

FALL / WINTER 2011 | VOL. 3 | NO. 2

# *imagine* ONE

THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH



## Who is our *Neighbor*?

EVERYONE. EVERYWHERE. WE ARE **ONE**.



*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, the Congregation of St. Joseph, promise to be mutually responsible and accountable for leadership in the congregation.

## WE CARE ABOUT ALL CREATION

In awareness of our mission, the Congregation of St. Joseph is pleased to present this issue of *imagineONE*, which has been produced in an environmentally sustainable way.



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If you guessed Baton Rouge, La., you are right! This beautiful cross is actually in the ceiling of the chapel located in the sisters' residence in Baton Rouge, inspiring all who come to worship.

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Photo by Pat Milenius

### Where is this?

This image comes from one of our congregational centers. Do you know which one? See below for answer.

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## Sister Marie Hogan, CSJ, reflects on...

### *who our neighbors are*



If you have been around sisters and associates of St. Joseph for any length of time, there is no doubt that you have heard them speak of the *dear neighbor*. Our mission is to achieve unity – neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God.

So who is this neighbor? When I heard Sister Leonie Shanley, SSJ, from Erie, Pa., speak about our Consensus Statement\* that reconnects us with the vision, charism and spirituality of our founders, I was delighted to hear that the French word that our founder Father Medaille used is “prochain,” which means “next to.” Neighbor includes our friends and family, parishioners and our co-workers. Neighbor also includes those we bump into in the grocery store, the person who cuts us off on the freeway and the person standing on the corner begging.

As we became aware of our global reality, we became aware that neighbors are not only those who are next to us physically, but everyone across the globe as well. With the use of technology, those across the globe are indeed our neighbor. Not only are our neighbors all persons around the globe, but we realize that everything created by God is also our *dear neighbor*. Water, air, trees, animals, all of creation is neighbor to us.

At a U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph Event in July where Sisters of St. Joseph were gathered from around the country and around the world, Executive Director Sister Kathy McCluskey, CSJ, stated that we are all from one neighborhood where we all have the same address, the heart of God.

As you read the articles in this magazine, I hope you become more aware of the *dear neighbor* and how we can treat each one with the reverence of one who lives in the heart of God!

Blessings,

*Sr. Marie*

Sister Marie Hogan, CSJ  
Congregation of St. Joseph Leadership Team

#### ***Consensus Statement***

*We, Sisters of St. Joseph and Associates, move always toward profound love of God and neighbor without distinction, from whom we do not separate ourselves, and for whom we work to achieve unity, both of neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God. Gathered by Love and in Love, we pray to be open to receive all the graces being offered us. May this time, this space and all creation be blessed. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen*



*upfront*

NOT FOR  
SALE

## U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph *expands partnerships to end human trafficking*

Bearing witness to the zeal of Christ, some 900 U.S. Federation Sisters of St. Joseph and associates, many serving in ministries around the world, gathered in St. Louis this summer for *EVENT 2011* to celebrate their 361st year of reaching out to the *dear neighbor*.

This was no ordinary celebration. Those present took the occasion to highlight worldwide efforts to eliminate human trafficking, one of the most serious ills of our day, which exists in every major city around the world.

In collaboration with ECPAT USA (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes) and Nix Conference & Meeting Management and Millennium Hotel – St. Louis, the Sisters of St. Joseph took a very public stand. After months of collaborative conversation among the three parties, they witnessed and applauded hotel General Manager Dominic Smart as he signed the six-point ECPAT-USA Code of Conduct. ECPAT USA is a global network of organizations with 81 affiliates in 73 countries.





Photos by Sister Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ

*Hotel employees in the photo at left witnessed General Manager Dominic Smart, in the photo at right, sign the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. Sister Joyce DeShano, CSJ, presented Mr. Smart with a plaque to inform hotel guests and visitors that the Millenium Hotel – St. Louis is committed to the global Code of Conduct to eliminate trafficking of children in the travel and tourism industry.*

Suppliers of tourism services adopting the code commit themselves to implement the following six criteria:

- To establish an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- To train the personnel in the country of origin and travel destinations.
- To introduce a clause in contracts with suppliers, stating a common repudiation of commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- To provide information to travelers by means of catalogues, brochures, in-flight films, ticket-slips, home pages, etc.
- To provide information to local “key persons” at the destinations.
- Report annually to the Code of Conduct Steering Committee.

The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism was created in 1998 and more than 1,000 companies worldwide have signed it. ●

## CONGREGATION DISCOVERS CARBON DIET WORKS

# *reduces footprint*

Carbon emissions are one of the main causes of climate change according to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Care of creation is one of the Catholic Church's main justice issues and a main moral concern for all of the world's great religions.

Each of our congregation's centers, our sisters and associates take caring for all creation so seriously, we have incorporated it in our daily lives. The results for just the season of Lent 2011, when we concentrated on specific actions, show we saved a total of 10,104,767 lbs. of carbon emissions (based on national averages provided by the U.N. Panel on Climate Change 2008).

The savings we achieved is equal to taking 842 medium size passenger cars fueled by gasoline off the road per year, or eliminating 10,784 barrels of oil, or planting 202,106 average size trees, each of which absorbs about 50 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Just a few examples of the actions taken to reduce the congregation's carbon emissions include: eliminating cars and increasing carpooling, recycling three-fourths of the waste from our centers, using CFL or LED light bulbs throughout, installing solar power panels, using hybrid cars, buying local foods and using recycled products and paper.

Some additional efforts our centers, sisters and associates are being asked to adopt include: 1) learning about the value of eating meatless meals one day per week; and 2) making it a habit to turn off power strips on all electric appliances. (An exception for now are those appliances that need "smart strips").

Eating one pound less of meat a week saves 130,000 gallons of water and 19,028 lbs of grain in a year, resulting in emitting 28,392 lbs. less in carbon emissions per year. ●

To learn more about how you and your family can reduce carbon emissions, go to [www.carbonfootprint.com](http://www.carbonfootprint.com) and click on "Individuals."



# Final vows run deep for

SISTER MARY JO CURTSINGER, CSJ

“**R**eligious life is actually a deepening of one’s baptismal call,” said Sister Mary Jo Curstinger, CSJ, and that is why she deliberately chose the Sunday readings of Ordinary Time with which to shape the July 30th liturgy for her final vows.



Photo by Sister Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ

Sister Mary Jo enters her name in the congregation’s register of vows.

Verses from the prophet Isaiah, “Come to the water! I will renew with you the everlasting covenant” (Is 55:1, 3) and the gospel texts relating Jesus’ miracle of the loaves and fishes (Mt 14:13-21) provided the context for the liturgy when Sister Mary Jo professed her final vows in the Chapel of the LaGrange Park Center near Chicago. Interestingly, the story of the loaves and fishes is the only miracle that is in all four gospels, and Sister Mary Jo describes it as “a prefiguring of Eucharist – a sign of our unity with God and each other.”

Claiming her profession of final vows as a public witness of renewing her baptismal covenant, Sister Mary Jo invited all present to renew their own baptismal promises.

Sister Kathy Brazda, CSJ, describes Sister Mary Jo as a woman of service, a woman of love and one who always searches for “the more,” which, simply put, means striving to stretch oneself in service and love of God and neighbor. “As I walked with her as her formation director over these past years, I saw her desire to live a life of inclusive love deepen,” Sister Kathy said.



Photo by Josh Passburg

*Surrounded by family, with her parents at left, Sister Mary Jo radiated joy.*

Originally from Kentucky, Sister Mary Jo is a graduate of Murray State University with a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology. She moved to South Carolina for graduate studies and worked there for 14 years as a school psychologist. In those years, she became very involved in parish and diocesan ministries at St. Joseph Parish in Columbia, S.C., in the Diocese of Charleston. Her interest in theological studies grew and she moved to Chicago to attend Catholic Theological Union (CTU), where she earned a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree. After working one year at Mepkin Abbey in South Carolina, she returned to CTU for a three-year stint, and became the director of the Biblical Study and Travel Program and visited the lands of Israel/Palestine, Greece, Turkey, Jordan and Egypt. She was received as a CSJ candidate on Pentecost 2002, as a novice on August 7, 2003, and she professed her first vows on August 6, 2005.

Sister Mary Jo thoroughly enjoys teaching scripture and theology courses at Nazareth Academy in LaGrange Park and is the moderator of the school's peace and justice group, "Just Us." She is also a member of the LaGrange Park Center's Anti-Racism Team. ●

# New St. Joseph Workers serve the *dear neighbor* in New Orleans

Four young women have begun a year-long adventure in the Big Easy as volunteers to serve *the dear neighbor* with the CSJ-sponsored St. Joseph Worker House Program in New Orleans, La.



**Sade Kelly** is a graduate of St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minn., and has a bachelor's degree in social work. She works at Crescent House with Catholic Charities of New Orleans in the children's program where they provide playgroups, personalized safety plans, physical and social assessments, homework assistance and individual parent sessions. In addition, Crescent House staff act as liaisons with schools, community resources and the courts and also teach safe dating tips to teens.



Originally from Hillsboro, Ohio, and later Cincinnati, **Megan Madden** is working with the St. Bernard Project rebuilding homes. "I am very excited to be doing a year of volunteer work in New Orleans! I absolutely fell in love with the city when I volunteered to rebuild homes with Operation Helping Hands after Hurricane Katrina in 2009," she said. Megan's degree is in general studies with a minor in religious studies and socio-psychology from the College of Mount St. Joseph in Cincinnati.



**Elizabeth Maloney (Ellie)** is from New Albany, Ohio, and comes to New Orleans with a degree from Goshen College in Goshen, Ind., where she majored in elementary education (K-6 certification) and minored in environmental science. Ellie works in the Harry Tompson Center, which is a daytime homeless shelter. Her responsibilities entail supervision of the laundry, phone and shower rooms.



**Dorothy Gbolo** is a recent graduate of Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, Minn., where she majored in community studies. One of ten children in her family, it is not surprising that she loves being around people. Dorothy's ministry in New Orleans is to tutor at the St. Vincent DePaul Adult Learning Center.

St. Joseph Worker House trains, supports and mentors single women between the ages of 21-30 to be agents of change as they provide direct services in local communities. The yearlong program is grounded in the values of justice, leadership, spirituality, community living and living simply. For more information, please contact: [jschmitz@csjoseph.org](mailto:jschmitz@csjoseph.org) ●

# CONGREGATION TO PARTICIPATE IN U.S. BISHOPS' 'PRAY FOR THE DREAM' EFFORT

Our congregation and, especially, our peace and justice teams, join Catholics in parishes across the country from September 18th to October 9th to "Pray for the DREAM," an initiative created by the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops.

The prayer is for Congress to pass the latest version of the DREAM Act, also known as the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (S. 952), which Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and 39 cosponsors introduced in the Senate, and (H.R. 1842), which Reps. Howard Berman (D-CA), Illeana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Lucille Roybal-Allard introduced in the House on May 11, 2011. In the previous session of Congress, the legislation came close to passage in the House, falling just five votes short of the 60 needed to move it to the Senate.

The bishops' website, [justiceforimmigrants.org](http://justiceforimmigrants.org), explains that, "Thousands of hard-working young people who were brought to the United States as children want to go to college and live the American Dream, but can instead be detained and deported to countries they've never known." The DREAM Act could stop the injustice by giving students who have grown up and graduated from high school in the United States the opportunity to earn legal status through higher education or military service.

According to the National Immigration Law Center, the DREAM Act would permit certain immigrant students who have grown up in the U.S. to apply for temporary legal status and to eventually obtain permanent legal status and become eligible for U.S. citizenship if they go to college or serve in the U.S. military. It would also

eliminate a federal provision that penalizes states that provide in-state tuition without regard to immigration status.

Meanwhile, individual states are moving to provide immigrant students greater access to education. In August, Illinois enacted legislation making these students eligible for in-state tuition and for privately funded scholarships. Other states that have passed similar laws are California, Kansas, Maryland, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin. ●



Photo by Sister Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ

When Region 8 of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) held an "Information and Legislative Day" at the Illinois State Capitol, Sisters Rosemary LaFlaur, CSJ (l), and Michelle Elfering, CSJ, took part. That very day, the Senate passed the "DREAM Act" legislation. The governor signed the act into law August 2nd.



# Making our faith tradition relevant to *young adults*

The *dear neighbor* includes young adults who find the Church out of touch with their spiritual quest or do not feel comfortable in their parishes.

The congregation's vocation team is partnering with Charis Ministries, so that we can offer a profound and lasting impact in their lives. Charis retreats are based on the principles of Ignatian spirituality of finding God in all things, which is also our own tradition, adapted to that age and culture.

**In good company** Appearing together for a University of Arkansas *Distinguished Lecture Series* program on "Turning Swords into Plowshares: The Many Paths of Nonviolence," death penalty opponent Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ (l), and the Dalai Lama told of their personal paths. "It takes effort to show compassion to your enemy," the Dalai Lama said, but you "have to make an effort to stop their wrongdoing."



**Parish bronzes 100 years of gratitude** From 1895-2008 – 103 years – Sisters of St. Joseph taught generations of children attending St. Mary's Colgan Catholic schools in Pittsburg, Kan. Earlier this year, the parish invited sisters back when it dedicated a bronze sculpture of a Sister of St. Joseph and one of her young students. As he blessed the sculpture, Father Tom Stroot remarked, "They not only educated the young children who came to them, they helped to form them, and they prayed for them."



*Young adults have always sought spiritual growth that is pertinent to their concerns.*

Beginning this fall our congregation is sponsoring two retreats: one in the Lake Charles, La., area and one in the Mobile, Ala., area. Both are settings where the CSJs would like to begin to establish new relationships and share our charism and mission.

The congregation hopes to develop these retreats in other regions of its geography. For more information, visit [www.charisministries.org](http://www.charisministries.org), or contact Sister Ileana Fernandez, CSJ, at [ifernandez@csjoseph.org](mailto:ifernandez@csjoseph.org) . ●

## 'Joseph' Connects Far and Wide

For Johanna Humanek Mader who happens to go by "Jo" her *Joseph* connection runs deep and keeps on growing.

Growing up in the Cleveland, Ohio area, the daughter of a *Joseph*, Jo's first connection to the Sisters of St. Joseph came in grade school as a student of the sisters. The next few decades included a marriage to her high school sweetheart, four children, 29 moves to places like Columbus, Georgia, Louisville, ...and finally, three years ago to Indianapolis, Ind. At the time, Jo had no idea there were Sisters of St. Joseph right around the corner from her in Tipton, Ind., who were now part of the same Congregation of St. Joseph as the sisters from her childhood hometown.

Jo happened to read an article in her Diocesan paper, **The Catholic Moment**, about the St. Joseph Worker Program launched by the sisters in 2009 in New Orleans and realized these were the St. Joseph sisters she knew as well. Jo says, "the program spoke to me because I have a granddaughter and I could see the program empowers women to utilize their passion and talents to create a better future for themselves, but most importantly, for the local and global community. I decided this is where I would make a donation – to help the sisters launch this program and help young women and the city of New Orleans where the sisters also have a long presence. I also see this as way to honor my father, the first *Joseph* in my life."



*Jo (l) met with Kim Shackleton, regional director of our congregation's mission advancement team, in New Orleans, prior to the first meeting of the St. Joseph Worker Advisory Committee.*

Soon after, Jo also started visiting the sisters at the Tipton Center. And, just this past August, Jo traveled to New Orleans to volunteer as a member of the newly formed advisory committee for the St. Joseph Worker Program. "My hope is that more people will continue to embrace this wonderful congregation of sisters and their ministries all over the country." Sometimes it matters less where we live and more what our heart is calling us to do.

Jo added, "I've known sisters as elementary school teachers, sisters leading young women as St. Joseph Workers, and Sisters in retirement who continue to commit their lives to God and

neighbor. Religious life will continue to change – it doesn't look like it did when I was a little girl, but I am sure it will exist as our sisters offer more and more opportunities for us to engage as volunteers, donors, and friends."

We are grateful to all of our volunteers, donors and friends who continue to grow with us. Thank you!

To learn more about our sisters, centers and ministries in the United States and across the globe, visit our website: [csjoseph.org](http://csjoseph.org). From there, to learn more about the St. Joseph Worker Program, click on "How We Serve," then "St. Joseph Workers." Also see an article on the new St. Joseph Workers on page 10 of this issue of *imagineONE*. ●

## The IRA Charitable Rollover has been extended through 2011

The Charitable Rollover provision allows an individual to donate up to \$100,000 from their IRA to public charities without having to count the distribution as taxable income. All you have to do is instruct your custodian to direct a gift from your IRA to the Congregation of St. Joseph. Learn more at [csjgiftplanning.org](http://csjgiftplanning.org).



Photo courtesy of Sister Jeanne Gamache, CSJ

On a follow-up visit to Las Latas Lajas in the hills of Nicaragua, Sister Jeanne Gamache, CSJ, went to visit a family and check the cleanliness of a new latrine with the tin corrugated roof behind them. It replaces “nothing.” Before the latrine, they had just the hills and nature. The upfront money to build it came from a grant, 30 percent of which the family repays into a community fund for emergencies or a special project the people decide on. One lovely “benefit” of Sister Jeanne’s visit is a tonk on the nose with a pencil.

# Who is our *neighbor*?

EVERYONE. EVERYWHERE. WE ARE **ONE**.

by Sallie Latkovich, CSJ

One of the most familiar texts in Scripture is the conversation in the Gospel of Luke, where the scholar asks Jesus what must be done to inherit eternal life. In reply, Jesus asks the scholar how he reads the law, and we hear this reply:

“You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”

The early documents of the Sisters of St. Joseph root our own ministry in this very story. Our founder, Father Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ, directed the early sisters to:

“Assist and serve the *dear neighbor* with the same care and loving concern that St. Joseph had in serving Jesus and Mary.”

**A**nd so, we members of the Congregation of St. Joseph ask: "Who is my dear neighbor?" What makes our neighbor "dear"? What mannerisms and behaviors make our serving the neighbor "care-full" and "loving"?

In common understanding, the neighbor is one who lives close by, on our street, in our neighborhood. Countries that share borders with other countries are neighbors. In the Christian life and spiritual life the lens widens to see every person who lives and even the earth we inhabit as neighbor. In the "Good Samaritan" parable, Jesus cautions us not to discount people with whom we have differences from being neighbor (Lk 10:29-37) And Paul reminds us that "There is no more Jew or Greek, slave or free, man or woman, but all are one in Christ." (Gal 3:28).

This is an understanding that is countercultural, particularly in first world North America where we tend to make judgments – harsh judgments – about others who are different from us in any way: people from other countries and cultures, of other religions, and people who are uneducated or poor.

As a member of the Board of CSJ Ministries, I am both impressed and humbled at the needs our sponsored ministries meet for so many *dear neighbors*.

And yet, there is so much more.

Several of our sisters serve *dear neighbors* in other countries: Sister Jeanne Gamache, CSJ, who served 12 years in Peru earlier, returned this summer from serving three-and-a-half years in Nicaragua with Sister Dianne Fanguy, CSJ. They work with "Cantera Ministry," which employs the principles of popular education and self-determination. Sister Jeanne describes the relationship with a *dear neighbor* there.



## CSJ Ministries:

### Housing

Dillon Complex for Independent Living, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
Resident Program, Tipton, Ind.  
Resident Rentals, LaGrange Park, Ill.  
Sheridan Village, Wichita, Kan.  
StepStone, Wichita, Kan.

### Social Services

ABLE Families, Kermit, W.Va.  
Caregiver Companion, Lafayette and Tipton, Ind.  
Holy Family Child Care and Devel. Center, Wheeling, W.Va.  
People Program, New Orleans, La.  
St. Joseph Adoption Ministry, Kansas City, Mo.  
Dear Neighbor Ministries, Wichita, Kan.  
Taller de José, Chicago, Ill.

### Resources and Advocacy

Ministry Against the Death Penalty, New Orleans, La.  
Ministry of the Arts, LaGrange Park, Ill.  
St. Joseph Press, LaGrange Park, Ill.  
Srs. of St. Joseph Charitable Fund, Parkersburg, W.Va.  
Srs. of St. Joseph Health and Wellness Fdtn., Wheeling, W.Va.

### Education

Nazareth Academy, LaGrange Park, Ill.  
St. Joseph's Academy, Baton Rouge, La.  
Saint Joseph Academy, Cleveland, Ohio  
School and Tutors on Wheels, LaGrange Park, Ill.

### Spirituality, Retreat and Conference Centers

Christ in the Wilderness, Stockton, Ill.  
Little Noddfa, Tipton, Ind.  
Magnificat Center, Wichita, Kan.  
River's Edge, Cleveland, Ohio  
St. Joseph Retreat Center, Wheeling, W.Va.  
The Well, LaGrange Park, Ill.  
Transformations Spirituality Center, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
St. Joseph Conference Center, Tipton, Ind.  
St. Joseph Spirituality Center, Baton Rouge, La.

*Our congregation also sponsors Ascension Health and Via Christi Health System with other religious congregations.*

“Doña Evangelina, or Eva, is one of the beautiful women of Los Planes de Chuajachillo who has inspired and encouraged me. She is a native of one of the rural farming communities in the hills of Nicaragua. Passing through her flowering trees and plants, she welcomed me (as her *dear neighbor*) into her humble home, where I knew I was ‘at home’ in a new land quite different from my own. I am enriched and know another face of God because of my relationship with Doña Evangelina and my sisters and brothers of Los Planes.”

In Africa, Sister Jackie Goodin, CSJ, is now housemother, teacher, maintenance worker, counselor, long-range planner, human resource person and disciplinarian to forty-nine teenage girls in Songea, a small town in rural Tanzania, where the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery who started St. Joseph Hostel to provide safe housing for the girls as they attend secondary school away from home.



*Asante is one of the 49 girls at St. Joseph Hostel where Sister Jackie Goodin, CSJ, serves in southwestern Tanzania. While the struggle to learn English (the language in which all secondary school subjects are taught) has been real for Asante, she is so happy to be at the hostel where she can study, study, study.*

And Sister Barbara McCartney, CSJ, was in Peru this summer, walking with the Peruvian Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in their ministries. One day, she accompanied Sister Maria to her ministry, a prison where she teaches English to the prisoners.

“As I walked (in) ... the odor of urine hung heavily in the air; it was overpowering,” she wrote. “The first image I saw was ... a prisoner (passing) by, but he had little semblance of being human other than he was wearing clothes. He couldn’t stand erect. He walked on all fours, and had an animal-like expression on his face. ... I wondered what he might have done to end up in such a hellhole.”

“Clearly, space and overcrowding are a major issue in this prison,” Sister Barbara continued. The prison, originally built to accommodate 1,500 inmates, now holds 6,000. “Prisoners sleep where they can find space, conditions are deplorable and food is probably as scarce as space,” she surmised.

“When we arrived at the prison chapel, it was full,” Sister Barbara explained. “The men were singing and I could hear the distinct sound of a guitar and a drum... they sounded amazing. This Sunday happened to be Father’s Day and, despite the fact they were imprisoned, they sang with deep pride and reverence.”

Sisters of St. Joseph remain there and in scores of other faraway places the world has overlooked, to serve the least of our brethren, our *dear neighbors*.

In Chicago, Sister Kathy Brazda, CSJ, established and directs “Taller de José (*Joseph’s Workshop*),” a community resource center whose staff accompanies immigrants to agencies where they can receive the services they need. The clients often can’t make the appointments themselves, due to language difficulties, cultural misunderstanding of various services, or simply out of fear. Such a client was Señor Raul.

Señor Raul (not his real name) was a homeless man in Chicago who came to “Taller de José” in May 2010, searching for a way to return to Mexico and rejoin his family. The staff began a search and contacted the Mexican Consulate. In the meantime, however, Señor Raul was walking through the park one day, and an attacker beat him and stole his identification. As Taller de José staff worked on his case, they had no way to contact Señor Raul, because he was homeless. Finally, Señor Raul returned to Taller de José in February 2011, saying that once again he would like assistance in locating his family.

With help from the Mexican Consulate, the Taller staff, located his family – who now live in California – and helped him retrieve his birth certificate and social security information. A few days later, Señor Raul’s son and brother-in-law drove in from California. They were reunited and they all returned to California together.

For more than 20 years, Sister Marybeth McDermott, CSJ, has seen the *dear neighbor* in immigrants to the United States who are without documentation. As one of few religious allowed to visit detainees at the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) site in McHenry County, Ill., she brings care and comfort to prisoners who are being shackled and torn away from their families. But, she has a success story to tell about Gerardo Perada, who came to the United States when he was nine and was working toward a career in welding when ICE officers arrested him.

“After my first visit with Gerardo, he had his family contact a lawyer,” she said. Then, one night, Gerardo was awakened at three o’clock in the morning to be fingerprinted and released. In Sister Marybeth’s two years of pastoral ministry at the detention center, Gerardo was the only detainee she ever saw released and not deported. The only one.

Serving entirely different *dear neighbors* in need, the Congregation’s “Magnificat Center” just opened its Spiritual Strengths Cancer Care Center. Its focus is on *dear neighbors* who may be affected by another person’s cancer. It offers programs for spiritual inner healing and transformation, sorely needed by everyone affected by cancer.

Yet, amidst all of these wonderful ministries, we also are lucky enough to witness individual outreach to the *dear neighbor*. I was recently out for lunch with Sr. Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ. When we had finished, Joellen took her tray to one garbage container, and I to another. I turned around and saw Joellen speaking with a young woman who was sitting all alone with nothing to eat on her table. Joellen asked her if she was hungry, and the young woman said that, indeed, she was. Joellen walked with her to the counter, asked what she would like to eat, then ordered and paid for her lunch. It was beautiful to see Joellen reach out spontaneously to a *dear neighbor* with kindness and nourishment.

May we each be moved to notice the *dear neighbor* in our midst or in our world; be attentive to our call and renewed in our commitment to “assist and serve others with the same love and care that Joseph had in serving Jesus and Mary.” ●

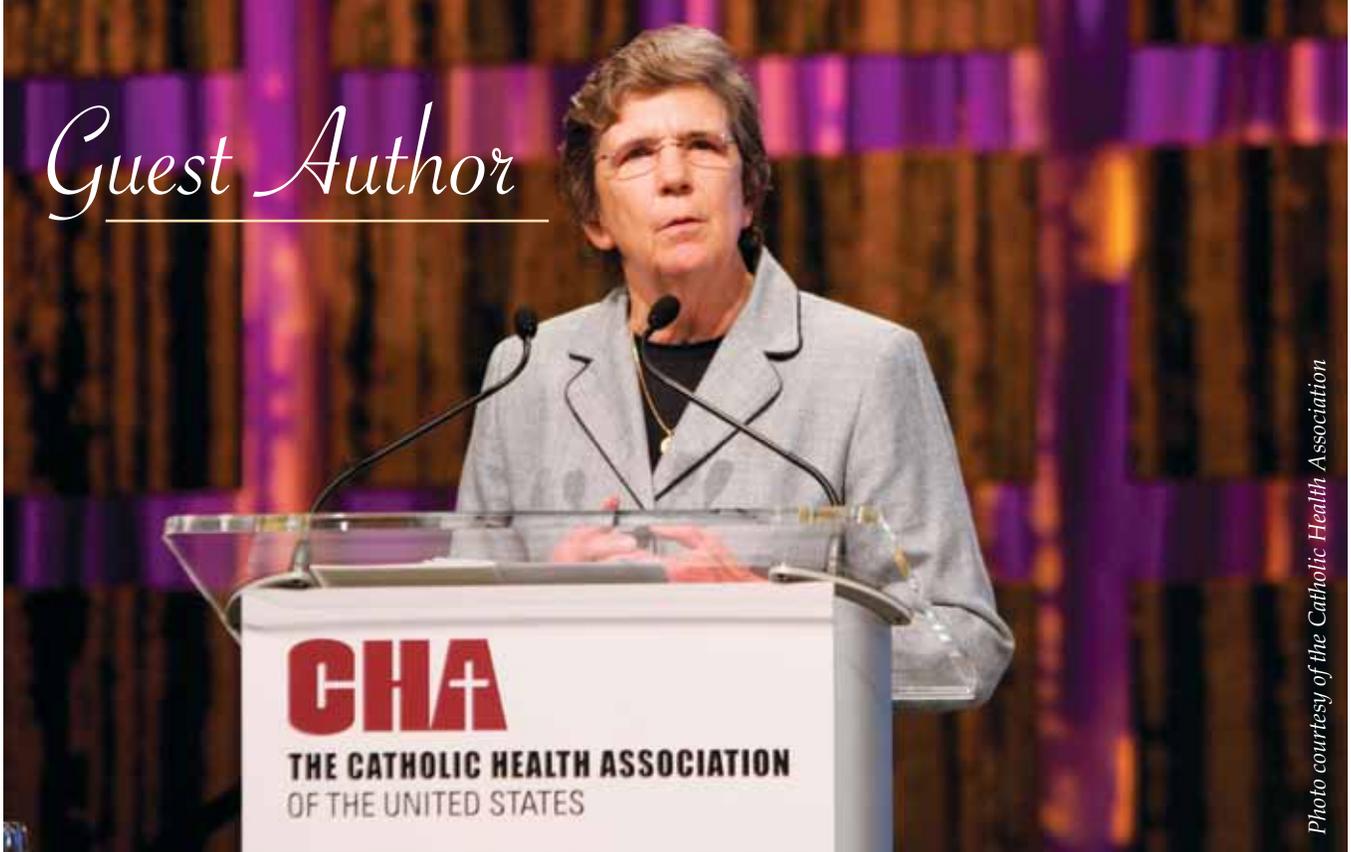


Photo by Sister Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ

From left, Sisters Michele Elfering, Marybeth McDermott and Sallie Latkovich, CSJs, went to witness for compassion, to pray and to “stand with” immigrants at the suburban deportation center near Chicago.

**Sister Sallie Latkovich, CSJ**, directs the Bible Study and Travel Program as well as the Summer Institute at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. In addition, she teaches a course in Biblical Foundations of Spirituality. Sister Sallie is also engaged in retreat ministry and recently published “Mining the Meaning of the Bible” with Liguori Publications.

# Guest Author



*Sister Carol Keehan, DC, is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Catholic Health Association.*

## Catholic Health Association Vision: Universal access to affordable quality care

by Carol Keehan, DC

*When Catholic sisters first arrived in New Orleans in 1727, they faced the daunting challenge of building a social service infrastructure for a developing nation. By establishing education, health care and other ministries, the sisters worked to meet human need in this fragile and evolving environment.*

Ascension Health and Via Christi Health System, which our congregation sponsors with other religious congregations, are members of the Catholic Health Association.

**A** lot has changed since then but much has also stayed the same. Catholic health care continues to be a vibrant ministry of the Church devoted to protecting human dignity and caring for all those who seek care and comfort. There are 636 Catholic-sponsored hospitals in the U.S., more than 12% of the total. Catholic hospitals employ nearly one million full- and part-time workers and admit some five million people per year – regardless of their ability to pay.

CHA members also operate long-term care and skilled nursing facilities, outpatient clinics, rehabilitation sites, home health services and hospices. Catholic health care welcomes people of all beliefs and traditions, attending to their body, mind and spirit.

Grounded in Catholic social teaching, CHA and our health systems and facilities have also made it a priority to advocate for justice in health care. Currently more than 50 million U.S. residents have no health insurance – they skip doctor visits, ignore chronic

conditions and make choices between food and medicine. When they do receive care, it is expensive and often too late.

In 2007, CHA developed a *Vision For U.S. Health Care* that imagined a better health care system in which everyone has access to affordable quality coverage and care. We named the Catholic values driving this goal – life, human dignity, justice, the common good and concern for the poor and vulnerable – as well as principles that should be upheld as part of any effort to reform the system, beginning with coverage for all.

We worked hard to support the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which represents the greatest progress expanding health coverage since the enactment of Medicare in 1965. The law is not perfect, but it is a solid foundation on which additional improvements can be built in the months and years to come. No one will be more vigilant than CHA in monitoring implementation to ensure that the law continues to be pro-life and effective for patients and health care providers alike.

The basic protections offered through the ACA will eventually provide coverage to 32 million people who now have none. These provisions from the law, many of which are already in effect, reflect the values and principles listed in CHA's *Vision* document:

- Coverage for young adults (up to age 26) through their parents' health plan, even if the children are married or no longer live at home;
- Illegal to deny insurance coverage to a child because s/he has a pre-existing medical condition. Same protection expands to all age groups in 2014;
- Illegal to cancel a beneficiary's insurance policy unless fraud can be proven;
- Preventive benefits coverage so that cholesterol checks, colonoscopies and similar services are available at no cost to the patient;

- Help for seniors who fall into the Medicare drug coverage gap known as the 'doughnut hole';
- Tax credits for small businesses that provide coverage to their workers; and
- No federal funding for abortion.

Millions of people are already receiving help and hope as a result of the Affordable Care Act. We know some of them: a 24-year-old farmer with a debilitating condition requiring expensive monthly treatment is now covered under his parents' plan; a senior with multiple chronic conditions is able to afford his prescriptions; a child cancer survivor's parents no longer worry about her ability to get insurance in the future; and a music store owner is able to continue providing health insurance coverage to his staff.

These stories will only multiply as additional elements of the Affordable Care Act are rolled out and made real. In the meantime, our work is far from done. About half of the American public disapproves of the reform law, mostly because of rampant misinformation that has been circulated by opponents. And we need to protect the gains we have made from ongoing threats of repeal and defunding.

Meanwhile the debt our nation now faces must be addressed. Balancing the budget on the backs of poor and vulnerable persons, however, is neither smart nor compassionate. CHA and Catholic-sponsored health care providers will continue to advocate on behalf of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid and a strong, sustainable safety net.

Each day, Catholic health care providers are blessed and proud to carry out the healing ministry of Jesus. This includes caring for the sick but also protecting poor and vulnerable persons and making sure their voice is heard when public policy is made. ●

To see stories of real people and families helped by the reform law, go to CHA's YouTube channel: [www.YouTube.com/HealthReformWorks](http://www.YouTube.com/HealthReformWorks) .

# SISTERS REACH OUT TO FILL *health care gaps*

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by Barbara Kupchak, CSJ

While many of us are fortunate enough to have health insurance and health care professionals and clinics and hospitals available to us, many in this country are not so lucky. It's all about access. For most people access comes with good insurance and the personal ability to pay. But it also includes geographic location, availability of health care providers, whether the health care provider takes a particular form of insurance, ease of contact with providers and agencies, whether there's good public transportation and even the cost of fuel, if one does have transportation. So, while access may be only one of the issues citizens face in today's health care dilemma, it is multifaceted. Lack of access to health care, for whatever reason, prevents more than 40 million Americans from receiving reliable, timely, and decent health care.

For example, "Joe" is seven years old and a student at a primary school in rural West Virginia. One day last fall, Joe had an unexpected severe allergic reaction to some unknown substance, while he was sitting in the classroom. The situation was critical and timing of the essence to get Joe the emergency treatment he needed. But, there is no clinic or hospital in or near this small rural town. The school is 15 winding country road miles from the Interstate highway and another 16 miles to the nearest hospital.

Fortunately for all concerned, there was a newly established School-Based Health Center — funded in part by grants from the Sisters of St. Joseph's Health and Wellness Foundation — just across the school yard and Joe got the emergency treatment that saved his life. Nurse Cherie, who is in charge of the clinic, said that Joe might have died if the health center was not there. This clinic is the only access to care in this little

community. So, at times, even adults have to make use of the services of the school.

In addition to the availability of care in underserved areas in this country, there is the issue of access to care because of the inability to pay. This is no longer just a problem for people who are poor. It is a fast-growing problem for middle class Americans, "the working poor," as well.

Fran lost her insurance altogether. She is self-employed and has a pre-existing condition; so she was refused insurance. She could get insurance only if she excluded everything that was related to her condition. Now, she is considering dropping her own business to try to find a job, in a struggling economy, which will offer some health insurance. Fran said, "I feel as though I'm begging. Even though I'm willing to pay for insurance, I still can't get the insurance or the care I need to keep



Photo courtesy of Via Christi

Via Christi Hospital in Wichita is serving as a “learning laboratory” for Via Christi Health’s other hospitals in trying out new technology and processes designed to improve patient outcomes and the patient and family experience.



my business and contribute to my community.” For now, Fran has had to rely on one of the free clinics sponsored by Ascension Health, even though she wants to work to pay for her own insurance.

The Congregation of St. Joseph, through a variety of its health care initiatives, has a long-standing commitment to serve the *dear neighbor’s* health care needs and provide care to those who have no ability to pay. Ascension Health, which our congregation sponsors with other religious congregations, has as a goal for 2020: Healthcare That Leaves No One Behind, with a focus on 100% access and 100% coverage. This means that all

In addition to the availability of care in underserved areas in this country, there is the issue of access to care because of the inability to pay. This is no longer just a problem for people who are poor. It is a fast growing problem for middle class Americans, “the working poor,” as well.



persons, including those who are uninsured or underinsured, receive healthcare services. This call to action reflects a 400-year legacy of the sponsoring communities to minister to the *dear neighbor*. Ascension Health operates hospitals and clinics in 20 states and the District of Columbia.

Jan was in a similar predicament to Fran’s when she was about to be discharged from the hospital and did not have any idea of how to take care of herself. She was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and she had just had a stroke. Without any health insurance, and with a lot of



medical concerns, Jan needed a doctor. She was on several new medications and needed to follow up with a cardiologist. She also needed to learn new ways to eat and to exercise. But she had no idea of where she could go for all these services.



Photo courtesy of Ascension Health

*As the “working poor” continue to lose insurance coverage or have to pay more and more for it, newborns become increasingly vulnerable.*

The discharge planners at the hospital made a doctor’s appointment for her at the St. John Community Health Center for the following week. Her first concern was how to pay for all of her new medications and how much it was going to cost her to see the cardiologist.

Mary Ann, the nurse attending to Jan, had a totally different concern. She wanted to know how Jan was coping and what she understood about her health. Mary Ann and the health center staff were able to help Jan obtain free and low-cost medications through pharmacy assistance plans and found a volunteer cardiologist to provide Jan’s follow-up care. Mary Ann gently encouraged Jan to take better care of herself, helping her spirit heal and letting her know that she was not alone.

What a difference a few months make! Jan’s health has steadily improved since January. She is healing and getting stronger each day – not just because of the medications – but because Mary Ann and the other health center staff cared about her – and showed her how to care for herself.

In the midwest, Mary came to the Infant Mortality Program, a service offered by St. John Providence Health System’s Community Health outreach, when she

was about 6 months pregnant. Another maternal/infant program in Detroit had referred her to see if she could get some of the necessary baby items that she could not afford.

Mary said that this was her fourth pregnancy. Her other three, unfortunately, ended in miscarriages. This was the longest time she

had carried a baby – 23 weeks. She was very nervous, scared and very stressed out. The nurse proceeded to comfort Mary and explain what services she could receive at the Infant Mortality Program. She also scheduled a home visit to assess Mary’s situation.

As a result, Mary continued to receive home visits and established a connection with the nurse and the clinic so that she could call to talk about her fears and receive the information and care she needed. The Infant Mortality Program not only provided the care, information and comfort for Mary, but also put her in touch with a clinic program that would help provide equipment for her baby, like a crib and car seat, which Mary couldn’t afford. Having these items available also calmed some of Mary’s fears.

Mary’s life has been difficult, but with the Infant Mortality Program’s help and support and home visits from the staff, she had someone with whom she could talk, express her feelings and get her questions answered. On June 5, 2011, Mary delivered a healthy baby boy with no complications.

Currently, our nation is in conversation about affordable health care for all citizens. Health care is a basic human

right and the question of access to care, for the variety of reasons mentioned, is paramount to honoring citizens' rights. In addition to the issue of access in these health care discussions, there is or should be a conversation about human dignity. Affirming human dignity means that everyone should have access. Folks like Fran should not have to give up their work and "go begging." Children should be able to have readily available medical services in an emergency. Mothers, like Mary, need to be supported in their efforts to bear and raise healthy, productive children.

The health care ministries sponsored by the Congregation of St. Joseph are helping to provide access to health care to "the *dear neighbor* without distinction" in a variety of settings. They provide a way to affirm the dignity of many who, otherwise, would be "invisible" in our society. ●



*Sister Barbara Kupchak, CSJ, practices and teaches nursing at West Virginia University. The focus area of her work as a nurse is Psychiatric/Mental Health, Gerontology and Community/Public Health Nursing.*

## How the Performance of the U.S. Health Care System Compares Internationally

	AUS	CAN	GER	NETH	NZ	UK	US
OVERALL RANKING (2010)	3	6	4	1	5	2	7
Quality Care	4	7	5	2	1	3	6
Access	6.5	5	3	1	4	2	6.5
Efficiency	2	6	5	3	4	1	7
Equity	4	5	3	1	6	2	7
Long, Healthy, Productive Lives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Health Expenditures/Capita 2007	\$3,357	\$3,895	\$3,588	\$3,837*	\$2,454	\$2,992	\$7,290

Source: Calculated by The Commonwealth Fund based on 2007 International Health Policy Survey; 2008 International Health Policy Survey of Sicker Adults; 2009 International Health Policy Survey of Primary Care Physicians; Commonwealth Fund Commission on a High Performance Health System National Scorecard; and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD Health Data*, 2009 (Paris: OECD, Nov. 2009).

# Wondering what it is *that artists seek so passionately*

by Caroline Benken, CSJ

“If you really knew me, you would know my Father.” (John 14:7)

Jesus is a revelation of God. He also used the world about him to reveal our God. “Consider the lilies of the field.” See death as transformation into an abundance of life. “When a grain of wheat falls into the ground, it is no longer a single grain, but multiplies into an abundance of life.”

Blades of grass or a gentle rain are a few images that Jesus used to reveal God’s unconditional relationship with creation. We do not know if Jesus, like St. Francis, ever called the sun his brother or the moon his sister,

but the humility of both led them to form a community with creation that strengthened their oneness with God.

Many artists approach their work as a step into a meditative experience that looks for what God will reveal in the process.

Their prayer draws them to that mysticism of Jesus that relates to the entire universe. Jesus did not have the words of cosmology or the tools of modern science that reveal our interdependence on one another. Still, his openness to the revelations that come with contemplation



Photo courtesy of Sister Karen Van De Walle, CSJ

*The creative Spirit guides the hands of Sister Karen Van De Walle, CSJ, Tipton, Ind.*

produced those insights that we are only beginning to discover when reading our scriptures with new eyes.

Potters mold and fold the clay of the earth. They model the tenderness God had while forming us in our mother's womb. The potter trusts that under her loving touch the stray glaze or irregular lines will be reconciled in the totality of her creation. Such is the power of the Spirit who blows where she will in us.

Observing the brokenness in our relationships with one another and with our mother earth, the heart of the song writer or the painter is moved with a compassion that urges us to seek healing.

The poet lifts up life's experiences with words and rhythms that stimulate our minds and hearts. They turn all creation into mirrors of God's unfathomable wisdom and delight.

Who cannot consider Georgia O'Keefe's poppy or iris when it is painted the size of a wall! The photo of a single raindrop suspended on the tip of a pine needle stimulates the reverence owed to the smallest of God's creation.

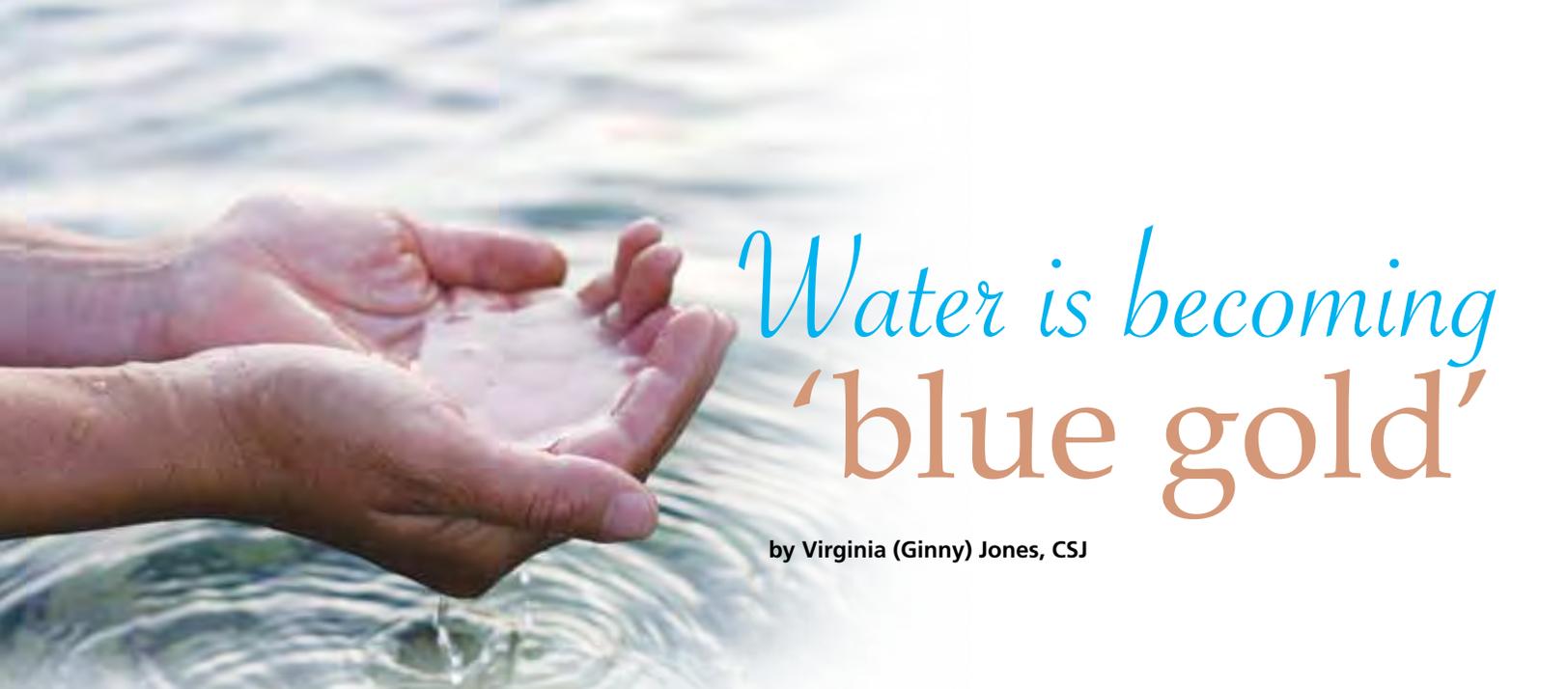
Art is integral to our mission as CSJs. Through it we manifest our oneness with all of creation. Gratefully, the prayerful act of creating and the art itself will enable us to know our God better in the world around us as well as among us and within us. ●

## *Ocean of Life*

by Rita Bonneprise, CSJ

The tide is low  
but the wind is high.  
Torrents of white sand  
sweep across the shoreline.  
Hundreds of white caps  
dot the ocean waters.  
A line of seagulls wait  
eagerly for their next meal  
And I am enamored of it all.

I sit on the seagrass rocks  
and watch this slice of life  
glad to be a part of it.  
Let the sights and sounds  
sink into my being.  
I know I am part of this vastness,  
this endless rhythm  
this constant energy and vibrant life.  
Eternity lives in me  
as it has in these waters  
since the beginning of time.



# Water is becoming 'blue gold'

by Virginia (Ginny) Jones, CSJ

**W**e are so alike, all humans, that we share the same basic needs no matter where on earth we are. One of the most basic needs — one that we see becoming even more precious in our times — is water.

We all began our lives and were nurtured in the watery womb of our mothers; out of waters we were birthed. Water is the womb of the earth from which all life is born. Flowing water is the circulatory system of our planet, bringing abundance and removing wastes.

We truly live on a blue planet — a water planet! Yet most of the water on our planet is salt water; only 3% is fresh water. We find it in ground water, lakes, rivers and in the atmosphere. All of us depend upon some body of water to stave our thirst, wash us clean and enable our food to grow.

Remarkably, we, ourselves, are 70% water! In a sense, the oceans (salt water) flow through each of us, too: in the form of our blood — carrying food, recycling waste — and in our tears, expressing our emotions. Water is the primary substance that comprises every living thing; it unifies us with all of life.

Throughout history, people have always honored that which gives life — earth, rain, the sea, lakes... . Water is

SO special that it plays an important sacramental role. In baptism it consecrates our bodies and prepares us as a new creation for closer communion with God.

So, with water binding us so fully with Earth and with each other, we soon see that there are many concerns about our relationship with Earth. We find that some bodies of water are no longer life-giving, but polluted in a variety of ways. Some have become sewers and have dead zones where no life is possible. Certainly, we cannot use polluted waters for drinking, cooking, bathing, etc. — and certainly not for our sacramental rites!

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Many of us have held the false assumption that the world's water supply is huge and infinite, and we have lived as if that were so. Today, however, many scientists predict that at some time in the near future water will surpass oil as the most important resource. It may become so important that wars will be fought over access to it. As many as 1.4 billion of the planet's inhabitants already do not have adequate access

to drinking water — a fundamental necessity of life!

Of course, scarce water limits food production; so we can anticipate increased hunger and famine. More and more of our *dear neighbors* will suffer. Certainly this is not acceptable; it is not just; and it clearly is not according to God's plan for the fullness of life for all of God's beloved creatures.

Who has access to water and who controls it become important when we are concerned about something that has been viewed as a resource managed by local governments for the public good – until recently. Privatizing water is a new economic frontier. Across the U.S., multi-national corporations are buying up municipal water systems, turning one of our last remaining public commons, our most vital resource, into a commodity and putting it at the whims of the market. One prominent Texas oil tycoon, T. Boone Pickens, now owns more access to water than any other individual in the U.S. He plans to sell billions of gallons a year and transport it long distances to potential buyers. “When San Antonio needs water,” some time in the future, “they’re going to have to come to me,” he said in a televised interview.

In addition, some rural residents are trying to sell their land AND their water rights to multinationals who process and sell it as bottled water. Extensive use of bottled water is depleting natural water supplies and jacking up prices. In the past decade the bottled water market has more than doubled in the U.S., surpassing juice, milk, and even beer. By 2030 nearly half of the world’s population will inhabit areas with severe water stress.

As Christians, we are called to be conscious of our relationships with all of our *dear neighbors*. That means we have a special obligation – a sacred duty – to become more conscious of water itself and how we use it; and to act to restore polluted waters so that once again they can sustain life.

To assist us, the Catholic bishops of the U.S. have identified Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching which include not only concern for the life and dignity of the human person, but care for all of God’s creation, as well. Pope Benedict XVI, in his encyclical letter, *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), clearly states that “the way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself. ...” ●



*Sister Virginia (Ginny) Jones, CSJ, is an adjunct professor of environmental studies at Western Michigan University and coordinator for the Eco-spirituality Center at the Nazareth Center. She holds a doctorate degree in environmental education from Michigan State University and has been teaching environmental studies for more than 40 years. Sister Ginny also serves as a spiritual director.*

## Here are ways we can help:

- Avoid using bottled water! Plastic bottles are a major source of pollution, and commercialization of water is unjust. Potable water is an inalienable right and source of life!
- Curtail wasting water. Use ultra low-flow shower heads and low volume toilets. Use dishwashers and washing machines efficiently. Don’t leave water running when brushing teeth or rinsing dishes.
- Outdoors, mulch plants to retain moisture. Allow grass to grow at least 3” tall before cutting, so roots will reach the deeper, moist soil. Choose plants that are drought hardy and native to your area.

For more facts, visit: [www.un.org/waterforlifedecade](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade) For 25 ways to conserve water in the home and yard, visit: [www.eartheasy.com/live\\_water\\_saving.htm](http://www.eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm) and [www.cleanwaterfortheworld.org](http://www.cleanwaterfortheworld.org)

# Readers show *what they can do*

Call it networking, call it some number of degrees of separation: readers are responding to some of the articles they've seen in this magazine.

If you can sew a straight seam, you can make

## *a world of difference*

by Grace Skalski

There's not much difference between a grown woman and a little girl when it comes to having a brand new dress. It lifts the spirit, helps build confidence, and it feels good all over. Just look at these little ones striking a pose at Grace House of Hope Orphanage in Haiti.



Ever since Therese Xandrew read about CSJs in Detroit who were sewing dresses for orphans in Africa, she's been doing the same. Therese is a shipping clerk for Ministry of the Arts at the congregations's LaGrange Park Center. In just nine months, she and some sisters and coworkers she trained on her pattern have made and sent 250 dresses to orphanages in Sierra Leone and Uganda, Africa; and to Haiti.

"Today, millions of girls in Africa are orphaned due to HIV/AIDS and, in Haiti, many were orphaned by the quake," Therese explained. "It is our goal to inspire hope and confidence in these girls by providing them with special dresses that are easy-to-make, yet beautiful to wear."

This year, Therese will personally deliver more than 100 dresses to orphans in Haiti. But that's not all. She's also taking six new sewing machines and five used machines that she obtained as donations. She will use them to teach the girls basic sewing skills so they can learn to make their own living, and she will leave the sewing machines behind.



*Therese Xandrew*

In addition, Therese has turned her work into a nonprofit organization, and it's growing. Her daughter created a website, [www.onlylovedresses.org](http://www.onlylovedresses.org), that invites volunteers to join the effort. It even provides the dress pattern.

Therese also likes to point out a thread of coincidences that seem to be blessing the group's efforts. "Our last shipment went to Grace House of Hope Orphanage in a suburb of Port-au-Prince, Haiti," Therese said. When she went to buy sewing machines to take to Haiti, the name of the machine model turned out to be Grace. "Several days later," she added, "a fabric store employee who was impressed with what we are doing

"Today, millions of girls in Africa are orphaned due to HIV/AIDS and, in Haiti, many were orphaned by the quake," Therese explained.

"It is our goal to inspire hope and confidence in these girls by providing them with dresses that are easy-to-make, yet beautiful to wear."

scissors, etc. The name of her church," Therese giggled, "is Grace Lutheran Church.

"Living in countries where girls and women are often devalued and abused, orphan girls are likely to face a very difficult future," Therese concluded. "If one pretty dress helps them feel they have some personal human worth, it will help them learn to present themselves confidently."

"If they learn a skill by which they can support themselves, they'll become contributing members of society with a better future."



*Some of the articles we've run in the past have "gotten legs," as readers respond to needs that touch their hearts.*

CONGREGATION OF ST. JOSEPH 17

Therese Xandrew, whose article about making dresses for orphans in Haiti and Africa appeared in the Fall/Winter 2010 issue, told us 39 readers from all over the country "contacted my website and offered to help make more dresses." One day, Mary Miller-Miller from Baton Rouge emailed: "Yesterday, more than 30 children, teenagers and mothers met at St. Joseph's Academy to make dresses for the orphans in Haiti.

With all the new help, Therese shipped 210 dresses to Africa in July and more than 100 dresses and eleven sewing machines to Haiti for the new sewing center the orphanage is building. When the building is finished, Therese will go to Haiti to teach the girls basic sewing skills so they can learn to make their own living.

As *imagineONE* was about to go on press, we learned Therese's story inspired 20 women and six 'tween and teen girls in Our Lady of Grace Parish in Noblesville, Ind., to start their own "Dresses for Haiti" project. They've already made 120 dresses, 12 pairs of boys' shorts, and skirts for older girls. The parish has been paired for several years with Saint Louis du Sud on the southwestern coast of Haiti and has underwritten digging and outfitting a community well. Since at least one team from the parish travels to Haiti each year to do maintenance, like painting classrooms earlier this year, the sewing group will ask a parish team to deliver their works of love.

In the same issue, Paul and Colleen Jarosz read about Sister Frances Duos, CSJ, and the NunsBuild



Former chair of the board of School on Wheels ministry, Paul Jarosz and his wife Colleen (r) spent a week in New Orleans with NunsBuild, rebuilding homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. From left: Project manager Sister Frances Duos, CSJ, and Sister Mary Ellen Proulx, CSJ; and (center) AmeriCorps worker Nieko Gonzales.

project to restore homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The Jaroszes signed on for a week last November. (He is the former chairman of the board of School on Wheels a mobile adult English literacy ministry founded in LaGrange Park.)

Paul wrote a thoroughly engaging and enlightening account of the work they did, people they met, the deep gratitude of local residents, sights they saw and glorious foods they enjoyed. Check it out at <http://paulstravelbabble.blogspot.com/>.

NunsBuild has built more than 350 homes, but more than 7,000 families still live in FEMA trailers or other temporary housing. Readers who want to pitch in should contact Adam Deline at [adam.deline@stbernardproject.org](mailto:adam.deline@stbernardproject.org) or call him on (504) 277-6831.

Going back to the Spring/Summer 2009 issue, “Your birthday is now January 1st” told about Sister Mary Francis Harrington’s work with the Lost Boys of Sudan since they arrived in Cleveland in 2001 under a humanitarian initiative sponsored by Catholic Charities and the United Nations.

When one of the boys, Isaac, returned to his village in 2006, he was shocked at the suffering, disease and death he saw due to the lack of clean water. Barely 300 of the 41,000 people in his village had access to drinkable water. He and Sister Mary Francis established “Isaac’s Wells,” a project to raise \$60,000 to drill four new wells.

Within two months from when *imagineONE* was mailed, readers sent \$2,775. Since then, Isaac’s Wells Committee, the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland and Christian workers in Sudan, have funded and installed five working wells – enough to serve the whole village. The committee’s goal now is to raise enough funds to provide water for each of the home villages of the Lost Boys of Sudan.

These certainly aren’t all of the instances where readers responded to articles they read in *imagineONE* – just a sample. Add to this all the readers who send contributions in the envelope tucked inside each issue of the magazine. Add the hundreds of people who volunteer in our ministries and even more friends and donors who contribute to the Congregation’s annual appeal. With all of your support you help transform so many dear neighbors’ lives in countless ways all over the global neighborhood. ●



Thanks to readers (and others) who contributed to the Isaac’s Wells project that was featured in the first issue of *imagineONE*, people in the Sudanese village Isaac came from in Africa now have access to drinkable water.

# Reflection

## Seeing with Sacred Eyes

by Karen Salsbery, CSJ

*"To see with SACRED EYES is to go beyond the surface. To see with SACRED EYES is to "see" with my whole being, with eyes, ears, touch, taste, smell, with every feeling and intuition. To see with SACRED EYES is to "borrow" the Beloved's eyes, is to behold the face of God in each person, each moment, each being."*

— Mary Southard, CSJ

I will never forget the day I came home from the eye doctor with my first pair of glasses. In amazement I gazed at the trees. What had been green blobs, were now individual leaves and branches. I gazed, awe-struck at the soil in the flower bed where I could now see each grain of soil and sand. What an awakening to the world around me, a world whose traits had become blurred for me. More than physical vision, there is vision which sees beyond physical traits and outward facts; vision that recognizes the heart, the soul, and Presence beyond ourselves, and that is the vision we turn toward now.

David Fleming, SJ, writes that Ignatian spirituality offers a vision of life, an understanding of God, a reflective approach to living, a contemplative form of praying, a reverential attitude to our world and an expectation of finding God daily. This vision, this reverence is what I experience in the quote of Mary Southard, CSJ, shown above. It is



*Lonzell Tate sells Chicago's StreetWise Magazine on behalf of the city's homeless people.*

this seeing, this looking with SACRED EYES that helps us to see all creation and every being as neighbor. It is with this kind of vision that we are called to look out on our world "miserable and sinful, but a world worked on by the Holy Spirit," as stated in the "Portrait of a Daughter of St. Joseph."

When my vision is blurred or focused on the mundane, I may not recognize the neighbor, but if I look with SACRED EYES, (as Mary suggests), I see what might not be immediately apparent. Sometimes, the vision awakens in me, as when I stood before a homeless man selling the "StreetWise" paper in Chicago. Our encounter was a simple one — he, trying to sell me the paper, and me, trying to fish money out of my

pocket with one hand while my grocery bags were in the other hand. To my, "How are you," he replied, "Ok," a usual public interaction. For some reason, I replied, "Just, ok?" As he responded with a hearty, "No, I'm blessed" our eyes met and we were both awakened to a deeper truth. Here on this street corner, we were connected. God was present. We saw with the Beloved's eyes. This simple encounter changed OUR vision that day — we could see more than we had seen before. We WERE neighbor to one another.

I will never forget that day either. Both days, the day when the gift of eyeglasses allowed me to see what I had been missing, to that day on a Chicago street when my heart was opened to one I had first seen as stranger, live in my memory to remind me to look at the happenings and encounters of each day with SACRED EYES. Ignatius knew that our path to God was through all the events, moments, and days of our lives — that everything created has the potential to lead us closer to God...to one another if we look with the Beloved's eyes. If we do that we can't help but see that we are neighbors, that we truly are all One. ●

*Sister Karen Salsbery, CSJ, recently began a new ministry with StepStone in Wichita, Kan. She is now their Resource Specialist, working to find jobs, housing and other support for survivors of domestic violence.*

# Let Your Light...

When Sisters of St. Joseph from around the globe came together in July to consider how their zeal could *heal God's sacred universe*, it was clear that our neighborhoods have no boundaries. Our neighbors are beside us and with us no matter the geography or circumstances that may seem to separate us.

**Sister Bert Lieux, CSJ, shares a story of how kindness can multiply over decades:**

*Evelyn Dennig graduated from St. Joseph Academy in Cincinnati many years ago. As an adult, one of Evelyn's daughters, Mary Boyle, developed a brain tumor and ultimately moved across the hall in the same hospice care facility that was serving our late Sister Kay Garnett, CSJ. Mary had no use of her hands or arms and she couldn't speak, but she was aware of her surroundings. Sister Kay, not knowing Mary Boyle was Evelyn's daughter, took up the ministry of feeding Mary every day, despite the fact that she, herself, was suffering from terminal cancer. Both Mary and Sister Kay died some time ago.*

*Following Evelyn's recent death, the congregation received word that Evelyn left a bequest to the sisters in gratitude for Sister Kay's love and attention for her daughter, Mary.*

**Associate Melissa Bear (along with others) observes kindnesses expressed daily:**

*Our Tipton Center Operations Manager, Jim Renshaw, finds meaning as a neighbor to sisters and residents at St. Joseph Center. Many evenings, before he makes his 35 mile drive home, he takes a sister or resident for a quiet walk outside to enjoy the fresh air and conversation. He does this without being asked or cajoled. He gives his time as a gift . . . and receives much in return. Jim commented, "My drive home is more pleasant and I feel great having given back just a little bit of my time."*

*Other employees go out of their way to offer a helping hand and a bit of laughter throughout the day. At the same time, residents and sisters share stories and offer words of kindness and gratitude every day. Together, we*

*have created a neighborhood without boundaries . . . where we all care and connect to people who aren't just next door, but are everywhere.*

**Sister Jeanne Oursler, CSJ, relates a story that reflects the expansiveness of our neighborhoods:**

*Housekeeping employee Insaf, her husband, Morghani, and toddler daughter Mihad came to LaGrange Park Center as refugees from Sudan seven years ago. Now, we're embracing her family, members of her tribe and friends.*

*In June, Insaf received a call at work that government soldiers were in her Sudan village and killed her brother, brother-in-law and cousin. Insaf's sister is pregnant and, now, a widow. There was no information about her mother, father and siblings, except that most villagers had fled to unknown places. Finally, Insaf made contact with her sister and mother and siblings in a refugee camp. They revealed that her father's health forced him to remain in the village.*

*Within days, the LaGrange Park Center community came together for a chapel service that incorporated prayers from Insaf's Islamic tradition, seeking refuge in God, who is peace. We offered Insaf our combined contributions of more than \$1,200. In thanking the assembly, Insaf recognized that "Your support makes me stronger."*

Our humble actions of kindness strengthen our relationships and help us realize that we all live in God's sacred universe as neighbors.

If you would like to share a brief account of witnessing someone letting Christ's light shine through an act of God's love in the world, please send your story to [bbrewster@csjoseph.org](mailto:bbrewster@csjoseph.org).

# Shine



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Photo by Sister Caroline Bejken, CSJ

## STAY *Connected*

Now there are more ways to stay connected to the sisters, associates, and ministries of the Congregation of St. Joseph.

🌐 Friend us on Facebook



🌐 Send in your confidential prayer request at **[www.csjoseph.org](http://www.csjoseph.org)**. Click on the Prayer Request icon on the homepage.

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