of *Maluak's Cows*, please contact Sister Mary Frances Harrington in Cleveland at 216-252-0440. ●

Our ministries in Japan

*There's a "character" in every class
— thank heaven!*

They really brighten your day. These delightful preschoolers are students at our congregation's Kikuchi St. Mary Kindergarten in Japan. Here they had just finished a singing performance for several of the Congregational Leadership Team visiting from America.



Congregation of St. Joseph Heritage Society

JOIN THE Legacy of the Lacemakers

The story of the Sisters of St. Joseph began in 1650 in the South of France where our first members earned their living as lacemakers. Remember the Congregation of St. Joseph in your will or estate plan and help us weave a stronger partnership with the "dear neighbor" for generations to come.

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Join us now so you can be included in the next Congregation of St. Joseph Heritage Society Mass. To learn more, mail us the completed form below or call (304) 232-8160, ext. 148. Additional information about the planned giving methods described here is available on our gift planning website. Please visit us at www.csjgiftplanning.org.

ALL INFORMATION IS KEPT IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

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Let Your Light...

Every day we are witness to acts of kindness. We all want to do good for others. It is in our nature as God's children. Father Jean-Pierre Medaille, founder of Sisters of St. Joseph, spoke of "multipliers" in reference to those who increase goodness and love. This column features a few random samples of multiplying goodness.

Sister Phyllis Tousignant brings attention to someone she doesn't even know:

My sister and I were leaving a local restaurant when we discovered our car wouldn't start, no matter how many times we tried. We were just ready to go back inside to call AAA when there was a knock on our car window. A woman sitting in her car across from us had seen our frustrations and came over to offer us her cell phone so we could call for help. We never did get her name but we were ever so grateful to this total stranger who came into our lives for a brief moment, but left a lasting mark of kindness.

Employee, Kathy Gilmartin, shares an experience she witnessed in Wichita:

Several local churches congregate once a month and make quilts from donated supplies for Dear Neighbor Ministries. They drive up in a car packed top to bottom with handmade quilts for people they do not even know, so others will be wrapped in warmth. It is one of the most amazing sights to see the joy of both giver and receiver.

Associate, Kathy Jeffers, offers gratitude to a coworker in Wheeling:

When Tim Goebel discovered 13 air conditioners bound for the trash heap, he got permission to take these units apart and extract the valuable metals, such as copper of all grades and aluminum. He enlisted the help of Bill Fugate and Don Wunnenberg to complete the weeks of recovery work. The proceeds from selling all this scrap were used to purchase recreational equipment for New Haven Court. All this because one person wanted to make a difference for many.

If you have a story about someone associated with the sisters who has done a kindness, please email the story to bbrewster@csjoseph.org for possible inclusion in our next issue.

These "multipliers" are examples of how we live in and reflect the light of Christ. As people all over the world let their lights shine, we will create a universe devoid of darkness. That's something to imagine!

Sister Julie Cannon was touched by the action of a friend:

A single mother has a three-year-old boy with major medical issues. Both mother and child struggle some days. Her physician built a train table and bought one of those wonderful wooden train sets for the young boy for Christmas. My heart is made happy by this awesome act of kindness.

Sister Gloria Jean Zieske is inspired by the service of retired sisters in Nazareth:

Retired sisters give daily evidence of inclusive, reconciling love as they serve the needs of each other, employees and guests with their warmth and hospitality and loving care and concern for each other, performing house duties, assisting with mailings, providing drivers for appointments, visiting and lending a "listening ear" to sisters in Borgess Nursing Home and Fontbonne Manor. These acts are done in love for all.

Associate, Joan Krebs, tells about kindness in LaGrange:

Maureen is a friend, a former CSJ and also a donor who engages in 'doing good' whenever she sees a need. A friend of hers recently moved from sheltered care to independent living. This woman had sufficient furniture, but lacked some basics, such as silverware and place settings. After visiting several stores, consignment and resale shops and other sources, Maureen found something appropriate and brought it to her friend who accepted the gift without comment. Maureen viewed this act of kindness through the lens of right relationships – service to her dear neighbor.

Shine



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WE CARE ABOUT ALL CREATION

In awareness of our mission, the Congregation of St. Joseph is proud to present this issue of *imagineONE*, which has been produced in an environmentally sustainable way, in an effort to reduce our carbon footprint and rethink our use of water, energy, and paper.

This magazine is printed on paper that has been certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, made with 30 percent post-consumer recycled paper (which is processed chlorine free), and manufactured with windpower.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international nonprofit organization that promotes responsible management of the world's forests by recognizing products and processes that meet their rigorous environmental and social standards. The FSC label represents a promise of a commitment to responsible environmental behavior and sound business decisions that benefit the environment and future generations.

By purchasing FSC certified paper and partnering with an eco-friendly vendor who is certified by the FSC, the Congregation of St. Joseph is supporting environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests.

In addition, this magazine has been printed using soy- and vegetable-based inks exclusively, which are less harmful to the environment than their petroleum-based counterparts. Soy- and vegetable-based inks are naturally low in VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds) and are widely recognized as the environmentally friendly choice.