

This Nuch

"I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."

John 10:10

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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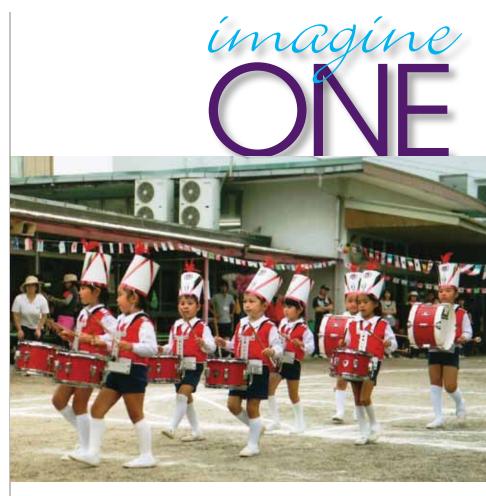
Reflection: Plenitude by Sister Christine L. Parks, CSJ



On the cover:

Creator God, Savior God and Counselor God, three persons in One God, have poured themselves out entirely in unconditional love for humankind: love as big as the sky and the oceans, love as big as the universe and beyond.

Why? "That they may have (life) more abundantly," Jesus said. That we may live from a sense of abundance, seeking nothing more than what is necessary, and always sharing from the reservoir of abundant love and compassion with all people, without distinction.



A Good Reason for a Parade

Before graduating from our St. Mary kindergarten in Kikuchi, Japan, six-year-olds celebrated their last sports day with a parade.

FEATURES

- God's total giving teaches us how to live abundantly by Sister Cynthia Sabathier, CSJ
- It is in giving that we receive by Sister Jeanne Cmolik, CSJ
- God's overflowing love seeks the common good by Sister Marilyn Nickol, CSJ
- Oh God, make me a not-so-material person by Sister Judith Minear, CSJ
- Abundant love enables all stages of life by Sister Mary Ellen Loch, CSJ, LMSW

Leadership Team reflects on...

Living Abundantly



Back row from left, Sisters Jeannie Masterson, Jeanne Cmolik, Kathleen Durkin, and Marguerite O'Brien. Front row seated from left, Sisters Pat Bergen, Nancy Conway, and Marie Hogan.

"Do you love me?" is a question that's been asked across the ages. In this holiest of seasons — Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost and the Ascension — we proclaim God's response of expansive, inclusive "YES!" Jesus explained in John 10:10, "I came that they may have life, and have it more abundantly." That is God's plan. Thus, we can proclaim, "We are an Easter People and alleluia is our song!" (St. Augustine, 4th Century)

Are you familiar with the story of someone, in a time of doubt, asking Jesus how much he loved her? It's said that Jesus stretched out his arms in the way they had been positioned on the cross and said, "This

much." It makes a powerful impression until the burgeoning demands of family and work, government and society, the economy, the environment, health care and so much more begin to drown out God's message of God's total love for us. So we need to be reminded, as on this issue's cover.

In her cover article on page 19, Sister Cynthia Sabathier, CSJ, describes how God continuously pours out God's whole being to convey abundance of love for all of creation. "How is it," she asks "that we miss the message that we are to do likewise?"

Our founder, Father Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ, made the connection when he envisioned the Sisters of St. Joseph to become "... the Congregation of the Great Love of God" — to receive God's total love and compassion and let it flow freely through us to all who are in need, especially those who are most vulnerable in our world.

Always mindful of God's abundant, never-ending compassion and love, we live from a sense of abundance, "eyes open, ears attentive, spirit alert ... sleeves rolled up for ministry, without excluding the more humble, the less pleasing, the less noticeable."* That is why so many of the articles in this issue speak to living abundantly: developing our leadership abilities to better use our resources in ministry; standing in solidarity with immigrants who are victims of wage theft; giving grants to organizations working toward systemic change.

We are an Easter People and alleluia is our song!

*From "Portrait of a Daughter of St. Joseph," by Father Marius Nepper, SJ

This is the last issue of *imagine*ONE for the current Congregation Leadership Team. We profoundly thank you for standing in solidarity with us in mission these past six years. During Easter Week, April 1-5, our sisters will take part in our congregation's second Chapter meeting where we will elect a new leadership team for the next five years. We ask you to pray for all of us during that time.



Anticipating 21st century challenges for leadership in our congregation, thirty-one of our sisters and their mentors took part in a yearlong leadership development program.

Cultivating new leadership for New Challenges

In January, thirty-one of our younger sisters and their CSJ mentors completed one year of developing leadership skills focused on what will be necessary to meet the challenges the 21st century will present.

At their final meeting, keynote speaker Gregg Servis from the Full Circle Group, a business whose competency is developing and working with leaders, stressed that the current economic, cultural, environmental, political and social challenges will require deeper inquiry into better ways forward. Questions to ask are: Can we look past what has worked in the past, see through our collective organizing assumptions and find new ways to meet our mounting challenges? How do we evolve the leadership that is both conscious and capable enough to effectively capitalize on the opportunity embedded in today's complexity?

Since January 2012, each of the 31 participating sisters met with her coach and mentors drawn

from the congregation to develop a plan to enhance her leadership abilities; participated in topical webinars; and read and discussed the book, "WALK OUT WALK ON: A Learning Journey into Communities Daring to Live the Future," by Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze.

At a mid-year assessment, the participants noted that "leadership requires contemplation," a point they see as both an insight and a desire. They also experienced a transformation in their understanding of "leadership," from the idea of one who is followed to seeing leadership as one whose presence, words, decisions and actions can influence the world with the congregation's mission of unity and its Generous Promises.

Congregation plans for

Neighboring a New

as time, life present new challenges

As our sisters consider what is foreseeable about the congregation's future and keep abreast of the evolving signs-of-the-times in order to serve the needs of our *dear neighbor*, planning becomes a huge priority.

The vast change over just the past ten years brought on by technology, the economy, health care, social issues and demographics already are having an impact on the congregation's physical presence in communities we serve and the ministries in which we can be most effective — sometimes, perhaps, in new ways.

In 2011, a team of sisters and staff formally took on that planning responsibility. Reaching back to when Sisters of St. Joseph were first established 363 years ago in LePuy, France, for the purpose of serving the *dear neighbor*, the team identified its work as "Neighboring aNew."

Already, they have taken a number of steps to gather information needed to continue planning:

- Taken an inventory of all of the congregation's physical properties, their occupancy/usage rates, operating costs and potential uses.
- Conducted a detailed survey of the sisters regarding their preferences for living arrangements.
- Asked sisters to indicate whether they affirm two Neighboring aNew agreements:
 1) to reduce the number of centers in order to better match the congregation's current and future demographics; and 2) to affirm investigating licensed care options (Medicaid) for sisters who need skilled or assisted care. 79% of the sisters who responded affirmed both agreements.
- Invited the sisters and associates attending Spring 2012 assemblies to volunteer ideas for potential uses for existing properties. Ideas focused on



Sister Marcella Clancy, CSJ, invited her audience in Cleveland to imagine new ways the congregation can more effectively use its resources.

- housing/shelters for vulnerable populations, integral spirituality, multigenerational education and environmental initiatives.
- Held meetings in January with national and local "thought leaders," and sisters and associates to engage in broad, high-level conversation about possible ministerial uses for our properties. The goals were to expand the congregation's understanding about the needs and possibilities thought leaders perceived to be present in their geographic areas where our centers are located; to "reality check" our dreams in relationship to the thought leaders' views; to meet the criteria of comprehensive, realistic, implementable and sustainable uses; and to identify those possibilities that might be pursued further.

Results from these meetings had not yet been compiled at this magazine's press time. We will continue to report on Neighboring aNew in future issues. •



Sisters, clergy and friends exit a special last Mass together celebrating all that the Sisters of St. Joseph have meant to people in the Tipton area since 1888.

To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Eccles. 3:1.)

Since 1888, Sisters of St. Joseph have served the community of Tipton, Ind., and many parishes throughout Indiana and beyond. They came to teach, to serve people in need and to live the Gospel.

On Sunday, October 28, St. Joseph Center in Tipton, Ind., was filled with friends whose lives have been touched by Sisters of St. Joseph. More than 400 guests came to worship and celebrate with the sisters one last time before sisters who lived at the center would move, and the center would close its doors at the end of December. What a celebration it was!

Several priests with personal ties to the sisters concelebrated Mass with Bishop William Higi, making the day even more special. Father Patrick Keith Hosey broke open the Word in the homily and Bishop Higi offered personal reflections. Each of these men recalled the faithfulness of these vital women of the church and offered words of comfort, challenge and gratitude.

Intercessions offered by Sister Veronica Baumgartner, CSJ, expressed thanksgiving and abiding hope for the future. "We, Sisters of St. Joseph, are filled with gratitude and joy for all the blessings we have received in this place, for all that has been accomplished through us, and for all that is to come. May future blessings be upon this building and our grounds, which we relinquish to others. May new uses for them bring good for people in the Tipton area and beyond."

As St. Joseph Center closed its doors and sisters who lived at the center moved to other CSJ centers, sisters living away from the center remained in the area and continue in active ministry and prayer with and for the dear neighbor.

Novices from St. Joseph congregations

grateful for time together



The Novitiate women are (l to r) Sisters Mary Flick, CSJ; Alison McCrary, CSJ; Clare Bass, CSJ; Heather Ganz, CSJ; Kelly Smock, SSJ; and Zita Iwuoha, CSJ.

At the U. S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph Novitiate House, which moved to Chicago on rotation from Orange, Calif., in the summer of 2011, six dynamic women are wrapping up an eight-month segment of their novitiate, discerning about becoming women religious. The Federation is a union of 16 member congregations of Sisters of St. Joseph throughout the U.S. and Canada who trace their common origins to Le Puy, France, in 1650. Today they number 5,000 sisters, nearly 2,900 associates and 11 agrégées.

Two program directors serve as guides for the women. They are Sisters Bernadette Dean, CSJ, and Anne Davis, CSJ. Together, they prepare the formation program, inviting presenters from member congregations to speak on topics particular to the history, spirit and spirituality of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

While reactions to the program vary, they hold a common thread called thankfulness. "I have not found this experience to be easy, but I feel fulfilled, engaged and joyful," said **Sister Clare Bass**, **CSJ**, a Mississippi native from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in St. Louis.

Sister Mary Flick, CSJ, a native of St. Louis and also with the St. Louis CSJs, reflected that she is in a mid-life vocation change and said, "I had been with a religious community during the 1980's; those were difficult times for us. But now, two decades later, I have found in women religious a new spirit for a new time."

Sister Heather Ganz, CSJ, a Long Island New Yorker from the CSJs in Brentwood, N.Y., added, "I am continually amazed at the growth in my life. I am beyond grateful to have formed some blessed relationships with women who radiate love of God and neighbor without distinction."

Sister Zita Iwuoha, CSJ, a native of Nigeria, West Africa, from the Baden, Pa., CSJs, said, "I live and share life with other energetic women who are as excited as I am in learning more about this precious "Congregation of the Great Love of God."

Sister Kelly Smock, **SSJ**, of Springboro, Pa., and from the SSJs in Erie, Pa., sums up her experience by saying, "It is a sacred time of growing even more into the woman God has called me to become."

"Relationships really are at the heart of who we are, and it's because of those relationships that the Spirit helped me to find the CSJs and the CSJs to find me," said **Sister Alison McCrary**, **CSJ**. She is from rural Georgia, a member of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee and a novice with our own Congregation of St. Joseph. "I am grateful to have had this Sabbath time of the novitiate to allow God to open my heart to all that is possible.

The next step for each of these novices, when ready, will be when they ask to make their first profession of vows.



New candidate's life experience leads to

Love of God and neighbor without exception'

Our congregation is pleased to announce that we have accepted Erin McDonald as a candidate for vowed membership. Erin, who earned a bachelor of psychology degree from Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling, W. Va., and a master of social work degree from West Virginia University in Morgantown, W. Va., returned to Wheeling last summer from working two years in ministry in Rwanda, Africa, with the Jesuit Refugee Service. She is currently working for Catholic Charities West Virginia in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston.

Referring to the description from the congregation's mission, "A Sister of St. Joseph moves always toward profound love of God and love of neighbor without distinction, from whom she does not separate herself," Erin says, "It encompasses the ways in which my experiences of faith, service and solidarity with the poor have changed and transformed me. ... I have been so profoundly changed by these experiences that I am choosing to live a life completely rooted in love of God and love of neighbor as a Sister of St. Joseph.

"After serving two years as a humanitarian aid worker with the Jesuit Refugee Service in Rwanda, I have seen and experienced, firsthand, the brokenness in our world that is crying out for unity and reconciliation," Erin explains. "As a candidate to become a Sister of Saint Joseph, I am called to be a catalyst for positive change and healing in our wounded and fractured world."

Originally from Massachusetts, Erin had an early connection with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. When she was a child, her grandmother

worked as a cook for the sisters' convent at St. Raphael Parish there. "She sat me in the kitchen with her while she cooked," Erin recalls. "Those sisters influenced my earliest memories."

Erin connected with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wheeling in the summer of 2000, when she was a student at Regis College in Weston, Mass., and participated in our "Volunteers in Mission Program." She then transferred to Wheeling Jesuit University to complete her degree in psychology. Later, she became the assistant director, then director of the Service for Social Action Center at the university.

As she begins her candidacy, Erin says, "I pray for the courage to follow God's call wherever it leads me and to embrace, with an open heart and mind, whatever the future of religious life may hold."

STEPS IN THE FORMATION OF A SISTER OF ST. JOSEPH

Inquiry: a time when women who are considering religious life get to know us through shared experiences of prayer, ministry and discernment.

Candidacy: a time to live in community and share the life and mission of the congregation. This provides an opportunity for the candidate and the congregation to get to know each other more deeply.

Novitiate: a two-year period in which the novice lives in community and continues to discern her call as she experiences the life of a Sister of St. Joseph. It is a time that includes a concentrated program of prayer, study, reflection and limited ministerial engagement.

Initial profession: a time of living as a sister for three-to-six years with initial vows of poverty,

chastity and obedience and working in full-time ministry. It is also a time of continued discernment about a lifelong commitment as a Sister of St. Joseph.

Perpetual vows: In making perpetual vows, a Sister of St. Joseph commits herself to lifelong vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and dedicates herself to God, to unifying love in community and to serve a world in need.

Major entertainment events for some mean literal slavery for others



In New Orleans, our Sisters Barbara Hughes, CSJ (left), and Ellen Poche, CSJ, assembled information packets that were delivered to hotel and other lodging general managers

As you may have read in our Spring/Summer issue last year, religious communities in the U.S. have been working to put a stop to human sex trafficking that thrives around major events like the Super Bowl, Mardi Gras, and major conventions. This year, women religious in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, like those in Indianapolis for the Super Bowl last year, spent months organizing and contacting general managers in the area lodging industry offering to deliver information on how to spot traffickers; offering training for their employees on how to report suspect behavior; urging management to sign a code of conduct agreement and inform travelers of their no tolerance policy for human trafficking on their premises.

In addition, they invited all of our sisters in the congregation to pray in the weeks prior to the Super Bowl to St. Josephine Bakita, who, herself, was a victim of trafficking. Meanwhile, students of St. Joseph Academy in Baton Rouge chose to support a safe house during the effort.

In Louisiana, this work was doubly important, because shortly after the February 3rd Super Bowl came Mardi Gras, culminating on February 12th with even more potential for sex trafficking. •

... Here on earth, God's work must truly be our own John F. Kennedy Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961

When CSJ Sisters Marlene Schemmel and Carol Crepeau and CSJ Associate Jim Martin learned about a group called ARISE Chicago challenging employers who exploit low-wage workers, they just had to get involved. ARISE people go to bat for low-wage workers, mostly immigrant employees, who regularly get shorted on pay and have to work in some unsafe and unhealthy conditions.

ARISE Chicago, formerly known as the Chicago Interfaith Committee on Work Issues, organizes the city's religious community to bring about just solutions to workplace injustice. In 2011, ARISE recovered more than \$120,000 in lost wages for cheated workers, bringing its 10-year total to more than \$5 million. Sister Marlene nominated ARISE Chicago for the two grants it received from the congregation's Generous Promise Grant Fund over the past two years. The funds contribute toward educating workers on their rights, providing health and safety training and waging campaigns focused on entire industries and state or national policies.

Last fall, Jim and Sister Marlene helped kick off ARISE Chicago's "Clean Cars, Dirty Work" campaign by speaking at Masses at local parishes on Labor Day weekend to make people aware of widespread worker rights violations at Chicago car washes. Altogether, ARISE Chicago people spoke at 116 services in churches, temples, synagogues and mosques that weekend.

ARISE Chicago had enlisted the University of Illinois Labor Education Program to conduct off-premises surveys of 204 employees from 57 Chicago car washes. The results represent the experiences of almost one-third of car wash workers and 70 percent of full-service car wash businesses in Chicago.

- More than three-quarters of all surveyed earned below the Illinois minimum wage of \$8.25 per hour, and 13 percent earned less than \$2.00 an hour in the previous work week.
- While more than 80 percent worked more than 40 hours in the previous week, less than 2 percent earned the legal overtime rate of time-and-a-half.



Sister Marlene Schemmel, CSJ (far right), joined other religious leaders in a prayer vigil outside Chicago Mayor Ram Emanuel's office in support of 300 airport janitors about to lose their jobs just before Christmas to a private janitorial firm.

- Almost all of those surveyed earned below the pay considered to be a living wage in Chicago and below the federal level for extreme poverty.
 - More than 80 percent did not have safety equipment protection from work related dangers such as injuries, cuts and reactions to harsh chemicals.
 - Over 60 percent are not provided fresh, clean drinking water on the job.

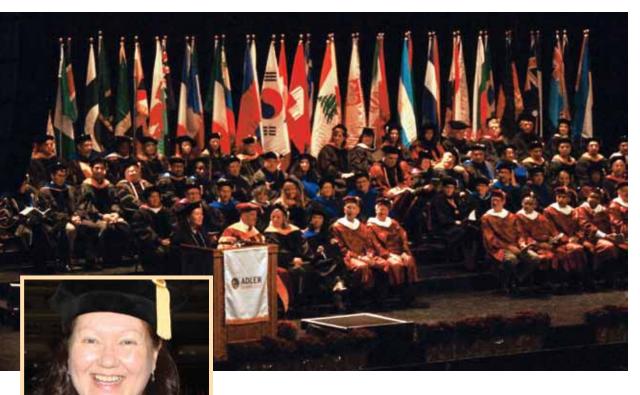
As a result of months of collaboration between ARISE and a Chicago alderman, the City of Chicago passed an ordinance stating that should a business owner be found guilty of wage theft, the owner's business license could be revoked. According to the National Employment Law Project the ordinance will impact hundreds of thousands of low-wage workers and their families in Chicago.

"Working with ARISE Chicago," Jim concluded, "I began to realize that these workers live in a completely different world than I had ever known. I'm amazed how genuine peace and justice can be won by taking small actions in solidarity."

In terms of Jesus' wish for us to live abundantly, Sister Marlene adds, "It takes accepting God's abundant love and compassion for us and letting it flow through us to our dear neighbors, who are suffering."

CSJ Associate's faith journey inspires her as a doctor who also heals the spirit

It was a landmark moment on her faith journey when CSJ Associate Barb Szulc received her doctorate degree in clinical psychology (Psy. D.) from the Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago AND had the honor of being the student commencement speaker.



In her commencement address, Dr. Barbara Szulc said, "... everyone deserves a good life, one free of unnecessary suffering and pain."

Barb chose to study at the Adler School because its focus on social justice went hand in hand with the CSI mission of unity. "I am at this point in my life because the mission had such a profound effect on me," she believes.

According to Barb, the cornerstone of Alfred Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology is social interest, which is a deep concern for the welfare of others beyond our immediate circle of friends and neighbors. To a person of faith, Adler's description of social interest is congruent with the definition of compassion, which

means to suffer with, often with the intent to help ease the suffering of another.

So highly consistent with the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Adler's theory offered Barb the chance to integrate the mission into every aspect of her work. In her studies, Barb has done assessment and psychological testing and individual and group psychotherapy. She worked with students, schools, teachers and families to develop individualized education plans for children and adolescents. In a parish setting, she saw individuals, families and couples for therapy. She did testing and therapy with clients at The Chicago Lighthouse for People who are Blind and Visually Impaired in a depressed area of the city. And, she worked at the North Lawndale Adult Transition Center for incarcerated men

and at the North Lawndale Adult Transition Center and with individuals who were homeless or dealing with HIV at Heartland Health Outreach in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood.

"It's difficult to work with people who are homeless and struggling to get on their feet," she admits. "Yet the experiences enrich me - being able to attend to the human spirit — and offering hope while facilitating healing."

Barb's first contact with the CSJs was Sister Pat Bergen, CSJ, who offered a "Time Out for Moms," program at Barb's parish near the La Grange Park, Ill., Center when Barb was a young mother of three. At Sister Pat's invitation, she became a CSJ Associate in 1993.

All those years, she almost never missed a meeting, according to Sister Pat. "The reason," Barb said, "is

because there is always so much energy when associates get together." While working toward her doctorate degree, she continued working at the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association of Chicago and, with the support of her husband, Casey, raised three children.

Going forward, Barb's desire "is to work with people who are in pain and determine what I can do to alleviate that pain," she explains. After another year of post-doctoral work she will be ready to become licensed.

Just before Barb's graduation, our congregation welcomed her daughter, Sarah, into the CSJ Associate program. Sarah is a pharmacist in the burn unit at Loyola University Hospital — another associate expanding a field of compassion.

Excerpts from Barb's commencement address evoke CSJ mission

We have studied human conflict and suffering, and we know they are rooted in the idea that we are separate from one another. We know that unless we believe, and more importantly act as though, all are worthy of respect, dignity, and compassion - and fully recognize everyone's potential - we will contribute to maintaining the status quo. ...

Our commitment to community gives us an edge ... as we work to challenge the status quo in order to transform systems of power, privilege and exclusivity to those of inclusion, accessibility and mutuality. We are guided by the idea that our health depends on the health of our community life to guide us, and hold that everyone deserves a good life, one free of unnecessary suffering and pain. What we want for ourselves, we want for others. ...

The work we do is intimate and profound, and if we let it, it slowly translates into a way of being so that practicing psychology is not simply what we do, but who we are. We put our own interests aside and work for nothing less than healing for all, without distinction as to ageism, sexism, racism or any other "ism" that sets us apart from one another. We hope with and hope for others, holding pain and suffering until the one who seeks our support can safely hold it, allowing it to effect a transformation that leads to healing. ...

We enter into our vocations knowing it will not always be easy. ... We use our considerable knowledge to put into practice the science that grounds us, and we do so with great courage, entering lives so often overlooked as they are lived on the margins of society. ...

Support us in our work and help us extend our mission in whatever capacity you can. It can be as simple as a kind look, smile or thought toward those who call out for inclusion people who are homeless, mentally ill, socially disadvantaged, persecuted, lonely, hostile or invisible individuals who share our world and are in need of healing, dignity and respect. Participate in community by doing what you find yourself called to do with great zeal, for it is our fully expressed lives of action that enable all of us to thrive....

May we courageously create a field of compassion with energy so strong it will transform our world into ... a world that is more equal, cooperative and just.

Congregation awards grants to groups that further our mission of systemic change

The screening committee of the congregation's Generous Promise Grant Fund chose 15 organizations to receive grants for initiatives that hold promise for making positive systemic change in the lives of *dear neighbors* here and abroad. Each of the receiving groups has a current or historical connection with the Congregation of St. Joseph and their work is an extension of our Generous Promises: They work to create lasting change that supports human rights and basic needs, that sustains and heals earth and that promotes changing our culture of institutional power and privilege to one of inclusivity and mutuality. Briefly, they are:

Sunflower Community Action, Inc. (Wichita, Kans.) "Bridging the Immigration Divide: Changing Attitudes and Public Policy" influences public policy and stronger worker protection laws for immigrants.

Shrine Catholic High School (Royal Oaks, Mich.) "Mission to Nicaragua" supports high school students who are future leaders to experience another culture first-hand and gain a global vision to appreciate inclusiveness and diversity.



A mission trip to Nicaragua impressed students with firsthand awareness of children living in extreme poverty.

Kalamazoo Student Cooperative (Kalamazoo, Mich.) "Building Cooperative Neighborhoods" provides affordable housing to diverse young families with children, seniors and single adults who share in the hands-on management of their housing organization.

Wellington United Church of Christ (La Grange Park, Ill.) "Interfaith Committees for Detained Immigrants" for developing a model for right relationships between undocumented immigrants and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), jail administrators and officers.

Harmony, Hope and Healing (Chicago, Ill.) In collaboration with social service agencies, its therapeutic music program offers clients at Chicago's Michael Barlow Center of St. Leonard's Ministries and St. Mark's Hospitality Center a means to become emotionally and spiritually well-integrated individuals, build healthy families and contribute to better communities.

Charis Ministries (Chicago, Ill.) "Hispanic Young Adult Initiative" is piloting two partnerships with communities serving Hispanic young adults to offer comprehensive Ignatian Spirituality retreats as a means of developing leadership for the Church and world.

Catholic Charities of West Virginia (Wheeling, W.Va.) "Mobile Outreach Program Tackling Asset Poverty with Wellness Works Food Pantry" serves a six-county area that promotes healthy nutrition through direct service, education and advocacy.

St. Luke N.E.W. Life Center, Inc. (Flint, Mich.) "St. Luke N.E.W. Life Enterprises" trains and employs women who were formerly at risk in a business they created to produce hospital "dignity gowns" that provide full back coverage, mammography gowns and other products. Their earnings provide them and their families more financial stability. The business is a model for others that exemplifies how change can happen through perseverance.



One of the residents tends to a garden outside the Houston Place Apartments, in Kalamazoo, Mich., where young families, single adults and seniors share management responsibilities.

Friends of Batahola (Managua, Nicaragua) "Providing Empowerment, Gender Equality, Violence Prevention Project" teaches adult and adolescent women and men from poor neighborhoods ways to increase their access to and control over economic resources. This helps them develop self-esteem, leadership and analysis and communication skills to defend their rights and to challenge harmful social norms. It also teaches them to coordinate with networks and government institutions to establish new alliances for women's empowerment and violence prevention. (See article in this issue on page 18.)

Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti (Norwich, Conn.) "Nutrition Program" treats malnourished children to bring them to normal weight for their ages and educates families on food preparation, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene.

Wheeling Jesuit University (Wheeling, W.Va.) "WJU Collaborative Learning Model for Health Care Students" is a new approach for training health sciences students with state-of-the-art interdisciplinary academics/activities, paving the way for systemic change. The learning model includes a revised four-year curriculum, use of a Simulator Center for practice skills on a human adult patient simulator and developing leadership ability through training and exercises.

Future Church (Lakewood, Ohio) "Future Church Capacity Building" is a catalyst for systemic change via a website that provides resources for Catholic church communities to become more inclusive and to value mutuality in decision-making.

Office of Catholic Schools (Chicago, Ill.) "Project Genesis in Nigeria" engages teams from the Archdiocese of Chicago school system with teams from the diocese of Nsukka, Nigeria, to develop a sustainable Catholic school system in Nssuka that will educate students to be agents of change and hope in Nigerian society. Known as the Vision 2020 Education Plan, it includes training teachers, resourcing schools with durable education tools and technologies, designing and improving school buildings based on sound standards, creating renewable energy infrastructures, designing a nursery-through-college model school as a lab for educating and training teachers, improving health and health services and developing partnerships to support Vision 2020.



The goal of the diocese of Nsukka, Nigeria, is to build a model Catholic school system that will teach the children to become agents of change and hope.

Mission Haiti (Edina, Minn.) "Earthquake Education Recovery 2013," in solidarity with Haitians, provides education in a temporary setting while plans for building a permanent school are underway. The goal is for education to result in job placements and economic recovery.

ARISE Chicago (Chicago, Ill.) "Low Wage Worker Education and Organizing Project" advocates for worker rights and just compensation and provides health and safety training in immigrant communities to move members from victimization in isolation to leadership in changing systems that affect their lives. (See article in this issue on page 11.)

Grant recipients must have a 501(c)3 or equivalent status, ensure a current or historical connection with the Congregation of St. Joseph and be sponsored by a current sister or associate. Applications for 2013 change grants will be available online the week of May 27th at www.csjoseph.org/gpgrantfund.aspx.

Young artists shine in the 'Stories of Oneness' project



Molly M. of St. Luke's in River Forest and Jordan O. from St. Francis *Xavier in La Grange, read the Prayers of the Faithful during the* "Oneness Liturgy" hosted at The Well.



Maggie F., from St. Francis Xavier School, is standing below her prized artwork, which became the cover of the book "God is Everywhere."



Sister Mary Schaefer, CSJ, happily poses with Amber S. from St. Agatha Catholic Academy as they show Amber's artwork in "God is Everywhere."

tudents from three Chicago Archdiocesan schools are official artists now that their work has been published in the books, "Look! Listen! Feel!" and "God is Everywhere," produced by the La Grange Park Spirituality Center, The Well. The two books grew out of the Stories of Oneness project at The Well — a project that gathers school-aged children and teachers from across social, racial, religious and economic conditions to participate in a field trip full of activities that foster communion with God, one another and all of creation.

Developed in partnership with the Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Catholic Schools, the books combine original text, children's art, a CD of songs by Sister Kathy Sherman, CSJ, and activities at the back to assist educators and parents in helping children come to recognize God's loving presence with and within us. The project is designed to facilitate recognition that the world is where God indwells. "Through their involvement in this project, participants expand their circle of inclusion and learn to recognize themselves as artists of peace, love and unity," said Bridget Sperduto, director of The Well and author of "Look! Listen! Feel!"

The books, which sell for \$15.95 each, are available from the Ministry of the Arts (MOTA) website, www.MinistryOfTheArts.com . •

Sisters Celebrate Life

Our Minnesota CSJs had the pleasure to meet Hollywood film producer Jason Jones, a longtime pro-life and international human rights leader who was the featured speaker at the Twin Cities' third annual Celebration of Life gala. Their support recalls work that our late sister, Jeanne Therese Condon, CSJ, began 38 years ago by establishing a LifeCare Center on campus of the University of Minnesota, shortly after the 1973 Supreme Court Roe vs. Wade ruling. That LifeCare Center was the model for nearly 30 more centers operating in Minnesota and Wisconsin today.

In addition to his pro-life work, Mr. Jones spearheaded an initiative to bring clean water and medicine to suffering refugees in South Sudan.

Among the films to his credit are, "Bella," recipient of the People's Choice Award at the 2006 Toronto International Film Festival, and "Soroya M.," which won both the NAACP Image Award in 2010 and the L.A. Film Festival Award in 2009.



Meeting the 'star' backstage: (I to r) Sisters Sue Torgersen, Phyllis Tousignant, Anita Germain and (far right) Shirley Tousignant, all CSJs, enjoyed a personal meeting with Jason Jones, keynote Speaker for the Twin Cities' Celebration of Life gala.

RESPECT FOR LIFE

We, the members and associates of the Congregation of St. Joseph, reverence all aspects of God's creation and respect the interrelatedness of each part of creation with all others. We seek to eliminate whatever hinders the continuance of life or threatens to interrupt the web of relationships in the universe. Thus, we work to eliminate the causes of poverty, war, racism, enslavement, abortion, euthanasia, ethnic and gender discrimination, capital punishment, and environmental degradation.

SPIRIT OF GIVING

Minnesota couple lives a ministry of presence

Sister Margie Navarro, CSJ, and Father Angel Torellas, OP, surely must be resting in peace, thanks to the "Friends of Batahola." Longtime friends and benefactors of the CSJs, Family Practice Physician Herb Holman and his wife, Terri, tell the story.

"Batahola, is a community of extreme poverty in Managua, Nicaragua," Herb explains. "It has about 10,000 families. The median salary in Nicaragua is \$87 per month, in U.S. dollars while basic cost of living is \$175 (U.S.). The unemployment rate is 66 percent for women and 55 percent for all people of working age."



The Holmans shared this photo of themselves with the Director of the Cultural Center, Geraldo Hernandea Arias, second from right; Dr. Holman, on the right; Terri Holman, center; and Geraldo's wife and daughter to her right.

According to Terri, Sister Margie and Father Angel were working to break that chain of poverty and, in 1983, they developed a culture center where people of all ages could come for basic adult education the arts and vocational-technical training.

But in 2001, Sister Margie was diagnosed with a terminal illness, and Father Angel, too, died shortly after. Before she died, Sister Margie asked Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, to help keep the ministry going. Sister Helen asked Terri to join the board of "Friends of Batahola." Today, Terri is president.

"Herb and I are former students of the sisters," Terri says, and later she was the northern region director of development for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Medaille.

Just last February 27th, Terri and Herb took off with eight other adults for their annual visit with the people of Batahola. Herb, who works at the Stillwater (Minn.) Medical Group, said that this year, he invited his coworkers to help. "We needed over-the-counter

medicine for the students, faculty and staff of the Culture Center of Batahola Norte and toothbrushes, toothpaste and dental floss. "Not that the people don't have access to these products," Herb said. "They just can't afford them."

Today the center's annual enrollment is more than 1,200 students, 30 teachers and 12 staff. It offers classes in everything from cooking and sewing to English, basic education and vocational skills. "The center helps give people a hand up, out of poverty, through education, skills, leadership training and empowerment," says Terri. A

two-year program at the Center focuses on a "Gender and Generational Violence Prevention Program," with help from the CSJ's Generous Promise Grant Fund.

"One of the basic 'jewels' of the center is the arts program," she adds. "To have an opportunity to play in an orchestra, sing in a choir, participate in a theatre production or perform in folk dance has helped people learn valuable skills working as a team, expressing themselves with confidence and appreciating their national culture."

As a physician Herb does well-child checks on the scholarship students, ages 5 to 18. He is also trained in medical acupuncture and provides that service to the overworked, underpaid and extremely stressed staff.

"Every time we go to Batahola, Terri says, "we have to remember that the reason for going is not to 'do' something, but to 'be.' It's about standing in solidarity with people we now call our friends."



God's total giving teaches us how to live abundantly

We live in a world of grace. Some would say we live in a world of sin. Which is true? Both are, without a doubt. We choose to see the cup half full, not half empty. We base our choice on what we perceive to be God's intention for the world, manifest through the Incarnation of Jesus, his life and love poured out that we might live abundantly.

ow can we imagine the abundant life that Jesus redeemed for us? What exactly is the abundance of which Jesus speaks? Scripture is rife with examples of this abundance. From the sacred covenant God made with Abraham in the Hebrew Scriptures — unequal partners though we are — God gives away more than God receives. This giving pattern continues in the Incarnation, the Eucharist, the Death-Resurrection and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon humankind. God gives God's all.

How is it that we miss the message that we are to do likewise? This is Jesus' message repeatedly, whether he is preaching God's vision, restoring to wholeness, or inviting discipleship.

Theologian Sallie McFague gives us the metaphor of the world as "the Body of God." By extension, we imagine the universe as the Body of God. Body of Christ that we are, we contribute our differing gifts to God's project. Our congregation's Generous Promises (See page 2 of this issue.) call us 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. This inclusiveness and mutuality begin in each of the communities that claim our attention and engagement, and they reach out in ever widening circles of influence. Families, churches, community action groups are where the shift in the global culture has to begin. We are powerhouses of Spirit energy wherever we choose to engage.



Another of our Generous Promises calls us to take the risk to surrender our lives and resources to work for specific systemic change in collaboration with others that the hungers of the world might be fed. This perspective helps identify both spiritual and material hungers and energizes us for meeting urgent needs. What is the quantum leap we are being invited to take in living abundantly? I name it "becoming compassion," the most authentic face of our abundance.

"Give away more than you receive," is a saying I saw hung on the wall by a coffeepot in a retreat house. One of many sayings that hung there, it was the one that called to me each morning as I had a first cup of coffee — a conundrum to be sure, but one that resonates deeply within my Christian psyche. Very nearly half the world's population lives in dire poverty. How I respond comes down to each choice I make in each particular unrepeatable moment, my conscience dictating how much I need, what I buy, how much I save, what I give, how I vote, with whom I collaborate.

What keeps me from receiving the abundance God desires for me and letting it flow freely to others? Is it fear with a capital "F"? Fear that I won't have enough in my old age? Fear of others' opinions as I take a stand? Fear that I won't save enough to keep the wolf from the door? At a deeper level, is it, perhaps, fear that I don't have within myself the necessary resources to accept a challenge?

The antidotes to fear are trust and surrender. Jesus led the way. We are reminded of this in his pause between, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" and "Into your hands I commend my spirit." May we trustfully let God's abundance flow through us to be the blessing!

We all know people who "give it all away" — who let God's abundance and compassion flow through them. For me, it's God who poured God's self out

into all creation and has never stopped pouring — Jesus pouring himself out in becoming human and ultimately surrendering his human life in Eucharist, his Death-Resurrection and sending the Holy Spirit endlessly pouring energy into us and the fragile framework of our world. It's God, of course, but also so many holy ones I have come to know through a lifetime. Some are here beside me on the journey, others I know only through accounts of their deeds.

We are called to *the more*. We are called to be profligate in giving away what we have received. The CSJ charism invites us "to give to everyone, every time, every place." Not only to give, but to do so joyfully, in gentleness, peace and joy.



Sister Cynthia Sabathier, CSJ, (formerly Sister Maura) is a spiritual director and facilitator of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius at St. Joseph Spirituality Center in Baton Rouge. With her master's degrees in English and in ministry, she has used her lifelong passion of faith formation in a variety of ministries, including teaching, administration, initial and ongoing formation of religious women and pastoral work with laity. Her avocation is journaling and the arts.



Sages never try to store things up. The more they do for others, the more they have. The more they give to others, the greater their abundance.

Lao Tzu

his spring the Congregation of St. Joseph celebrates six years of existence. The Vatican approved this union of seven groups of Sisters of St. Joseph, effective March 19, 2007. As we look back over the past six years, we are grateful for the many blessings that have come to us, especially the new relationships and the support of knowing that many other sisters and associates share in our mission and ministry across the U.S. from Kansas to West Virginia, Minnesota to Louisiana — and beyond

the U.S. to Japan, Nicaragua and Tanzania — where our sisters and associates serve. We have made many new friends in our sponsored ministries, among our donors, and with our collaborators. As we strive to be the "Congregation of the Great Love of God," we experience this love given and received in so many ways!

Ever since the dreaming and planning for the new congregation began ten years ago, we have worked to bring all of our resources — human and material — into

one abundant resource of energy and blessing for the world. While we have paid careful attention to building a sound fiscal structure to manage our material resources, and have put in place staff, facilities and best practices to care for our members, both retired and active, we have made a conscious choice to focus on our commitment to mission – our purpose for coming together.

We encourage and assist those who desire to follow Christ more closely, and we work to alleviate the conditions which cause poverty, suffering, and oppression.

> Our mission as Sisters of Saint 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 It is rooted in the mission of Christ, the same mission which continually unfolds in his Church: "that all may be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you: I pray that they may be one in us." (John 17:21)

> To bring about this unity, we search out and undertake whatever works may best meet needs and show forth the glory of God. We encourage and assist those who desire to follow Christ more closely, and we work to alleviate the conditions which cause poverty, suffering, and oppression. (Provisional Constitution)

While observers may note our apparent diminishment - older and fewer members mirroring a decline in religious congregations across the country - we do not choose to focus our attention there. We see many

unmet needs and work to find ways to meet them. At its inaugural chapter in 2007, the new congregation, recognizing its call to incarnate its mission and charism in the world in fidelity to God's call in the Gospel, committed itself to four Generous Promises. (See page 2 of this issue.)

We promised "to surrender our lives and resources to work for specific systemic change in collaboration with others that the hungers of the world might be fed." In addition to the sisters and associates who serve in ministries that help to "feed the hungers of the world," we have dedicated significant financial resources to help other organizations whose work is an extension of our own. For example, we established the Generous Promise Grant Fund to support endeavors consistent with our mission. In fiscal year 2011, we gave grants totaling more than \$500,000 for projects such as these:

- We have committed funds to Ascension Global Health Partners, to work on projects such as an initiative to address the current water delivery system and the lack of reliably clean water in Guatemala.
- We are collaborating with the U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph to fund the work of Mission Haiti, a nonprofit organization sponsored by a Minneapolis parish. We pledged tuition for girls in both elementary and secondary school, funds for teacher certification classes and help with building a secondary school.
- We are working with the architectural firm of Waggonner and Ball to explore a new use for our post-Katrina vacant Mirabeau property in New Orleans as a watershed project, as part of a strategy to save large areas of New Orleans from future flooding.

As we plan for our future as a congregation, we are conscious of our greatest resource – our members. Our Leadership Development Program, which involves a great commitment of time and significant finances, is designed to enhance the leadership skills of our younger members to better prepare them for service to the dear neighbor wherever they minister.

We also realize we need to assess our Center buildings and property to determine how much space we will need to house our retired members and provide for their quality of life. In our "Neighboring aNew" initiative, we are exploring these needs as well as other possible uses of our buildings and property for ministries that are aligned with our Generous Promises. We are committed "to claim our oneness with Earth and to take steps to strengthen, heal, and renew the face of Earth," so we are conscientious about the carbon footprint of our buildings. We have been blessed with buildings and land that have been "holy ground" for us; we want to use these resources wisely for the common good.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the rich fool. A rich man, whose land produced a bountiful harvest, built larger barns to accommodate the bounty, and said to himself, "You have so many good things stored up for many years. Rest, eat, drink, be merry!" But God said, "You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?" Jesus ends the story by saying, "Thus will it be for [those] who store up treasure for [themselves] but are not rich in what matters to God." (Luke 12)



Discerning how to use the congregation's resources wisely meant that, in December, 2012, it was time to thank God for all the blessings the congregation had in Tipton, Ind., call future blessings on the building and grounds, and relocate some of our sisters to the Nazareth Center, Kalamazoo, Mich. Here, sisters from Tipton and Nazareth planted jonquils at Nazareth, a gift from the CSJ leadership team, covering the bulbs with holy ground brought from St. Joseph Center in Tipton.

Thanks to careful spending, many sisters working and ministering well beyond retirement age, and the generosity of our donors and friends, our congregation has indeed been blessed with bountiful harvests over many years. Conscious of Jesus' Gospel invitation to share from our abundance, we continue to seek ways to bring God's compassion to our world today. •



Sister Jeanne Cmolik, CSJ, is a member of the Congregation Leadership Team. She has ministered in elementary schools, high school, and parishes in the Cleveland area. She served the former Cleveland congregation in leadership and in work with new members.



"Abundance - My Cup Runneth Over", by Sandy Tracey ©. To view more, go to http://www.traceypaintingaday.blogspot.com.

Our dear Sister Eleanor Bernstein, CSJ, who entered eternal life just one year ago, observed in our congregation Lenten booklet, "Springtime of the Soul," that "For all of us called to discipleship and service — nursing, teaching, social advocacy, peace-making, administration, research — the call is always the same: to choose life. In this complex and confused world, where the darkness of human nature increasingly snatches away human dignity, natural resources, means of livelihood and peace and security, people who are vulnerable are the victims. How is what I do a way of choosing life for them?"

Sr. Eleanor's question helps us to visualize the work of our peace and justice team and committees. We work to promote life through respecting and recognizing the dignity of all people and our living planet, Earth. We work to promote the common good through collaboration with others as a voice for those who are vulnerable.

The Congregation of St. Joseph is rooted in a strong vision of love of God and love of the *dear neighbor*, without distinction. Through our work we hope to promote the dream of an interdependent society, where love and compassion form the basis of relationships and action. In our interdependence we discover the abundance of life in the common good.

As we considered the hungers of the world today, the peace and justice team identified these issues the death penalty, human trafficking, socially responsible investment, women, the environment, and immigration — as areas inviting a response for life and the common good.

Migration is at the heart of our faith story. Reflecting on the early life of the Holy Family, we know that Jesus began his earthly journey as a migrant and displaced person, having been born far from home and having to flee with his family as a refugee. In his public ministry, Jesus is a preacher on the road with nowhere to lay his head. (Luke 9:58)

Migration has always been part of the human story, but with globalization, more people are on the move than ever before. The United Nations estimates that more than 200 million people are living away from their homelands. Much of our surrounding culture and political discourse displays fearful and disdainful attitudes towards new immigrants. Our congregation envisions a more compassionate and welcoming relationship with global neighbors who migrate into our midst for many valid reasons. Our faith assures us that each person is created in the image and likeness of God and has inherent dignity.



Sister Mary Frances Harrington, CSJ, has been instrumental in mentoring to the Lost Boys of the Sudan since they first arrived in Cleveland in 2001. She is seen here with Nicodemus, one of the "lost boys" who later became a U.S. citizen.

At the Cleveland Center, Sister Mary Frances Harrington, CSJ, long held the vision of caring for all neighbors in need and was the first to respond when Catholic Charities asked for help in resettling twentyeight refugees known as the "Lost Boys of Sudan" in 2001.

These young men were displaced during the second Sudanese Civil War. They were boys of six or seven when their villages were attacked by government forces. They set out on foot to survive the attack and traveled thousands of miles through harsh terrain over several years before being settled in a refugee camp in Kenya. They spent nearly nine years in Kenya before coming to the U.S. In 2001, 3,800 Lost Boys arrived in the United States with no experience of the amenities of the modern world. They learned quickly and today they are working, going to school, having families, and are productive citizens contributing to the common good of our communities.

They dreamed of helping the people of the villages they fled from as small children. Isaac Mabior Malong, one of the Cleveland Lost Boys returned to his village of Duluit Bol in Southern Sudan, Africa, in 2006 to visit his family. While he was glad to see his family again, he was greatly concerned about their suffering from the lack of basic needs, including clean drinking water.

When Isaac returned to Cleveland, he asked for help getting the essential life element — water — to his village. Sr. Mary Frances formed a group along with Isaac to have wells dug in the villages of the Lost Boys. The project was named "Isaac's Wells," and to date it has dug twelve wells in Southern Sudan. They are now planning wells for each of the villages of the Lost Boys living in Cleveland.

The story of Isaac's Wells illustrates a concern for the common good of the community locally and globally. El Salvador Archbishop Oscar Romero envisioned: "Everyone can contribute much that is good, and in that way trust is achieved. The common good will not be attained by excluding people. We can't



A mother and child get water from one of the new wells drilled in their village in Southern Sudan, Africa, which was sponsored by Isaac's Wells.

enrich the common good of our country by driving out those we don't care for. ... Thus, with all contributing, all can build the beautiful structure of the common good, the good that we construct together and that creates conditions of kindness, of trust, of freedom, of peace." (Oscar Romero, July 10, 1977 from a collection of his homilies, "The Violence of Love," by James Brockman.)

Today we continue to hear the cries of the migrants in our midst, who search for a place to call home. The challenges of immigration in our nation have no easy answers. Becoming aware of the complexity of each dimension - human, political and economic - can give direction to a response rooted in our faith tradition and the common good.

The Catholic Church's rich heritage as an immigrant church offers a vision for dialogue on the issue of immigration reform grounded in a moral stance that flows from

scriptural and Catholic teaching based on the sanctity and dignity of life.

Our sisters and associates throughout the congregation have been active in the hubs of conversation about immigration. They can be found joining with parish efforts in solidarity with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Justice for Immigrants Campaign, standing with immigrants at local detention centers and partnering with faith-based advocacy groups. Through their efforts our members promote life, dignity and actions which encourage a welcoming community and comprehensive immigration reform.

We recognize Scripture's injunction: "From those who have been given much, much will be expected in return." (Luke 12:48) We are blessed with a wealth of opportunities and resources. One of the primary ways we share our resources for the common good and systemic change is through socially responsible investment.

The congregation belongs to the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR). As members of ICCR, we work with faith-based groups to partner as shareholders in using our resources for systemic change. Systemic change happens at one level when corporations adopt policies which protect the environment, protect worker rights, respect community interests, and provide for fairness in wages and accountability for corporate practices and transparency.

We have joined with other shareholders in inviting the Hershey Company to certify its sources of chocolate from West Africa. Raytheon, a Department of Defense contractor has, over the past five years, addressed sustainability issues, ethics issues,

and most recently, human rights issues including human trafficking.

As we do this work we know that we are serving the common good when workers in the Congo, or Haiti, or West Virginia are treated with respect and justice. Then, all of society benefits.

Through these and other partnerships we hope to build Archbishop Romero's "beautiful structure of the common good, the good that we construct together, and that creates conditions of kindness, of trust, of freedom, of peace."

For more information on

- Immigration resources: See the *Justice for Immigrants website:* www.justiceforimmigrants.org.
- Water: see the article by Ginny Jones "Water is becoming Blue Gold" from the Fall 2011 issue of imagineONE: www.csjoseph.org . In the left-hand column, click on publications, then imagineONE. On the right, click on Fall/Winter 2011 and scroll down to the article.



Sister Marilyn Nickol, CSJ, has been a Sister of St. Joseph for 35 years, ministering as a social worker and pastoral minister in Northeast Ohio. She presently serves as a member of the congregation's justice team and as the senior care coordinator for Humility of Mary Housing.



While most of us do not fall into the category of hoarding, all of us face the cultural tug-of-war between scarcity and abundance.

According to theologian Walter Brueggemann in his article, "The Liturgy of Abundance, the Myth of Scarcity" ("Christian Century," March 24-31, 1999) as we were growing wealthier, money became a kind of narcotic for us. We hardly noticed our own prosperity or the poverty of so many others. The great contradiction was that we had more money and less generosity — less public money for the needy, less charity for the neighbor.

Scarcity thinking tends to makes us reactive. If there is not enough to go around, then I must get my fair share, even if others get nothing. This not-enough belief spills over into the workplace, inviting the building of "silos" that isolate and divide, causing us to feel threatened when someone else does well. Is my own job now on the line? Scarcity thinking shows up in public program cuts and foreign policy decisions. It tells the fearful story of me instead of proclaiming the gospel story of we.

Certainly, Jesus teaches us that another name for God is abundance. In John 10:10, Jesus says, "I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly." It would surely seem that American culture has focused on the abundance part of this promise. We are deeply invested in our hunger for more. Consumerism preys upon our scarcity mentality: that there isn't really enough to go around, and if we don't act now, we might not get our fair share.

Remember how shocked we were last November when Black Friday invaded Thanksgiving Day? For years, this traditional start to holiday buying had seen retailers opening their doors earlier and earlier, but 2012 marked the first time national chains opened for business on Thanksgiving Day itself, stealing from what is generally seen as family time. The public was outraged ... and then went shopping. The non-shoppers among us simply consumed differently. Perhaps we surfed the web for hours, or vegged out on the sofa watching football, or ate one more piece of pie. None of these things are bad in and of themselves. The question is, what is the hunger driving our need for more? What is the longing we are really looking for? What is the object of our ever present longing?

The abundance that Jesus hoped for us was an abundance of life. I remember a life-changing conversation I had with my youngest brother when he was in his late 30s, dying from cancer. He spoke with sadness and longing about all the time he had spent focusing on his work, sacrificing summer vacations with his young family. He mustered the energy to take a trip with them during that last summer before he died. "Don't put off what really makes you happy," he urged me. Focus on what makes your life more abundant, he might as well have said. It was his greatest gift to me.

Scarcity and abundance are paradoxes. We are tempted to believe that having more will leave us feeling full and satisfied; instead, we feel empty and reach for more. Simplicity (having and making do with less) initially looks like scarcity; lived faithfully, it grows into the richness of abundance. Simplicity teaches us that what we think we need and desire is often covering up another yearning. "My heart will not rest until it rests in you, my God," said St. Augustine.

Living from a scarcity mentality leaves us feeling scared and grasping-after. Paradoxically, living from a place of simple abundance leaves us feeling blessed, secure, and generous. This is our counter-cultural challenge as 21st century Christians: to reprogram ourselves so that we live abundant lives from the inside out. The gospel power of Jesus is not logical, or easy, or popular. It challenges us to believe that 5,000 hungry people can all be fed with a few loaves and fishes. That sharing what we have and who we are is enough — and can change the world. That even God, as the Creation story says, stepped back from the abundance of Creation, not to obsess about what more could be made, but to pause and reflect on what was. And it was good.



Sister Judith Minear, CSJ, works with the Mission Advancement Department for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph as social media manager. She recently completed training as a spiritual director through the Haden Institute in North Carolina. Her background includes 17 years as a Catholic school principal and Diocesan Superintendent, hospital chaplaincy, and ministry with the CSJ Vocations Team for nine years.



The congregation's ministries demonstrate service to the dear neighbor in all stages of life. From left to right: Holy Family Child Care and Development Center in Wheeling, W.Va., St. Joseph's Academy in Baton Rough, La., and Wheeling Hospital in Wheeling, W.Va.

ABUNDANT LOVE ENABLES all stages of life

by Mary Ellen Loch, CSJ, LMSW

Scripture reminds us that life began when the Spirit hovered over the Earth and God breathed life into the human race – like a mother watching over her child, insuring that her child was safe. Every mother assumes care for her child, providing food, clothing, education, love and guidance. Mothers never stop thinking that their child is their "little one" always needing them, even when the child becomes an adult, even when their child makes serious mistakes in life. They love their child unconditionally.

On a far greater scale, God loves each of us abundantly and compassionately. That's why, when the Sisters of St. Joseph first became a congregation in Le Puy, France, in 1650, our founder Father Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ, made clear that the Sisters of St. Joseph were to be known as "the Congregation of the Great Love of God." We were to totally commit ourselves to serving the needs of the dear neighbor in all ways that we could, especially for people suffering in poverty.

Speaking at a CSJ Federation event in the 1970s, Father Nepper, SJ, described how Father Medaille and our first sisters saw the world as broken, divided and poor. He told us that Sisters of St. Joseph were women "whose eyes were open on a world both miserable and sinful, but worked on by the Holy Spirit, whose ears were

attentive to the suffering of the world ... and our sleeves were rolled up for ministry without excluding the more humble, the less pleasing, less noticeable. ..." (from "Portrait of a Sister of St. Joseph" by Father Nepper, SJ)

Jesus saw all people as one with him, children of God, made in God's image, to be reverenced and respected, and he told us that the world's poor and vulnerable ones were especially dear to God's heart. We all have the privilege of serving with Jesus, seeing the world and all people as he did. Members of the Congregation of St. Joseph are committed to Jesus and stand in solidarity with him in our efforts to see that all may have life and have it more abundantly.



Sister Jackie Goodin, CSJ, or Sister "Kiazi" (which means "potato head"), as the girls affectionately call her, with Sophia and Neema, two residents of St. Joseph Hostel in Tanzania, Africa.

People have asked how our congregation is pro-life (against abortion) and why we have not focused on this in our work. In fact, our Leadership commissioned our Peace and Justice team to write a statement of the congregation's position on life that our members subsequently approved and which, appears on page 17 of this issue.

It includes this understanding "We reverence all aspects of God's creation ... and seek to eliminate whatever hinders the continuance of life ... and work to eliminate the causes of poverty, war, racism, etc."

We know that many of God's children are vulnerable from the beginning of their lives to the end. We also know that care of our Earth affects us all and contributes to our abundance of life and to life itself. The late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin stated it well when he reminded us that in our Catholic faith, we must stand for a consistent ethic of life,* holding each person sacred from womb to tomb. The right to life and quality of life are equally important, as one is intrinsically linked to the other.

Our congregational ministries flow from this mission for life. They include health care for pregnant mothers and children to services for struggling families and individuals. We established services to offer other alternatives to abortion, such as counseling, adoption services, a home for pregnant teens and support shelters for women at risk of abuse. At the later stages of life, we have programs that enable seniors to stay in their homes and services for those who need greater care. Another major focus throughout our Congregation has been education, which is directly linked to selfdetermination, improved health, social and economic status, as well as to positive health outcomes for mothers and children. We serve the soul through our spiritual and pastoral ministries and Ministry of the Arts.

Today, Dear Neighbor Ministries, ABLE Families, and Taller de José (Joseph's Workshop) give assistance to immigrants and people living in poverty, enabling them to begin to rise out of poverty. We also serve in developing countries, such as Tanzania, Nicaragua and Nigeria and sponsor youth groups in service of the poor. Our Peace and Justice groups work with government bodies to change unjust systems, such as our Ministry to End the Death Penalty (MADP), lobbying on issues such as the environment and immigration, and educating people about what they can do to help end the sex and labor trafficking of women, children and men.

The need is great. And when poor and vulnerable people ask, "How much do you love me," we roll up our sleeves, stretch out our arms and say, "this much and more.

*You can read Cardinal Bernardin's presentation online at http://archives. archchicago.org/jcbhome.htm . Click on "List of Selected Talks," scroll down and click on "A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American-Catholic Dialogue."



Sister Mary Ellen Loch, CSJ, LMSW, was educated in formation at St. Louis University and has served in the ministries of spiritual formation and leadership, as a counselor in a shelter for abused women and presently on the Peace and Justice team for the Congregation of St. Joseph. *She also does spiritual direction* and retreat ministries with the Magnificat Center in Wichita, Kan.

Reflection

Plenitude

by Sister Christine L. Parks, CSJ

I've been wondering lately about fullness...about abundance, listening to those who pace and haggle in corridors of excess. Do the haves always get more? The have-nots always lose what little they have? As if those were our only choices. When did we decide there isn't enough for all? When did enough inflate beyond the reach of so many?

I'm thinking about oak trees and galaxies — the prodigality of those who do not grasp their wealth in closed fists, who shed stars and acorns freely giving light and sustenance bestowing bounty without hesitance.

They never count the cost and still, there is — enough.



"Abundance Tree", by Kristalina Steininger. To learn how to paint your own abundance tree, log on to Kristalina's website at http://www.ownawesome.com/diy-paint-your-own-abundance-tree/



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WOMENS CATHOLIC SISTERS IN AMERICA

Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America is a documentary that narrates the virtually untold story of women who exercised leadership at a time when few women enjoyed such possibilities Theirs is a story of quiet courage during many dramatic moments in U.S. history. Discover more about these innovative women who helped shape the nation's social, cultural and spiritual landscape. It includes videos from the traveling Women & Spirit exhibit, which showed at the Smithsonian, Ellis Island and other noted museums throughout the country.

You can order this 56-minute DVD online at **www.lcwr.org** or call Carol Glidden at 301-588-4955. Proceeds from the sale of the DVD will support the mission of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). The Sisters on our leadership team are members of LCWR.

A DOCUMENTARY NARRATED BY COKIE ROBERTS

PRESENTED BY THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

