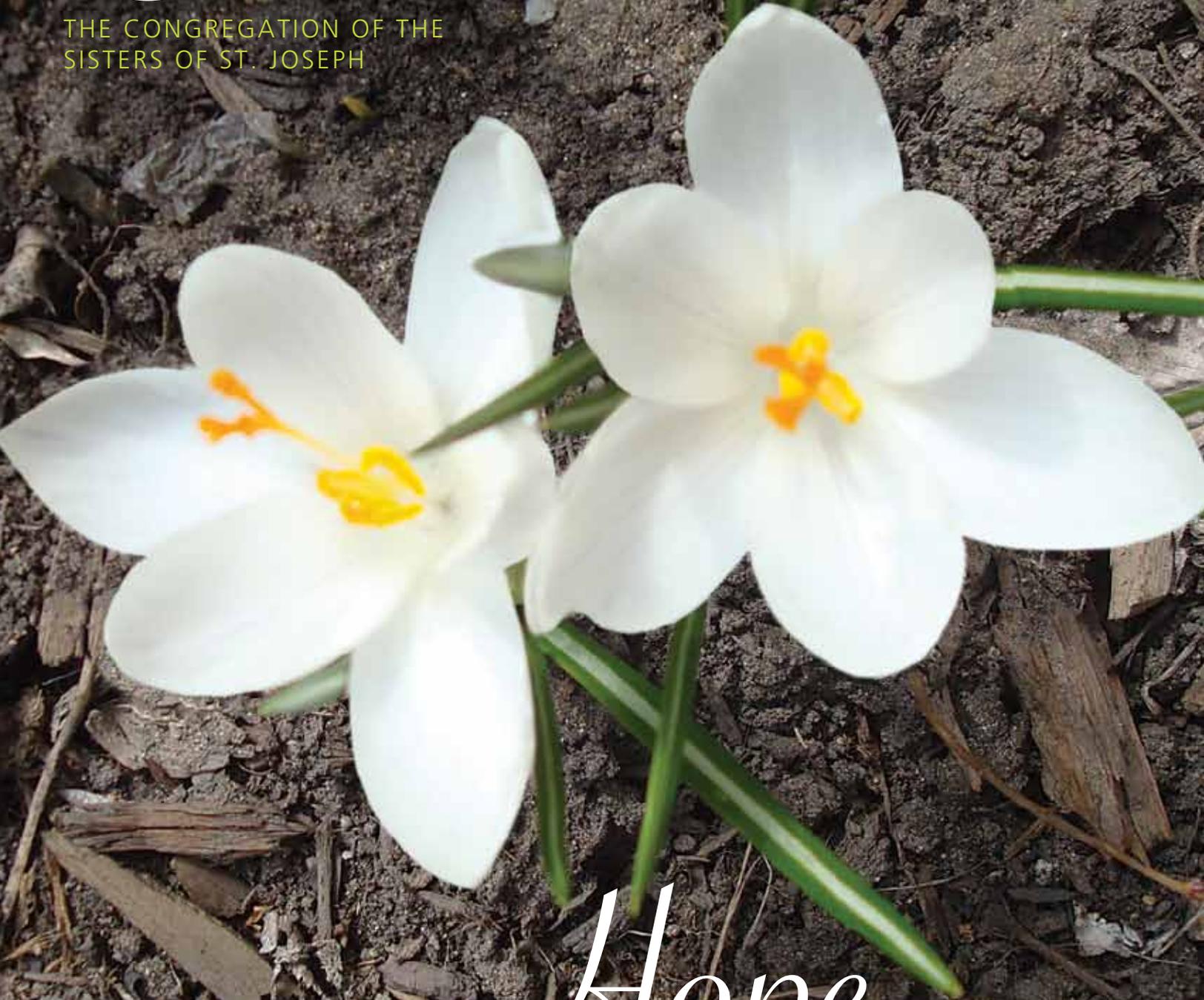


SPRING/SUMMER 2014 | VOL. 6 | NO. 1

*imagine*  
**ONE**

THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH



*Hope*  
**RISING**

*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.

- ⊕ 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 through the use of recycled paper manufactured by windpower and printed using soy- and vegetable-based inks.



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#### On the cover:

From barren earth left by forgotten snows come spring's first delicate signs of resurrection and hope. The phenomenon brings truth to the age-old saying that, "Hope springs eternal."

*Photograph by Kathy Sherman, CSJ; courtesy of Ministry of the Arts.*

*imagine*  
**ONE**



*Photo by Dermot Roantree, Irish Jesuit Provincialate*

*Photographer Dermot Roantree told us, "It was a great pleasure for me to shadow Sister Helen (Prejean) with my camera during the conference" in Galway, Ireland. "I think everyone who was there will long remember her warmth, her wisdom and her wit." Here, Sister Helen (r.) greets Anthuanette Hidalgo.*

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## Sister Rita Ann reflects on...



### *Hope rising*

Each and every day we can expect to be surprised, gifted, challenged and transformed through our belief in God's Great Love pulsing through every soul and all creation. And, each and every day we are called to embody the optimism of God's love, to live fully, and to bring hope to those who need it most.

Hope names the way in which the Congregation of St. Joseph embraces 2014 and future years. As the theme of this issue of *imagineOne*, Hope Rising gives voice to some of the places and ways that hope is happening through us, among us and around us.

In Hope, at the end of last year, four hundred and seventy sisters affirmed our congregation's Directional Statement, which was developed as part of our Neighboring aNew process to move us through the next ten years of exploring, planning and implementing strategies for each of our Centers that enhance our mission and engagement in ministry; provide living spaces that enhance the lives of sisters and support our needs for the future; actively promote our commitment to earth and all creation; and enable us to right size our buildings and properties to better match our current and future needs.

In Hope, the congregation is partnering with many people and ministries who are meeting the basic human needs of our *dear neighbors* and who with intention, are working to change the systems and practices that cause inequality, separation and division among us.

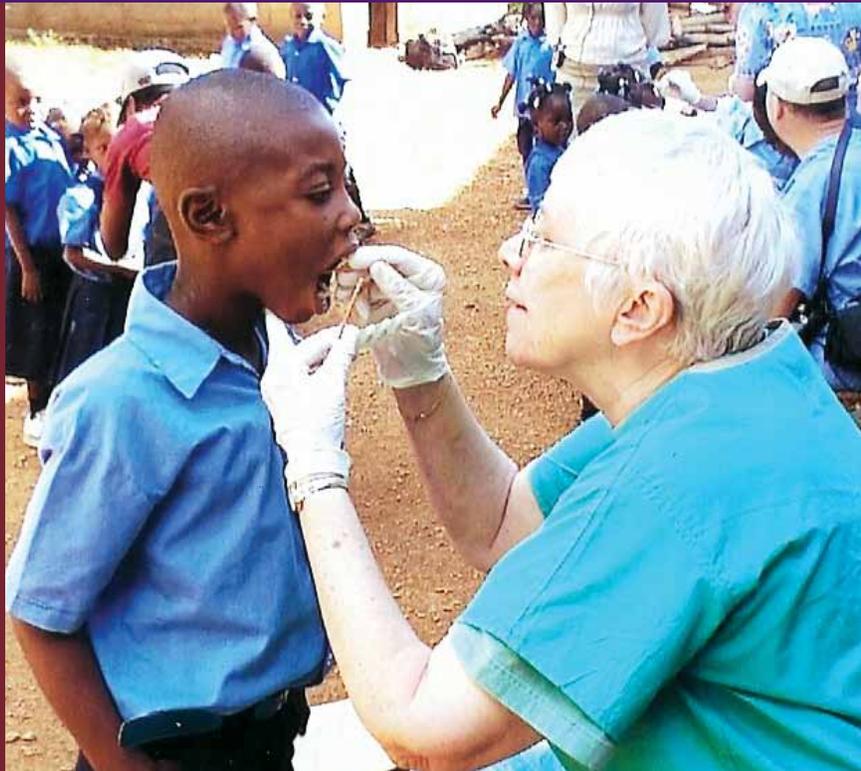
Yes, hope names the way the Congregation of St. Joseph embraces 2014 and beyond! And we invite hope to be a way for all on the journey with us. As ONE, let us take hold of hope's hand.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rita Ann Teichman, CSJ". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Rita Ann Teichman, CSJ  
Congregation of St. Joseph Leadership Team

# Twin parishes create hope

CSJ Sister Marlene Schemmel recently returned from her sixth trip to Haiti in 18 years. Although she's taken on other ministries since she first visited there, she still cares about St. Mary Magdalene parishioners in Duchity, Haiti, who have made solid progress developing their community and their sense of community.



*Sister Marlene gives a fluoride treatment to a child from the orphanage*

In 1995, while serving as a pastoral associate at St. Thomas the Apostle parish in Naperville, Ill., Sister Marlene visited Haiti where she met an American woman, Theresa Patterson, who had a dream to “twin” some 400 U.S. parishes with parishes throughout Haiti. Theresa asked Marlene to invite her parish to twin with St. Mary Magdalene parish, and the people of St. Thomas didn't hesitate.

“Duchity,” Marlene described, “is in a mountainous region of Haiti southwest of Port au Prince.” It has about 2,000 people and the pastor also serves eight so-called “chapels” scattered throughout the rugged terrain.

In the 18 years since the two parishes twinned, together they built a medical clinic, a dental clinic, an elementary school, a high school, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help orphanage, which is now building an addition. Today, these are staffed primarily by local people. They've also started building a church.

All told, some 375 St. Thomas parishioners visited Duchity, pitching in with hard work, building, performing medical and dental tasks — whatever needed to be done all the while they were there.

“What made the difference,” Marlene is convinced, is that “the people of Duchity now have a genuine sense of community among themselves and with St. Thomas people.”

Other differences she's noticed over the 18 years:

- Many people have cell phones, but they have to go to a central place and pay to recharge them.
- More children are learning English for employment opportunities.
- They now have electricity for four hours per day.
- The teachers in the schools are better trained for better standards of learning.
- Two students from Duchity have come to the states for high school studies and have gone on to study at the college level.
- The water supply and sanitation system have been improved.

“The whole emphasis now,” according to Marlene, “is for the people of Duchity to become enabled and self-sustaining. St. Thomas parishioners and I will continue to offer what help we can, but the people of Duchity know their future is in their own vision and own determination.”

Presently, Marlene is engaged with organizations that support workers for fair wages, benefits and safe workplaces. She volunteers at a domestic shelter weekly and is a member of an organization that offers therapeutic music programs that instill dignity and spiritual healing for homeless and underserved women and children in the Chicagoland area. ●

# Congregation awards grants that enable people to sustain *hope*



Mr. Tony Evans waxes and polishes the floors at First Unitarian Church, one of Cooperative Janitorial Services' many customers. He is also Chair of the Board of the co-op.

Sister Judith Ann Teufel, CSJ, director of the congregation's Generous Promise Grant Fund, makes an indisputable point about the real, active and widespread presence of hope in the world:

*"In this era where the media sensationalize bad news, we are so blessed to be connected with so many people who are quietly, and with intentionality, making good news of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, freeing prisoners and, most frequently, quietly exerting influences to change the systems that cause poverty, imprisonment or inequality of any kind."*

Sister Judith Ann knows so many people like that – like the latest grant recipients the congregation announced in October: the 17 organizations and community projects presented here. To be eligible for grants, the recipients had to have a current or previous connection with the congregation and hold the promise to actualize one of the following Generous Promises values:

- Promote systemic change (focusing on issues of human rights and basic human needs);
- Strengthen/heal the earth (sustain Earth's resources)
- Develop a culture of inclusivity and mutuality (shifting from the prevailing global culture of institutionalized power and privilege);
- Develop leaders who will bring a commitment and competence to the issues of a global family.

"What a privilege for us to have some small hand in these endeavors, straining toward a world view where all have what they need and are treated with justice and dignity," Sister Judith Ann concludes. "May we continue to support one another with our consciousness and our prayer, that each day, together, we move our world one step closer to the reign of God."

## HOW THREE NONPROFITS PLANT SEEDS OF HOPE

Among the grant recipients announced in October, here are three whose programs focus on human rights and basic human needs in sustainable ways to bring hope for and with the *dear neighbor*.

### **Interfaith Business Builders, Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio**

Founded by Cincinnati's faith community in 1983, Interfaith Business Builders, Inc., promotes systemic change by empowering people in low income communities to develop cooperative business ownership and create jobs. Sister Joan Hartlaub, CSJ, sponsored its application for a grant.

According to Executive Director of Interfaith Business Builders, Inc., Carl Raymond West, "Disinvestment, unemployment and vacant storefronts devastate city neighborhoods. Core low-income communities must proactively rebuild their own communities regardless of corporate and government involvement." The organization applied for a grant to implement its strategic



*Kansas State Representative Louis Ruiz and Governor Sam Brownback meet with Sunflower leaders.*



*Guardian Finance and Advocacy Services held a "Pizza and Piggy Banks" event to introduce the credit union to the neighborhood and reinforce the importance of savings to children.*

plan. "We know co-ops rebuild our community. Now we need to create more of them," he insists.

Examples of two co-ops Interfaith Business Builders, Inc. helped establish are Cooperative Janitorial Service, founded in 1995; and late last year, it opened Community Blend, a fair trade coffee shop. Today, the janitorial co-op has 15 owner-operators and 27 commercial janitorial clients. The average member has been with the co-op almost five years earning \$10.40 per hour with paid holidays and profit sharing. Community Blend coffee shop will also serve as an education center to teach cooperative community investment.

**Sunflower Community Action (SCA), Wichita, Kan.**

Sister Mary Ellen Loch, CSJ, sponsored the application for a grant to give practical assistance to future leaders and to counter public misinformation about immigrants. "Kansas's undocumented workers struggle to support their families in an environment that often misrepresents and mistreats them," she explained. "They experience wage theft, unsafe workplaces and deportations that tear their families apart."

Currently the center refers workers to appropriate social service agencies for meeting immediate needs. It connects others with federal labor departments or skilled attorneys who have recovered an average of \$300,000 per year in the past five years.

SCA's campaign against misinformation will make it easier to organize immigrants and their allies to defeat anti-immigrant bills in the Kansas legislature, to defend its in-state tuition law, to promote a bill that will hold accountable employers who repeatedly fail

to pay workers their full wages and to win/enact national reform.

**Guardian Finance and Advocacy Services, Kalamazoo, Mich.**

Poor people pay more for everything, particularly for loans and basic financial services. In Kalamazoo, payday lenders can legally charge up to 400 percent interest. Check cashing and rent-to-own businesses charge exorbitant fees. Families who are perpetually in debt pay inflated interest and fees on loans end up trapped in debt and see no hope for the future. The resulting financial stress has devastating effects on individuals, families and community health. It is the most common cause of domestic violence. It can impair children's academic success and it erodes the social fabric of neighborhoods and entire cities.

Sister Kathleen (Kit) Kaiser, CSJ, sponsored Guardian Finance and Advocacy Services's application for a grant to help establish the Community Promise Credit Union to provide members with the tools they need to manage money and empower them to take control of their lives.

Some of the tools include: alternatives to payday loans; direct deposit of paychecks and government checks; budget counseling when applying for a loan and referrals to community partners for unmet needs; credit-building loans, emergency loans and auto loans; savings accounts insured by the National Credit Union Administration; financial education in the local elementary schools; and, outreach programs at medical facilities where more than 40,000 patients receive medical services. ●

## ADDITIONAL 2014 GENEROUS PROMISE GRANT FUND RECIPIENTS

**Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling, W. Va.** Provides students with a collaborative learning model to practice skills on adult and infant patient simulators; conduct real-life clinical scenarios; develop medical judgment; and learn how to collaborate across the fields of: premed, nursing, physical therapy, nuclear medicine, respiratory therapy and athletic training.

**St. Luke N.E.W. Life Center, Inc., Flint, Mich.** Supports continued partnership with the State of Michigan to replicate the Center's process with other cities in the state to create jobs and thereby reduce violence in cities.

**Cleveland Housing Network, Cleveland, Ohio.** Funds a piloting method to remove barriers and enable families caught in the cycle of poverty to improve their economic conditions.

**Mission Haiti, Inc. - Minneapolis, Minn.** Enables a Minneapolis parish to fully optimize its ministry in Haiti that is growing and producing crops, providing jobs and food for the community and empowering women in the farming business to lessen dependence on imported food.

**Tutweiller Community Education Center, Tutweiller, Miss.** Supports a safe, drug-free place in an impoverished rural area where value-based programs are offered for children and teens that will impact their lives in a positive way, both now and in the future.

**Arise Chicago, Chicago, Ill.** Supports action to create and/or change city and state policies to better serve working women, especially immigrants who face additional levels of exploitation on

the job, including lower wages, discrimination, harassment and lack of flexibility needed for family care.

**Shrine Catholic High School, Detroit, Mich.** Supports the school's Nicaragua Immersion Trip for students to become future leaders who have a global vision and acceptance – even celebration – of our differences around the globe, and who will help to restore the planet to a state of harmony and balance.

**Harmony, Hope & Healing (HHH), Chicago, Ill.** Enables HHH to collaborate with an increasing number of social service agencies to offer participants a means to become emotionally and spiritually well-integrated individuals, to build healthy families and, ultimately, to contribute to better communities.

**Friends of Batahola, Baton Rouge, La.** Supports the next stage in developing a sustainable model for working with groups of adult and adolescent women and men in Nicaragua to transform individual practices and change cultural patterns that normalize gender-based violence.

**Women's Empowerment Project) Programa Velasco** Supports efforts to reduce the effects of gender inequality and the marginalization of women in El Salvador so women will gain the tools to become more self-directive, become role models of gender equality for their children and, ultimately, help to support their families economically.

**United Methodist Open Door, Inc., Wichita, Kan.** Supports the "Bridges out of Poverty" program to address both the personal barriers as well as systemic issues that cause poverty.

**Providence House, Cleveland** Proposes a new program (The Prentiss Wellness Nursery) to address the safety of children up to age 10 who are medically discharged with minor medical needs into an appropriate setting with intensive family support services. It is designed to reduce foster care placements and hospital stays and readmissions and to increase caregiver capacity and improve family stability long term.

**Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center, Cincinnati** Networks with other Ohio and national groups to educate the public and lawmakers about the injustices of capital punishment by putting a human face on executions, with a goal of abolishing the death penalty in Ohio. Also provides pastoral support for families of death row inmates in a model replicable in other death penalty states.

**ERACCE, Kalamazoo, Mich.** Enables the Latino and black communities of southwest Michigan to develop antiracist trust relationships and accountability that will help them create significant systemic transformation, including higher high school graduation rates, an increase in college readiness among black and brown youth, a decrease in Latino infant mortality rates, a decrease in youth violence and increases in economic stability, income, generational wealth and the quality of life.

*Grant recipients must have a 501 (c)3 or equivalent status, and evidence of a current or historical connection with the Congregation through a sister or associate sponsor.*



*Following a congratulatory message that Sister Christine Parks, CSJ, (far right) gave in Japanese, Sister Hostia reflected on the statue of the Holy Family Sisters Christine and Jeannie Masterson, CSJ, brought as an anniversary gift.*

## Guests bring respect and gratitude for the *50th Anniversary* of medical center in Japan

The spiritual nature of relationships is what makes the 50th Anniversary of our congregation's St. Joseph Medical Welfare Center in Kyoto, Japan, an especially important celebration.

The second of three anniversary events invited public and church officials, board members and major donors to a ceremony and formal dinner on February 11th in recognition of the medical center's unique ties to the area and the country. Their regard for Sister Hostia Horike, CSJ, who started work as a nurse there the day the hospital was founded in 1963, and today is president, certainly swelled the attendance.

Working in cooperation with the Diocese of Kyoto's Catholic Caritas Corporation in 1963, one of our founding congregations, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wichita, established an institution for children with physical handicaps in Kyoto, Japan, the first, and still the only, such institution in Kyoto. St. Joseph Welfare Medical Center's 50-year practice and history of serving children and adults with serious physical disabilities or with mental retardation have long been recognized and appreciated by the Japanese people.

In December, Sister Hostia hosted an anniversary celebration for all employees and, in April, the medical center will hold an event for the public featuring inspirational speaker and author Sister Kazuko Wantanabe, a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur who is chairperson of the board of trustees of Notre Dame Seishin College in Japan. Sister Wantanabe is well known through her book, "Bloom Where God has Planted You," which became a million copy seller.

At the 50-year mark, the celebrations reflect a lifetime of Sister Hostia's selfless dedication to her young patients, to St. Joseph Welfare Medical Center and to our congregation. This month, the center's director will retire and a new one who is Catholic and a board member has been named to fill the position. Eventually, when Sister Hostia is ready, the new director will assume the position of president. She will continue to serve as an officer of the board indefinitely. ●

## New sister extends the hope of the first *Sisters of St. Joseph*

A late night snack in a conference room at the congregation's LaGrange Park Center in Illinois launched Sister Paula Terese Pilon, CSJ, on a retreat to LePuy, France, in preparation for making her final profession of vows. "I could not think of a more perfect way to discern my formal and lifetime YES to the Congregation of Saint Joseph than to walk the streets of our founding Sisters." And walk she did!



*Sisters Paula Terese and Karen Salsbery visit the LePuy kitchen. "I was struck with how my 'yes' joins the 'yes' of our first six sisters," said Paula Terese.*

Part of a group of 18, led by Sister Carol Crepeau, CSJ, Paula Terese's pilgrimage went to the cities of LePuy and Lyon in France. There they walked the cobbled streets, climbed the many hills and steps, and immersed themselves in the surroundings of the first six sisters and Mother

St. John, the CSJ foundresses. They explored historic sites including chapels and cathedrals, an abbey and the hometown of Mother St. John.

For Paula Terese, a visit to the kitchen, a sacred space in CSJ history where the first sisters came together in mission and service, was particularly moving. Those women, who had such incredible courage, oftentimes in the face of great adversity, walked where God beckoned, often not knowing where the road would take them. I want to draw on their courage and that of Mother St. John as I walk my journey, called by God yet not knowing what my future holds. Like these valiant women, I trust that the One who calls me will be my constant guide and loving companion."

The LePuy trip was more than a sightseeing expedition. Every evening ended at the Center with a communal

meal, prayer and time to process the experiences of the day. Paula Terese led one of these reflections as part of integrating her pilgrimage and final profession retreat.

Four months after returning from her time in LePuy, Paula Terese professed her final vows in the CSJ congregation at the Center in Nazareth,

Michigan. "As I stood in Holy Family Chapel and looked out at the many people who came to celebrate my vow day, my heart was overwhelmed by love. As I said my vows, I responded 'God of Great Love, I come before you to offer myself in response to your call.' I offered myself wholeheartedly, in service to our Loving Creator, to be a conduit of unifying, reconciling love for all creation. It was a powerful moment."

The city of LePuy is named for its location on a 'puy', a volcanic formation. Paula Terese reflected: "As it was explained to us, when we let God be our foundation, our charism oozes out of us and we become like volcanoes for God. We carry this energy inside ourselves and as we live a life deeply connected to God, it emerges from us as God's love and energy for the world. This is a strong image for me as I move forward in my life utterly for God and utterly in God." ●



The Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance (DCPA) walked in solidarity in the 50th Anniversary Martin Luther King Memorial March last summer.

## *Sustaining hope in Detroit*

Lifelong Detroit resident Sister Cathey DeSantis, CSJ, was recently quoted in an America magazine article on the status of her city. As executive director of the Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance (DCPA), Sister Cathey is a pragmatic optimist about her work and about Detroit. Bristling with impatience, she asserts that the media too often portray Detroit as bleak and on the downturn. The reality is different and she is hopeful about progress continuing to happen.



Sister Cathey observes a student in the Tuskegee Spirit Program, a math and science program for young people ages 9-14.

However, hope doesn't get the work done; that is where Sister Cathey and DCPA enter the picture. "We're not swooping in with charity to be the saviors here in the community. We are working in solidarity, we are together with our neighbors, and we are in this community working for change from within." DCPA is a community development organization that, among other things, works to restore and open homes, rental properties, and retail sites. From an informal advocacy group

banded together in 1967, DCPA was founded as a response to the closing of over 30 Detroit parishes in 1988. The alliance operates outside of diocesan parameters and remains a coalition of Catholic parishes determined to address important issues of their parishioners and neighbors. DCPA is involved with parishes within the city with programs for targeted audiences such as seniors with the Senior Network. Youth efforts include a math and science program, Tuskegee Spirits. Minister of Service training and Anti-Racism training are other aspects of the important work that DCPA is fostering in participating parishes. Sister Cathey has been a part of DCPA since 1990.

When asked what she enjoys most about her work, Sister Cathey is quick to respond: "Everything. I like everything about what I do but it's not easy." There are frustrations, but she says: "The greatest success for me is having credibility in the neighborhood. That is huge. We are not a social service agency giving out clothing and food and shelter. We are working to make our neighborhood viable and productive." And where does she find hope in her own life? "I find hope in the people of my neighborhood and in my worship community at Sacred Heart. I could not do what I do without them." ●



## *We network with professionals to fight* child sex trafficking

As *imagineONE* went to press, our congregation was a sponsor of a national conference on sex trafficking that brought together professionals from key disciplines for a packed schedule of presentations and workshops and a rare opportunity to network across disciplines.

Offered by Exchange Initiative, a new social action organization launched by Nix Conference and Meeting Management, the conference took place in St. Louis March 2-4. Titled “Ignite: Sparking Action against Sex Trafficking,” the conference drew criminal justice professionals, medical first responders, corporate managers, travel planners, educators and not-for-profit community and faith-based staff.

The conference offered four educational tracks – Criminal Justice, Corporate travel, Action/Faith-Based and Education/First Responders – and participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas within their own specialties and, through evening networking sessions, with attendees in other professions. Distinguished panelists and speakers addressed various facets of sex trafficking, such as Human Trafficking Investigation; Corporate Social Responsibility and Professional Resources; Emergency Rooms, Doctors’ Offices and Clinics; Trauma Bonds, Misplaced Loyalty and Inability to Detach; and Approaching Spirituality with the Rescued.

Nix Conference & Meeting Management, which created the Exchange Initiative for social action, is a firm that has arranged large conferences for the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph as well as our congregation’s first two Chapter meetings in April 2007 and April 2013. The new Nix organization is the latest breakthrough resulting from the U.S. Federation and our congregation requiring that Nix book our conferences at hotels willing to sign the international ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) Code of Conduct for the hospitality industry, with standards for the hotels to meet to prevent child sex trafficking on their property. Today, Nix Conference & Meeting Management addresses the issue with management at every hotel where they do business and the company leads the charge among meeting planners worldwide. For more information, visit [www.ExchangeInitiative.com/Ignite](http://www.ExchangeInitiative.com/Ignite). ●



# Students focus on efforts to stop human trafficking

Human trafficking is a global human tragedy that has captured the attention of students at all three of our congregation's academies.

In Cleveland, Sister Antonia Ugheighele, came to tell Saint Joseph Academy students about survivors of sex trafficking she works with in Italy, helping them rediscover their human dignity. As project coordinator of Hope/Speranza II in Castel Volturno, Italy, she described just how girls and women can become trapped into traveling from their homes in Nigeria to Italy and dragged into a life of prostitution and servitude. "Poverty and a lack of education are a perfect storm for human trafficking," she said, "leading women to believe that if they go with their 'sponsors,' they will get well-paying jobs and can send money to their families back home." Once away from home, they are either told they have to pay exorbitant fees to get free or, if they try and escape, their families will be harmed.

"They are bought, sold, violated, beaten, raped," she said.

In Baton Rouge, students in St. Joseph's Academy's Amnesty Club distributed information about human trafficking throughout the school and collected items for a garage sale and homemade baked goods for a bake sale. Proceeds went to support a missionary sister working to end international human trafficking. In addition students volunteered service hours to work the garage sale and bake sale.

At Nazareth Academy in LaGrange Park, Ill., Nazareth Academy's Just Us group became involved in fighting human trafficking two years ago when traffickers set up shop during the Super Bowl in Indianapolis. According to advisor Sister Mary Jo Curtsinger, CSJ, "We raised awareness by writing fact-filled school announcements, showing up in homerooms with quizzes and prizes to see who listened, and wrote prayers for morning announcements calling attention to the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation as the kick-off to Human Trafficking Awareness Month."

In addition the students connected with a Christian group called "Threads of Hope" that establishes missions in poverty-stricken areas in the Philippines. Women there are paid to make thread bracelets and the students sold them as a consciousness-raising effort about the connection between fair trade and trafficking prevention. They also played "recognizing the signs of trafficking" videos during lunches where they sold the bracelets. ●



(Top) Sister Joan Manuel (r), CSJ, works with students at Baton Rouge's St. Joseph's Academy to make people aware of anti-trafficking awareness programs. In photo below, students learned about international anti-trafficking efforts.

## SPIRIT OF GIVING

*Life-Long Relationship Prompts Simple, yet Vital, Gift*

George and Judy Bruzza of Kalamazoo, Mich., have known the Sisters of St. Joseph a very long time. "My lifelong relationship with the sisters began when I was 5 years old in kindergarten and continued through eighth grade," said George. "They taught me how to read, write and do long division. More importantly, through their words and their example, I learned the fundamental teachings of the Catholic Church, the value of prayer, self-discipline, and to respect all life."



*George and Judy Bruzza*

After George went on to graduate from medical school and completed his training in obstetrics and gynecology, he and Judy moved to Kalamazoo and joined the staff at Borgess Medical Center, which was sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Judy, a registered nurse, was employed in the newborn nursery there. They enrolled their children at St. Monica School, which was staffed by the sisters.

"Throughout our years of medical practice, Judy and I had the opportunity to interact with many of the sisters, as hospital administrators, clinical nurses, teachers, foreign missionaries, parish workers, and community activists," George observed. "Now that I am retired, we are able to take advantage of some of Transformations Spirituality Center's thought-provoking, prayerful, and inspirational programs at the Nazareth Center. That's quite a journey – from learning the ABCs as a kid to learning about the most profound truths of life," he marveled.

George and Judy feel it's important to support the sisters financially and help them to provide hope for the *dear neighbors* they serve. "The sisters are doing what Jesus told us to do: spreading the Gospel message through word and deed." When the Bruzzas made their will, their attorney advised them that the simplest and most straightforward way to bequeath money to an organization was to name it as a beneficiary on an Individual Retirement Account (IRA). "We went to our securities broker and asked him to add

the congregation as a beneficiary. He prepared the appropriate forms and we signed them.

The Bruzzas are enjoying some wonderful benefits of their generosity. "By designating the sisters as a beneficiary of our IRAs, it is good to know they will be able to continue their good works after our earthly lives are completed," George added. "It's an uncomplicated way to assist the sisters in their mission to help bring about the Kingdom of God on Earth."

Upon making this gift, George and Judy Bruzza have become members of the *Congregation of St. Joseph Heritage Society*. The *Heritage Society* allows the congregation to publicly recognize those who have included the sisters in their estate plans. It's just one small way the sisters can say, "Thank you!" ●

*If you are interested in designating the Congregation of St. Joseph as a beneficiary of your IRA, or are considering another type of estate gift, visit the congregation's gift planning website at [www.csjgiftplanning.org](http://www.csjgiftplanning.org); or contact Gary W. Mulhern, our Gift Planning Specialist, at 304.232.8160, ext. 148, or via email at [gmulhern@csjoseph.org](mailto:gmulhern@csjoseph.org).*

# *We need to live the powerful hope of the* *Resurrection*

By Sister Pat Kozak, CSJ

Cautiously, carefully, I want to suggest that it wasn't enough that Jesus died and rose. I know. It's a central teaching of our faith. We learned it in school. We proclaim it in the Creed.

Yet still, I want to say it is not enough. The Resurrection was never just about Jesus. Hope Rising is about us as well. Hope Rising is about all the deaths and losses of our own lives as well — the death of friends, the collapse of relationships, the loss of employment or health or possibilities.

And it is about our resurrections, in the midst of all this death and loss.

Way too often, we find ourselves going to the past and getting stuck there, in the cemeteries of our experiences, reliving the losses and dyings. But what the Easter story tells us, and what the women who went to the tomb early that morning discovered, is that we won't ever find the living among the dead. The stone has already been rolled away. The tomb is empty. We do not need to go there anymore.

The Church talks about the events of Holy Week as the Paschal Mystery. Maybe the operative word here is mystery. Not Agatha Christie mystery, not Ken Follett kind of mystery. But, rather, the birth of a child mystery; an out-of-the-blue act of kindness mystery; or a crocus bursting through snow kind of mystery.

The women who came to the tomb that first Easter saw that God could be trusted. Jesus is risen. They saw that the tomb was empty and the cemetery was no place to stay.

They had work to do.

We need to be reminded that because Jesus was and is one of us, *ONE with us*, then all of us share in the power of his Resurrection. Every cell of our bodies, every fiber of our beings and hope of our hearts — are one with him, and when he rose, we did too.

The world around us — our families and workplace, our church and country, the global community in which we live — desperately needs each of us to move on, to live fully, filled with the power of the Risen Christ. We need to make the difference that people of faith and courage can make.

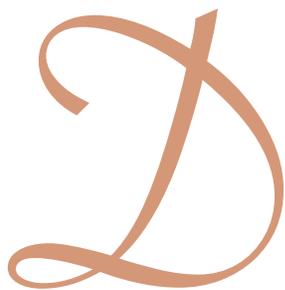
Hope rises. ●

# *Where can we see* **HOPE** *in the world?*

By Marianne Race, CSJ



In his exhortation, "Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis draws from many sources in Scripture and church documents to support the urgency with which he calls us to be a joyful people. He reminds us that "when all is said and done we are infinitely loved." Even in times of difficulty and grief, the steadfast love of God for us never ceases. (Lamentations 3:22) This love is the source of our hope. St. Peter calls us to "always be prepared to give an account for the hope that is in you<sup>1</sup>."



uring this springtime and Lenten season, we look forward to new life rising up from Earth. The first crocus that bravely pops out even in the midst of snow makes us smile and gives us hope that more beautiful flowers will soon be blooming. The celebration of the Resurrection reminds us that we are Easter people; we share in the power of the Resurrection. The transformation of the disciples that we will witness in the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus demonstrates this power. Jesus' followers, bewildered and paralyzed with grief, are transformed by their encounter with the Risen Jesus. They become dynamic preachers, full of zeal, ready to spread Jesus' message of hope and love to the ends of the earth. They gave their whole lives to it. We, too, have access to this power. Though we may not go to the ends of the earth as many of the apostles and disciples did, we can use the values of our faith to provide hope by participating in developing a more just society.

We are bombarded daily with bad news. Armed conflict, poverty, racism bring misery into the lives of millions around the world. Unbridled climate change causes powerful weather patterns capable of devastating entire cities. Trafficking of women and children, a booming illegal drug trade, corruption in government and many other problems blight our society. Where does one find hope in the midst of this malice? Is there a crocus bravely raising its head into this world offering signs of hope? Just as these little flowers flourish in early spring so, too, does hope abound in areas that are most challenging. Here is a bouquet of hope to lift our spirits.

Nelson Mandela will forever be an icon of hope that change is possible. Like other great leaders who had personally experienced injustice, he knew that only a process of restorative justice would enable the South Africans to move beyond apartheid. He



*Nelson Mandela showed the world one of the most powerful examples of systemic change through restorative justice.*

believed that forgiveness must be initiated by the injured party and that forgiveness opens the door to reconciliation. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission gave members of the public a chance to express their regret at failing to prevent human rights violations. This experience was cleansing. Guilt for wrongdoing was translated into a positive commitment to build a better society. Forgiveness led to reconciliation. Reconciliation led to one of the most powerful examples in our time of systemic change.

The statistics related to death by gunshot in the United States are gruesome. More Americans have died from guns here in the United States since 1970 (nearly 1.4 million) than American soldiers have died in all the wars in our country's history over more than 200 years (about 1.2 million)<sup>2</sup>. After 20 children and six adults were killed in Newtown, Conn., in December 2012, citizens and lawmakers including President Obama vowed to curb gun violence. In the months since then more than 29,000<sup>3</sup> people have died from gunshot wounds. The past year has produced limited results in increasing gun regulations, yet advocates of new gun-safety laws are not quitting or giving up. Instead, they are working together for as long as it takes, strategizing for the future. It is their hope that education, common sense and the voice of the American public on this issue will



have as much influence as those on the other side of the argument. We have successfully reduced drunk driving deaths and smoking deaths in this country through legislation. Systemic change is possible. Grassroots organizations and the energy of concerned citizens provide the hope that gun-safety, another major step in preventing unnecessary deaths, will someday be the norm.

ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) is the only global network dedicated to protecting children from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation. ECPAT, coordinating research, advocacy and action, has developed a six point Code of Conduct for hotels and other businesses. This code sets a standard of responsible business practices that effectively crack down on child sexual exploitation. In 2011, 900 Sisters of St. Joseph gathered in St. Louis for our CSJ Federation meeting. We introduced our meeting planner, Nix Conference and Meeting Management, and the Millennium Hotel to the ECPAT code. We successfully negotiated with the Millennium Hotel

to adopt this code and train their employees in its practices. Nix signed the code as well and now helps all of its clients choose hotels that are part of the ECPAT network for their meetings. Currently Millennium Worldwide and Hilton Worldwide, and the Marriott, Wyndham and Carlson hotel chains cooperate with ECPAT in ending child sexual exploitation. In addition, from March 2-4, 2014, Nix hosted a nationwide conference cosponsored by our congregation to bring all stakeholders fighting to end trafficking together for the first time to network: criminal justice professionals, first responders, nonprofits and faith based organizations, educational administrators and counselors and corporations. (See article on p. 12).

Trafficking is a multi-billion dollar global business. Every step taken to counteract it provides hope that this modern slavery can be ended.

UISG (Union International of Superiors General) in partnership with IOM (International Organization on Migration) supports Talitha Kum<sup>4</sup>, an international anti-trafficking network of women religious. As consecrated women religious, our life calls us to be at the service of the most vulnerable, especially women and children. We sisters realize the need to pool resources and create networks of collaboration among ourselves. We have a significant presence all over the

world, both in the countries of origin and countries of destination of those being trafficked. "UISG-IOM, is a first example of cooperation between church and lay institutions at the global level, through a network which will help the Religious Congregations to interact at world and regional levels with international governments and agencies<sup>5</sup>." Women religious working together globally gives new energy and hope to our mission.

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*As consecrated women religious, our life calls us to be at the service of the most vulnerable, especially women and children. ... Women religious working together globally gives new energy and hope to our mission.*

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Since the 1960s we have become more aware that the climate on our planet is changing. Most experts agree<sup>6</sup> that the changes are caused largely by human emissions of greenhouse gases that are the result of burning fossil fuels. The chief greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide. CO<sub>2</sub> levels are at their highest in 650,000 years. Slowly governments and business leaders around the world are coming together to make changes that would reduce the pace of global warming through required emission reductions and an increase in the production of clean and/or renewable energy. Two weeks of UN climate talks (in November 2013) in Warsaw were attended by more than 10,000 people. Agreements made



*Wind farms are becoming a more common site and source of energy around the world.*

there will hopefully come to fruition at a climate change conference in Paris in 2015 intended to replace the world's first such agreement known as the Kyoto Protocol. On a more individual level, the practice of recycling is relatively new in the U.S. The first recycling plant in the United States was built in Pennsylvania in 1972<sup>7</sup>. Today most school districts integrate recycling into the K-12 educational system. Children are helping their parents understand the need to curb waste. Though there are many challenges and complications involved in recycling our trash it is a sign of hope for the planet that the practice is becoming more commonplace daily.

In a talk given to the Pontifical Academy of the Social Sciences at the Vatican in July, 2013, Jeffrey Sachs<sup>8</sup> stated that sustainable development is the most important problem facing the world today. He added that the voice of the church will be central for success.

There is no possibility for success unless the world unites in an ethical vision defending humanity and nature. The social doctrines and moral teachings of the church are vital in building that ethical framework. There was a moment in history, 50 years ago, when the voice of the church helped save the world. In April 1963, Pope John XXIII published "Pacem in Terris," his last encyclical. It called

on all governments around the world to exercise political power in a context of morality and human survival, and it helped inspire and encourage President John F. Kennedy to give the most important speech of the modern American presidency, known as his "A Strategy of Peace" address, at American University in June 1963. The encyclical, combined with the speech, helped pave the way for the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, signed with Premier Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union in July 1963, a crucial step back from the brink of nuclear annihilation.

New leadership at the Vatican is a source of hope that the vision of our church will once again inspire global leadership on the pressing



*"I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by ... the lives of the poor, Pope Francis wrote in his "Joy of the Gospel" exhortation.*

issue of the destruction of the natural environment.

In December, 2013, Senator Patty Murray of Washington state and Representative Paul Ryan, Wisconsin, negotiated a budget that will keep the U.S. government in operation for two years. This remarkable achievement came shortly after a government shutdown and in the midst of a Congress paralyzed by partisan wrangling. How did it happen? Senator Murray, chair of the Senate Budget Committee, established a bond of trust with Representative Ryan, and together they put partisan views aside and focused on reaching a pragmatic solution. This blend of male and female leadership skills brought about this positive result. In decades of analyzing exceptional leadership, John Zenger and Joseph Folkman have identified 16 traits required for success. Their recent study results published in the Harvard Business Review<sup>9</sup> show that women are as effective in leadership positions as men. In her research on women and systemic change, Suzanne Dumbleton has found “that women have always been working well at easing suffering and advancing the development of

individuals across centuries and cultures. Until now they were not able, save in very few circumstances, to influence public policy.”<sup>10</sup> Rather than be discouraged that there are not more women in leadership positions in business, government and church it is a source of hope that this huge resource is just beginning to be tapped. In a lengthy interview published in America magazine Pope Francis stated, “The feminine genius is needed wherever we make important decisions.”<sup>11</sup> We wait in hope to see how women’s contributions will help shape the future of the church.

There are thousands of people and forces for good all over the world working to acknowledge our place in the universe, preserve our planet and care for the people on it. Only a few are mentioned here. Identifying others will add to the hope rising around Earth. One can choose to be a thoughtful, active citizen of both church and state. We can make our voices heard and trust that the values of our faith and our wisdom will contribute to developing a more just society. These choices, themselves, will generate hope for us and our world. ●



*Marianne Race, CSJ, a lifelong Chicagoan, has served in high school and Congregational leadership. She is currently co-leading Women’s Retreats in the Holy Land, working with Catholic Mobilizing Network and providing some Adult Education in Scripture.*

1. Peter 3:15
2. Nicholas D. Kristof New York Times News Service, printed in the Chicago Tribune, December 31, 2013.
3. An estimate based on 2010 data on firearm deaths provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
4. Talitha Kum is funded by the US Government Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration through the US Embassy to the Holy See.
5. Peter Schatzer, former head of IOM Mission in Italy
6. Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities. <http://climate.nasa.gov/evidence>.
7. In 1987, a barge hauled garbage from New York to North Carolina where it was denied. It was then sent to Belize where it was denied as well. Finally, the barge returned to New York and the garbage was incinerated. The incident led to heated discussions in the media about waste disposal and recycling, as well as a heightened awareness among the American public of the issue.
8. Jeffrey D. Sachs is director of The Earth Institute, Quetelet Professor of Sustainable Development and a professor of health policy and management at Columbia University. He is also special adviser to U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on the Millennium Development Goals.
9. Harvard Business Review Blog Network, March 15, 2012.
10. Suzanne Dumbleton is a professor and former dean of the School of New Learning, DePaul University, Chicago, IL.
11. Pope Francis, America, September 30, 2013.



*The story of agriculture in the U.S. is coming full circle  
back to local food growers*

By John Ikerd

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**

*Guest writer John Ikerd was one of the “thought leaders” the congregation invited for conversations last year concerning how the sisters could best use their resources to make significant systemic change toward healing and renewing the face of Earth. The following is an abridged version of the fascinating history he related about efforts to grow good food for all.*

I can think of no area of concern where spiritual leadership and physical, tangible support is more needed than in ensuring that everyone has access to good food — meaning food with integrity. I (also) believe this particular congregation may be uniquely suited to lead in specific aspects of this mission.

I believe I understand the problems of our current food system better than most people because I helped to create it. I grew up on a small farm in the 1940s and 1950s. My college education, including B.S., M.S. and

Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics, was indoctrination in the need for an industrial agriculture. Our mission was to help farmers reduce the cost of food through specialization and mechanization to achieve the economic efficiencies of large-scale, industrial operations.

Then, I spent 30 years as a professor at four major agricultural universities teaching and working with farmers through extension programs. I was an ardent advocate of industrial agriculture. We were going to eliminate hunger and malnutrition, not just in the United States but globally.



Eventually I was forced to conclude that industrialization of agriculture was a mistake. Admittedly, we succeeded in making food cheap. The percentage of disposable income that American consumers spent for food fell to less than one-half of 1950s levels, or less than 10 percent of disposable income. But we failed dismally in providing good food for all, even in the United States. There are more hungry people in the U.S. and the world today than in the 1960s. About one-sixth of the people in the U.S. are classified as “food insecure” by the USDA, and nearly one-fourth of our children live in food-insecure homes.

In addition, those who can afford to buy enough food, particularly those at lower income levels, are not getting safe, wholesome, nutritious foods. Massive recalls of food contaminated with E coli and salmonella bacteria and other contaminants have become almost commonplace in the U.S. We have an epidemic of obesity and associated diet-related diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and numerous types of cancer. America is faced with a health care crisis, much of which is linked to a lack of safety and nutrition in the American diet. Systemic change in the American food system is no longer an option; it is an absolute necessity.

Thankfully, systemic change is beginning to happen. Organic foods, for example, have been the fastest growing segment of the U.S. food market for the past 20 years. From virtually nothing in the 1980s, organic sales have risen to more than \$30 billion, over 4 percent of total food sales in 2011.

It was farmers on small, intensively managed, diversified farms who started the organic movement. True organic farming is not just about producing food without using synthetic chemical pesticides and fertilizers; it’s about working in harmony with complex, interconnected, natural ecosystems that can thrive only in the absence of such chemicals.

Of course, the growing popularity of organic fruits and vegetables attracted the attention of the large food corporations and agricultural operations. In order to facilitate access to mainstream food markets, the USDA established national organic “standards,” which paved the way for the “industrialization of organics.” The

organic movement then became dominated by the pursuit of profit, which meant economic efficiency took priority over ecological and social integrity.

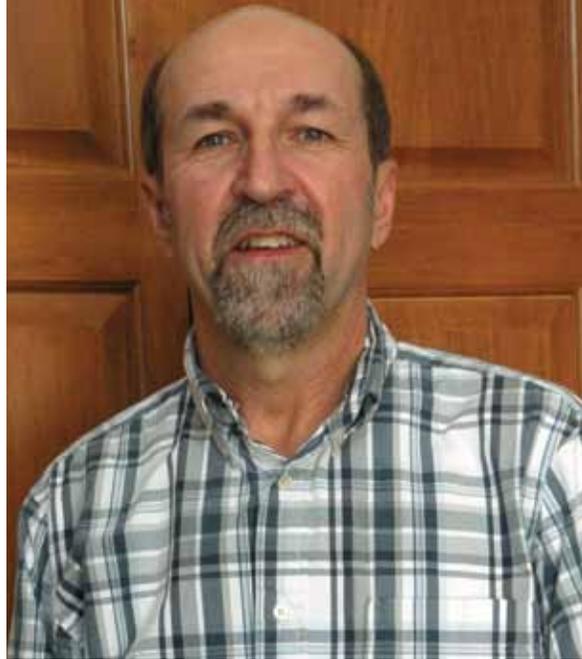
In response to the industrialization of organics, a growing lack of consumer trust in the ecological and social integrity of *mainstream* organics gave birth to the local food movement. Increasingly, organic consumers are looking to local farmers, people they can at least get to know and trust, to ensure the integrity of their food. Local foods have replaced organic foods as the most *dynamic* sector of the food economy, growing to about \$7 billion in sales.

The local food movement provides new opportunities for farmers who are committed to producing food with ecological, social, and economic integrity. Thousands of well-educated, thoughtful, young people desperately want to become a part of this new “good food movement.” I see these young people in increasing numbers at sustainable agricultural conferences and on college campuses where I have had dozens of opportunities to speak over the past few years. These bright, young people are willing to work and to learn, and they have mentors and growing grass-roots organizational support. The greatest remaining obstacles to their success are “moral support” and “access to land.”

Providing *good food for all* certainly will not be quick or easy, but it is a mission that is most certainly worthy of our best efforts. ●



**John Ikerd** is Professor Emeritus, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.; Author of, “The Essentials of Economic Sustainability and Sustainable Capitalism,” “A Return to Common Sense,” “Small Farms are Real Farms,” “Acres USA,” “Crisis and Opportunity: Sustainability in American Agriculture,” and “A Revolution of the Middle and the Pursuit of Happiness.”



George Tebbe

## Here's how the sisters and our neighbor in Tipton *are ushering in today's local food movement*

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It's certainly not only the young agriculture students who are eager to pursue the goal of providing good, healthy food locally. In Tipton, Indiana, the congregation has had a neighbor/business partner relationship with the Tebbe family of farmers for more than 80 years.

Most recently George Tebbe has partnered with us in some new sustainable agriculture efforts. After success with his soybean crop and encouragement from Ed Sutoris, congregational director of operations and property, Mr. Tebbe agreed to the no-till farming method for corn on some of his CSJ leased acreage. The community offered some financial incentives for the necessary equipment for no-till farming and Mr. Tebbe will sacrifice some short-term crop yield for very positive long-term benefits to this land.

Ed Sutoris is enthusiastic about this project with the Tebbes and the possibility of duplicating the effort with other congregation land. "It's been such a privilege to partner with George on this project" Ed said. Sister Marty McEntee, CSJ, of Tipton agrees: "His willingness to participate in a farming practice that reflects the CSJ mission, and eventually benefits all involved, sets a strong precedent for future sustainable agriculture efforts by the congregation."

No-till farming involves planting seeds with an attachment on a combine that does not disrupt the soil as deeply. No-till farming promotes better crop growth in dry conditions and helps the soil recover for the next planting season.

The agreement between the Tebbes and the congregation is grounded on a relationship of trust and respect. According to George Tebbe: "The sisters were always honest and fair to deal with. They were always concerned about the land. Tipton County has drainage issues, because it is so flat. We worked with the sisters on many tiling projects. They would come and visit my mom and dad. We shared our rock pile with them and the sisters often asked for rocks for their driveway and flower garden. We have a long family history of a relationship with them."

Mr. Tebbe credits the congregation for encouraging the no-till approach to his corn crop. We, in turn, are grateful for partners such as George Tebbe, who are willing to give this sustainable agriculture practice a try. The collaboration between George Tebbe and our congregation reflects the Generous Promises and offers an opportunity to bring about some systemic changes in our Tipton neighborhood. ●

# The Arts as Heralds of Hope



The arts are often described as prophetic voices within a culture, reflecting what is going on in a society. However being prophetic is not usually the artist's intent in creating. Generally, artists are simply voicing – whether in paint, music, poetry, literature, sculpture – their personal expressions of their own experiences, their perceptions, their vision of what is going on in their world – the world within their community; or, the world at large.

Some of the best art of any culture can often be seen as suggesting hope, whether as the creator's expression or as perceived in the eyes of the beholders. This hope that rises – in the true meaning of the word – is hope that is not dependent on wishful thinking, unrealistic optimism, or getting one's way in answer to a prayer. It speaks to a societal influence.

Let's consider how hope rises within a few of the many ways that artistic creativity is expressed.

## Visual Arts

The art departments of our congregation's three academies are virtual incubators where young artists express their perceptions and perspectives. In fact, Artist Kaitlyn Manning, a senior at Nazareth Academy in LaGrange Park, Ill., titled her watercolor-acrylic of the prominent eye shown here, "The Perspective." She explains that it "is meant to symbolize the power of perspective in an increasingly monochromatic and non-creative world. The image of a heart in the center of the eye, with bright colors stemming from it, shows that those who seek love and beauty will always find it." A herald of hope?

Artist Nina Ripich, a senior at Saint Joseph Academy in Cleveland, features the profile of a young woman in the piece she calls, "Changing Seasons." According to Nina, her work represents growth, changing of the seasons, and hope for the future. "It encompasses the everyday by the representation of the journalistic sketchbook renderings, coupled with a hopeful contemplative gaze."

Approaching the milestone of high school graduation, senior art students Audrey Marsh and Hope Mayer



*"The Perspective" by Kaitlyn Manning*

from St. Joseph's Academy in Baton Rouge, La., created the portrait titled, "Our Guiding Mother." Notations behind the figure speak of the love Mary lived throughout the Scriptures. "During this crucial time in our lives, we look to her for guidance. ... As Mary had to take a leap of faith, entrusting her life to God, we do the same as we graduate, trusting that the Lord and Mary will guide us on our path of life."



*"Changing Seasons" by Nina Ripich*



*"Our Guiding Mother" by Audrey Marsh and Hope Mayer*

# Music

By Kathy Sherman, CSJ

Music is a universal language that reaches beyond all boundaries and all lands. Music connects us and has the limitless capacity to express our many and complex emotions. It speaks to us and for us.

If we glance through history we discover the powerful influence music has had, especially during times of struggle, injustice and political unrest. Music has frequently functioned as a "herald of hope" and sustained people by giving them a collective voice. I think of songs like Charles Albert Tindley's "We Shall Overcome," which was a rallying cry for the civil rights movement; or Pete Seeger's "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," which was a popular protest song during the war in Vietnam. These songs were heralds of hope precisely because they made us think and re-examine our positions on difficult issues related to justice and peace.

The capacity music has to transport our spirits above even the harshest of human experiences was the subject of a 1997 film with Glenn Close titled "Paradise Road." Margaret Dryburgh and Nora Chambers (Glenn Close) were two British women who were evacuated from Singapore with other female "foreigners" to a Japanese prison camp in Sumatra 1942. Nora was a society matron who had been trained at London's Royal Academy of Music and Margaret, a missionary. Together, working from Nora's memory, the two women painstakingly hand drew the music staves and notes of works like Dvorak's New World Symphony and music by Chopin, Debussy, Brahms and Mendelssohn. Then, they taught their fellow prisoners how to sing the symphonic music without words, just with hums and nonsense syllables. Amazingly, they sounded like a human symphony orchestra. Their first concert in the camp was Dec. 27, 1943. It marked their second year in captivity. They presented concerts over a two year period and even the prison guards attended these concerts. Amazingly, in these deplorable conditions, amid sickness and despair, music offered consolation, hope and a bit of joy! Music was their herald of hope that somehow transported them from what they were enduring and gave them a glimpse of beauty and a song for survival.



# Handcrafted Art

By Carrie Vall, CSJ

A friend gave me a bumper sticker that read “Art Saves Lives.” At the time we were both embarking on a Master of Arts in Art Therapy Counseling program. While I knew that art could transform lives, the assertion that it could “save” lives seemed a bit of a stretch to me, but I would soon learn the truth of those words.

I listened to talks and read journal articles by Holocaust survivors who, as children in the death camps, found any way they could to create. Some gathered bits of charcoal with which they drew pictures. One woman, who was six at the time and forced to work in a factory, would secret away pieces of wire found on the floor. With these she fashioned herself a hook and crocheted the bits of wire together to make little art pieces. These survivors all claimed that it was the act of creating and self-expression that kept them going and gave them hope.

The woman who crocheted with the wire scraps lived a long and meaningful life, crocheting to the very end. Her final work was a very large piece made of crocheted wire displayed in her synagogue.

I had the privilege of fulfilling my internships at a homeless shelter for women and children. The percentage of women at this shelter with mental illness, including drug and alcohol abuse, was estimated at eighty percent. Many of the women were victims of repeat traumas, such as rape or domestic violence, and many bore the scars of childhood abuse and neglect. Many of these women had grown up in foster care, group homes, and juvenile facilities. Feeling vulnerable and cut off, they plunged deeper and deeper into isolation, finding it difficult to trust anyone. One of the first things that struck me was how they seemed to wall themselves off.

I got busy offering art sessions designed to build self-esteem and enhance socialization. The sessions were well attended and popular, but what the women really wanted to do was learn to crochet. This was NOT something I had planned on, as I did not know the first thing about crochet, so I asked my mother and her friends to come and teach the women. None of us had any idea of how therapeutic it would prove to be.



*Antoinette Robinson puts the finishing touches on her lap blankets for schools and hospitals in the inner city.*

We could not help but notice that the women began sitting in groups as they crocheted. They also began approaching others, whom they normally ignored, to ask about and admire the work they were doing. Ever so slowly they were beginning to trust each other.

Crocheting had a calming, centering effect on the women. Another benefit was enhanced self-esteem, as they realized they were able to create something that was both beautiful and functional.

Frederick Frese, a psychologist who has schizophrenia, wrote that self-expression, especially through art, is crucial for those with mental illness. He maintained:

*For those of us with schizophrenia... art, music, or poetry can be a viable method for building a bridge back to the world of normality.*

Crocheting helped build a bridge back to a happier, more self-sufficient life.

The crochet project has spread to several other sites in Cleveland. Now the women not only teach newcomers to crochet, but they donate most of the blankets, hats, and scarves that they make to schools and hospitals in the inner city.

In 2004, Sisters Felicia Petruziello, CSJ, Patti Gentile, SND, and I created the Women’s Outreach Center (WOC), a ministry of Cleveland’s River’s Edge Spirituality Center. It is a safe space where women in transition can gather to create and share that which gives them life and hope.

# Literature

By Christine Parks, CSJ

Anyone who loves to read, who loves literature, can find the entire range of human emotion – from deepest despair to the most expansive joy – present in the written word. The words of the best writers take us from the depths of feeling to the edge of the known universe. In the face of what may seem insurmountable they can tap into and bring us to a deeper, stronger hope in our own hearts as we share their experience – whether in fiction, reality, poetry. They can inspire a hope that can sustain us in the face of the sometimes harsh realities that fill our airways, newscasts, and sometimes our daily lives.

There is a story about Henri Nouwen who was asked, “Are you an optimist?” His reply: “No, not naturally, but that isn’t important. I live in hope, not optimism.” His writings are replete with stories, descriptions of hope; not easy, shallow hope, but deep and pervasive hope. Hope that doesn’t cover up the difficulties we face in life, but that holds us up and gives us strength to move through the hard times.

There are writers who might be surprised to hear that their poems and stories are doorways to hope, and yet that is exactly what they are. The writing that moves us to proclaim it great, to re-read it, most often carries us on a journey through life’s hardships into new understandings, into light, into hope.

There are also writers who seek to inspire this creative gift in others, who take time to work with young people who have experienced trauma or survived violence. Some offer their services to those in prison. They offer the gift of words to help others uncover, describe, name what has wounded them, bring it into the light, and see it through new eyes, and open themselves to hope.

It is not a small gift to be a beacon of hope rising, using whatever the medium we can use. Each of us can find a way to welcome “...the thing with feathers” Emily Dickinson wrote, “...that perches in” our own soul. We can find ways to be beacons of deep, true hope; to sing hope; paint it; write it; sculpt it; or simply let it shine through us. ●



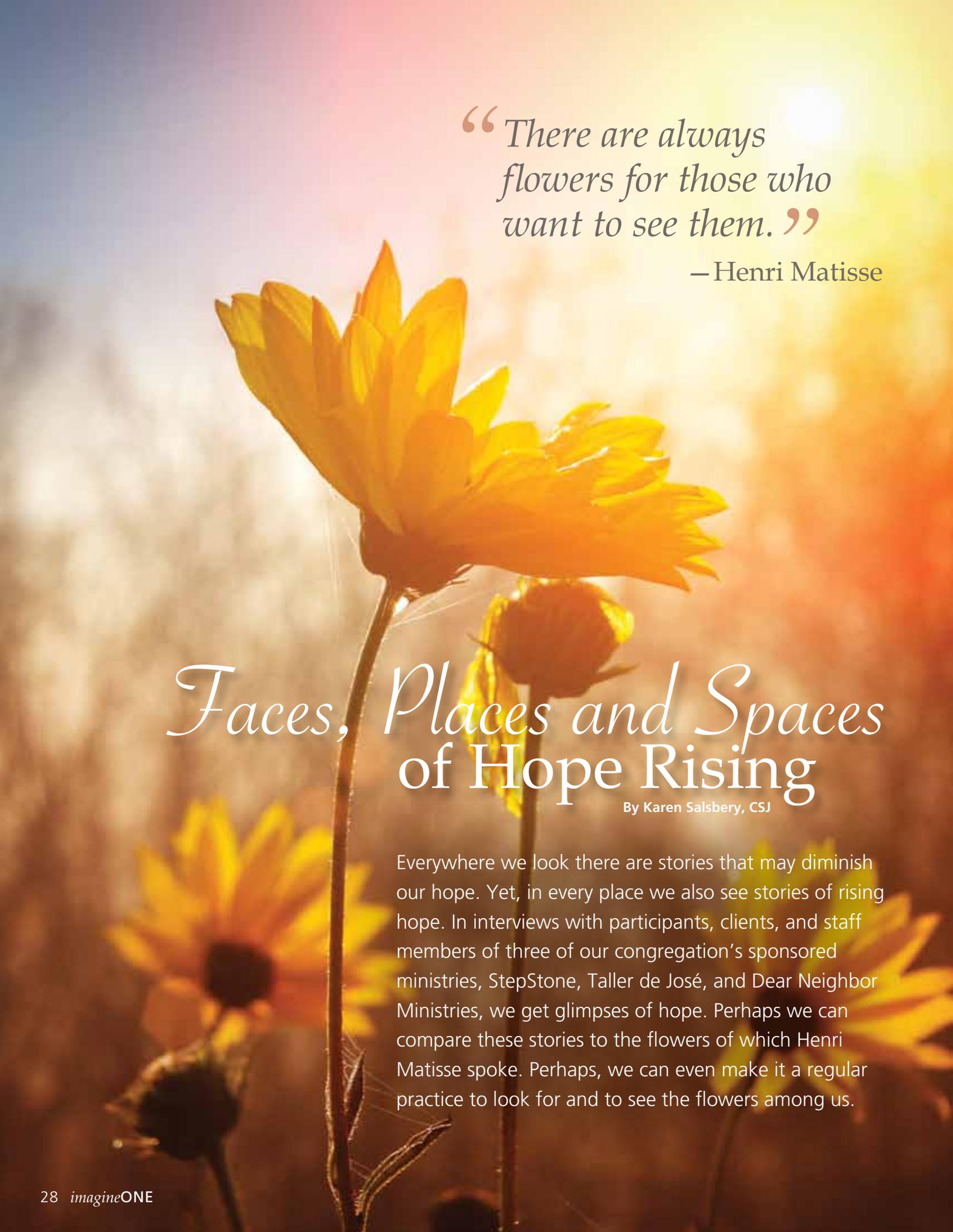
*Kathy Sherman, CSJ, is a composer, singer, poet and recording artist based at the LaGrange Park Center. Her original music and songs invite people to recognize the sacredness of their own life stories and our common hopes and dreams for one another and all of Earth. In addition, she directs retreats in the U.S. and Canada.*



*Carrie Vall, CSJ, is a board certified art therapist who works with individuals and groups in a variety of settings. She is employed by River’s Edge and is a co-director of the Women’s Outreach Center in Cleveland. Carrie especially enjoys offering art as prayer experiences.*



*Christine Parks, CSJ, is a member of the CSJ Leadership Team. Prior to that she served as Spiritual Director and Program Coordinator for Transformations Spirituality Center at Nazareth Center in Kalamazoo, Mich.*



*“There are always  
flowers for those who  
want to see them.”*

— Henri Matisse

# *Faces, Places and Spaces of Hope Rising*

By Karen Salsbery, CSJ

Everywhere we look there are stories that may diminish our hope. Yet, in every place we also see stories of rising hope. In interviews with participants, clients, and staff members of three of our congregation's sponsored ministries, StepStone, Taller de José, and Dear Neighbor Ministries, we get glimpses of hope. Perhaps we can compare these stories to the flowers of which Henri Matisse spoke. Perhaps, we can even make it a regular practice to look for and to see the flowers among us.



*Irene sees a brighter future for her children and herself.*

### **Irene, a graduate of StepStone**

*StepStone is a two-year transitional housing program for survivors of domestic violence in Wichita, Kan.*

“In January 2014, I became 28 years old. I thought I’d never live that long. With the drugs, molestation, suicidal thoughts, gang involvement and domestic violence that had been my life, I wanted to give up. In StepStone, I set goals: to get my own place, earn my GED, get divorced, earn back my driver’s license and get further education. I’m in cosmetology school now and love it. I have my apartment and I love the schools my kids attend. My son is in 7th grade and on the honor roll and my daughter is in 4th grade and doing well. I’m going to make it.”

“StepStone did what my Mom couldn’t. We had support from all the staff and they helped us in so many ways. I’m successful because they believed in me. When I graduated with my GED, the school asked me to be the honorary guest speaker. When I finished speaking, I got a standing ovation. I will keep telling my story if it can help someone else.”

### **Lisa Monnot, associate director, and Anna Mayer, program director, at Taller de José**

*Taller de José is a ministry of accompaniment in Chicago, Ill.*

Lisa and Anna both express that the caring, supportive and welcoming staff with whom they work gives them hope. This spirit is so contagious that former Taller interns who move on to other placements always come back saying how they long for the community they had at Taller. The benefits of the variety of ages among staff members

is often eye-opening, sometimes challenging and always an opportunity for them to learn from one another. They say those who have worked in the field for decades, who have had so many experiences and who remain hope-filled are inspiring to them. “I was talking to a friend about being surrounded by so much hope,” Lisa shared, “because of the people we work with and the CSJ values in our work. I have no idea where I’d be without the sisters. I have no idea where life will take me, but now I know I want to be in a faith-based organization. I can’t imagine life otherwise.”

### *Lisa’s Client*

“A former client had just given birth when I met her,” Lisa recounts. “I accompanied her as she sought services. We had a good conversation about the reasons she came to Chicago. She thought she would have a better life here, but in the beginning, things were a lot harder than she expected, especially since she lacked documentation. Now her daughter is five and in kindergarten. We helped this client figure out the school system. She got her daughter into a good school and into the gifted program. Recently, the family was able to save enough money to have their daughter baptized with the accompanying celebration for family and friends. They asked me to be the Godmother, the Co-Madre. This is such an honor to know I’ll be a part of their lives forever. I have so much hope for this family, yet, without immigration reform, they still live in fear of what could happen.”



*Lisa with her goddaughter.*

In our congregation's ministries, we see places, spaces and faces of hope rising. We cannot underestimate the importance of believing in and encouraging another person when the going is tough or underestimate the importance of being with and walking with people on the journey regardless of outcomes and struggles. As we go about our days, let us look with new eyes, eyes open to seeing goodness and possibility – and we will see flowers.

### *Anna's Client*



*Anna and her client who is now with AmeriCorps.*

One client with whom Anna had the opportunity to work was applying to be a resident of the United States and needed assistance with language interpretation. This client was terrified, shy, and nervous. Once her application for residency was approved she applied for AmeriCorps and began working with community gardens. Now, this woman is part of a neighborhood coalition called The Hope Response Coalition. She has blossomed and is using her voice to help the neighborhood.

### **Kit Lambertz, executive director, Dear Neighbor Ministries**

*Dear Neighbor Ministries provides support services and direct assistance to help people master the skills to become self-sufficient.*

“One example of hope is when a Hilltop neighbor, one of the poorest, engaged in the Getting Ahead classes. The client worked with our social work student on budgeting so she could pay her back utility bills little by little and was so proud when she was caught up. Then she called to tell us she got a job ringing the bell for Salvation Army at more than \$7.00 per hour and another job wearing the Statue of Liberty costume to advertise for a tax agency after the first of the year. She was so excited and proud!”

### **Linda – graduate and current resident coordinator at StepStone**

“When I first came to the program I had just gotten out of recovery. My abuse was drugs. I had forgotten how to live a normal life. I had nothing and thought I'd always do drugs, but the Holy Spirit turned me around.” Linda had been in a women's treatment program for seven months when she came to the Dear Neighbor Ministries housing program. “God sees all,” she said, “and I knew I'd have to be able to take care of myself because my grandson, Pierre, was going to need someone to take care of him. God gives me the strength to care for him. Pierre gives me hope.” An 8th grade student, Pierre just tested for the International Baccalaureate program at East High where he will go to school next year.

“Hope is sort of like people you deal with, people who encourage you to go forward. I find hope at Dear Neighbor when Kit says to me, ‘You can do this.’ I still struggle. It's tough. It means a lot to me to have people in my life who love me for me, and I have found that here.” ●



**Sister Karen Salsbery, CSJ,** is a Sister of St. Joseph. Currently she serves at StepStone in Wichita as a resource specialist.

# Reflection

## The Spirit is alive and active

by Sister Mary Ellen Loch, CSJ



I believe that I have always been a hopeful person, when from my childhood

I have seen God's protective hand in my life. In my work as a peace and justice coordinator, I see overwhelming problems all over the world and sometimes it

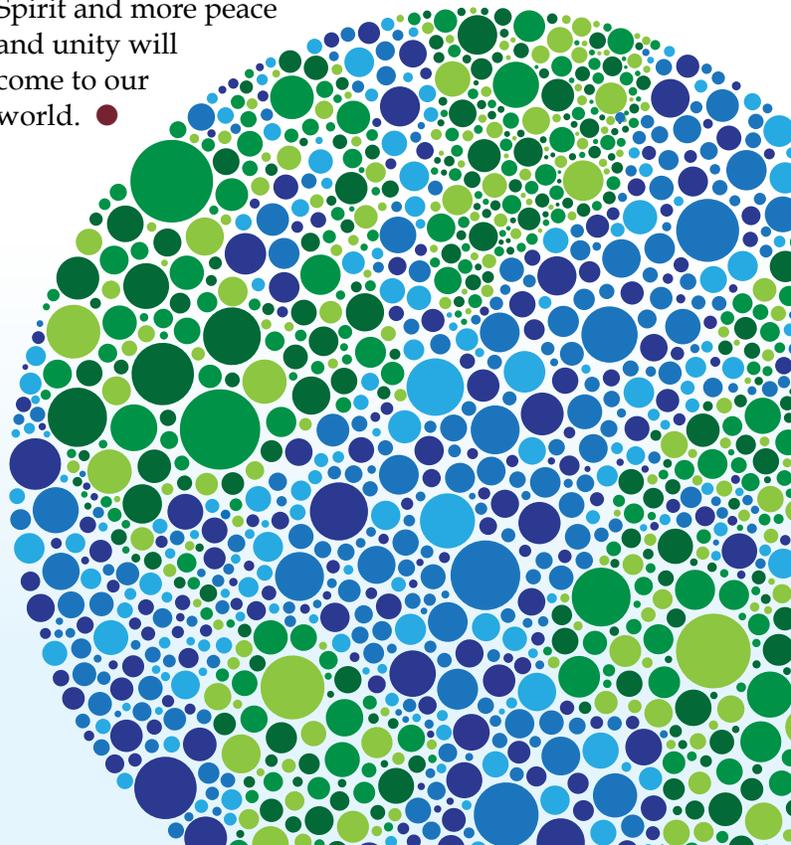
becomes difficult for even a hopeful person to continue to believe that justice can happen. "When will God change things?" one often asks. Extreme poverty, gun violence, mass shootings, domestic violence, discrimination, wars, genocide, environmental degradation and the list goes on. I hear God say, "When will you do something about it?" and I realize that God and I and all people and all creation are connected; so that when I serve, God is working through me. That is what being Christian means.

Hope is truly rising. Shortly after Vatican II, when I and many others felt so much hope and excitement for our church and country, so many of our leaders died: Pope John XXIII, John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Bobby Kennedy. The church and society seemed to become entrenched in conservatism to an extreme. The problems continued to mount. Hoping was difficult.

But now, the Spirit of God is very visible in the world again. In spite of our nation's long history of racism and sexism we elected our first black president and had a woman on presidential primary ballots while other less developed and free countries with greater racial division have long elected women and black heads of state. For us, it has been impossible until now.

People are uniting to work for immigration reform. Groups are gathering to prevent gun violence and human trafficking. The U.N. has called all nations to work to eliminate extreme poverty in the world and to bring about gender equality. Pope Francis was elected with the sign of the dove, and has called the Church back to the Gospel, to be compassionate and merciful, to address the problems of the poor as our primary duty, to stand against greed and the overwhelming imbalance of wealth to the detriment of the poor, to be a welcoming church that heals and works for peace and unity. This was the mission of Jesus Christ. This is the mission of the church, our mission, because we are church. These are great signs of hope for me.

Our first sisters saw the world as poor, sinful and broken, but with the Spirit truly alive and active in the world. When we believe in the hope that our good works will bring results, despite the odds, and persevere in our efforts, then we too live in this Spirit and more peace and unity will come to our world. ●





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