

# PARTNERING WITH NEW EYES

## CARONDELET/BUILDING/GROUNDS/NEIGHBORHOOD

- ✦ St. Joseph Housing Initiative for low and moderate income families in Carondelet area.
- ✦ Motherhouse facility upkeep and repair—signal to Carondelet neighborhood that the CSJs are here to stay.
- ✦ Events at motherhouse open to the community, which initiate new friendships, mingling of interests and creating awareness of new opportunities in the community.
- ✦ Hosting Neighborhood Night Out with a barbecue and a “getting to know you” event.
- ✦ Carondelet Community Betterment Federation—ongoing partnership with neighborhood outreach organization.
- ✦ St. Joseph Housing Initiative with the Diocese.
- ✦ Partnering with the Center for Women in Transition.

## WELCOMING THE STRANGER

- ✦ Border work: partnering with the congregation and Annunciation House to welcome the stranger.
- ✦ English Tutoring Program (in partnership with other religious communities in this area)
- ✦ Offering sanctuary (in partnership with School Sisters of Notre Dames and Sisters of the Most Precious Blood in Ruma, IL)
- ✦ Financial support to Catholic Charities Legal Assistance Fund registering DACA-holders
- ✦ Welcoming the Stranger—Three-part series

## BEING FAITHFUL TO RELATIONSHIPS

- ✦ Encourage growth of associate program; encourage associate leadership.
- ✦ New agreements emphasizing the charism and Catholic identity for all St. Louis province-sponsored educational institutions.
- ✦ Work to strengthen partnership with Benedictine Health, managers of Nazareth Living Center’s campus.

- ✦ Work to strengthen relationships between members of the Fiat House community and sisters/associates. (Fiat House has some elements of a house of discernment.)
- ✦ Gulu Water Project: welcomes the partnership of the laity in providing this ministry.
- ✦ Diocesan mobile clinic for the poor south of St. Louis.
- ✦ Ministerial Public Juridic Person to continue our historical presence with our sponsored institutions in a new way.
- ✦ Province annually donates a scholarship to each of our educational institutions primarily because of the ways those in leadership at those institutions focus on our sponsorship and our mission.

## PARTNERING WITH AND FOR A WORLD IN NEED

- ✦ Journey House, Center for Women in Transition (from prison)
- ✦ Marian Middle School in conjunction with other religious communities in St. Louis.
- ✦ Tabitha Grant provides funding for qualifying ministries and on-going support to recipients.
- ✦ Work with homeless shelters, using new eyes to see how best to be present to guests and respond to their individual needs (Green Bay).
- ✦ Spokes for Hope—partner with organization to repair bikes, provide new bicycle parts and used bikes to those who have no means of transportation (Green Bay).
- ✦ Work with women who have been traumatized by abuse (Mississippi).
- ✦ Living in community with the laity—The Village, Laclede Groves, St. Joseph Manor, Carondelet Manor, McGovern Hall and Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

# CLAIMING OUR ONENESS

## RELATIONSHIPS AND STRUCTURES FOR MISSIONS

### WE ARE ONE IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- ✦ We have stayed faithful to the process addressing structures since 2007 and have participated in all activities related to “Claiming our Oneness.”
- ✦ Our province sectionals and assemblies have given priority to issues sent us from the Congregation Leadership Team.
- ✦ Our Province Leadership Team has attended and collaborated with the Congregational Leadership Group in all their meetings.
- ✦ We have taken leadership in and continue to participate in addressing with other provinces new forms of religious life through the Agrégée Task Force.
- ✦ We took leadership in establishing the mission in Gulu.
- ✦ We distribute the *We Are Carondelet* magazine across the province.
- ✦ We have participated in and have taken leadership in Seeding the Future events (which has evolved into Kakehashi).
- ✦ Our Chief Financial Officer has collaborated with the other province CFOs in collecting demographic data and other statistical information.
- ✦ We collaborate whenever feasible with congregational efforts. We see collaborating (rather than consolidating) in these efforts a much more viable way of relating for the sake of the mission. We believe collaboration allows a focus on mission where consolidation could take time and resources for the sake of structure.
- ✦ Some of our sisters participate with the Mission Office by giving mission appeals across the United States.
- ✦ The St. Louis province took leadership in and hosted the first Associates, Consociates, Ohana, Familia de San Jose (ACOF) Convocation in St. Louis in June 2017.

### WE ARE ONE IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR NEWER MEMBERS

- ✦ We enhance generational relationships through prayer groups, conversations and other gatherings.
- ✦ We encourage newer members to use social media as a way to reach out to others who might be interested in the vowed life.
- ✦ We encourage newer members to enhance their “peer group” relationships within the congregation, the federation and other religious congregations.
- ✦ We hold discussions on the future of religious life, which are helping us see our diminishing numbers as a call/invitation to expand our collaborative efforts beyond ourselves to other like-minded/Gospel-focused groups.
- ✦ We welcome experimentation as a way to “generate new possibilities for the sake of the mission.” To this end, our newer members serve as our Vocation/Formation Team and bring to that effort possibilities without past baggage of “ways we’ve always done it.”

# COMMUNION WITHIN THE EARTH COMMUNITY

Asking the question on how our decisions and actions impact the earth community  
to raise a deeper awareness and change those behaviors that are harmful:

## THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE

- Increased utilization of hybrid cars
- Increased carpooling and sharing of cars
- Incorporated Zoom meeting technology to reduce the carbon footprint
- Conduct an assembly meeting audit on the carbon footprint
- PLT endorsement of discontinuing purchase and use of plastic water bottles.
- Promotion of Fair Trade coffee and chocolate

## REGIONALLY

- KC: Conscious recycling effort while cleaning out Sister Martha Nieman's family home
- Mobile, AL: Modeling recycling behavior at L'Arche and Cursillo movement weekends at Visitation monastery—Sister Becky Holley focuses on recycling materials
- The Village green steps: tree planting, green space, butterfly garden

## MOTHERHOUSE

- Installation of energy-saving windows
- Provided copies of *Laudato Si* to assembly participants
- Utilization of LED lighting, which conserves electricity
- Dining room efforts: Composting, recycling, straws, Fair Trade coffee, cloth napkins, no paper plates, no styrofoam, getting rid of Nescafe coffee and juice machines to protest Nestle's use of plastic and their consumption of water.
- 2 raised beds, 1 kitchen and 1 butterfly gardens on the property
- Presentations on the environment by Sister Jeanene Yackey, ad hoc earth committee, and Sister Amy Hereford

- Recycling: paper/plastic throughout offices and sister rooms, associate volunteer ministry recycling drive for teachers
- *Laudato Si* Workshop with Paul Bernadette Bounk and Sister Mary Lou Basler.
- Membership of Region X Intercommunity Ecological Council, Sister Janet Kuciejczyk, representative
- Participation in last four Sisters of the Earth conferences
- MCRI advocacy for the environment
- Educating investment advisors about our concerns with fracking. Merrill Lynch advisor subsequently offered a presentation to other investment advisors on this topic.
- CSJ participation in legislative process sharing concerns about fracking—contacting representatives, etc.

## ACTIONS TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH EARTH

- Concerts: Earth Mama, Janet Novatka, Sara Thomsen
- Speakers: Kathleen Deignan and Ilia Delio
- Communications: Weekly CSJ Messages and PNN strong promotions/mentions of recycling extravaganzas; PNN articles; Social Justice Notes create awareness and invites participation.
- Shared Practices: educating others especially by examples, e.g., groups who come to the Carondelet Motherhouse; laity at The Village also grown in this area due to what CSJs are passing on.
- Gulu project raises consciousness on the preservation of water
- Wisconsin: sent support to and marched in support of the Standing Rock demonstrators.
- Behavioral responses since implementing Call to Action re: earth community—people are enjoying Mother Earth—walking outside, praying outside

# LIVING THE CSJ CHARISM

Members of the St. Louis province desire the charism permeate everything we do. To that end, all the Acts of Chapter demonstrate ways the CSJ charism comes alive in us. The following activities are more directly tied to the charism, with charism being the central focus.

## DEEPEN OUR UNDERSTANDING AND LIVING OF THE RADICAL NATURE OF CONSECRATED LIFE

- Sharing of the Heart and contemplative prayer groups meet across the province.
- The 2017 Province Assembly focused on mission. Through a consensus building process, sisters developed specific ways we, as a province, will prioritize living the charism.
- Heritage retreats are sponsored every year by a province team. A retreat entitled, "The Radical Nature of our Consecrated Life," was given by Sister Janet Gagnon of the Maine province of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyon. Another retreat on charism was given by Sister Marian Cowan shortly before she died.
- Several sisters have had the opportunity to travel to Le Puy to experience the heritage in its original setting. Members of our sponsored institutions have also been welcomed there, deepening their understanding and appreciation of our core values.
- Several sisters have participated in the six-part Walk with Wisdom series, which invites sisters, associates and partners in mission to engage in prayer, facilitated conversations, and shared experiences that deepen their understanding of the CSJ charism and a Gospel-centered way to discuss justice issues.
- Newer members have volunteered to serve as the province Vocation/Formation Team and are in contact with several women through social media. They write *CSJ Life* blogs, which are regularly shared with the whole province. They have sponsored "Come and See" weekends at the Carondelet Motherhouse. They have been a presence at our Fiat House, a residence for young women who want to discern their future (which may or may not be religious life).
- The St. Louis province takes special pride in the support it has given in so many ways to Sister Mary McGlone as she traveled around CSJ/SSJ congregations to present the *Log Cabin Chronicles*. And as she researched and wrote, *Anything of Which a Woman Is Capable: A History of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the United States, Volume 1*.

## EMERGING WAYS OF LIVING THE CHARISM

At the urging of associates, an agrégée task force was formed and is addressing if and how we will embrace this way of living the charism.

## SHARING OUR SPIRITUALITY AND MISSION WITH YOUNG ADULTS

- Fontbonne University students have actively engaged in the Hilton Oral History Project, interviewing sisters about their lives. Some of these students have gone on to become associates.
- Fontbonne University sponsors "Rockin' With a Sister," an opportunity for sisters and members of the Fontbonne family to interact.
- Mother St. John Fontbonne appears at Fontbonne on occasion to greet students, faculty and staff. She blesses them, thanks them for their presence and answers any questions they might have.

## CELEBRATE THE EVOLUTION OF ACOF

- Associates throughout the province participate in the mission and ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph through a myriad of volunteer services.
- Province associates are engaged in the Lace Is Not Finished process in which participants look more deeply into the spirit, spirituality and mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph, and discern how their gifts can be used to pass this experience on to others.
- A June 2019 retreat for sisters and associates will be held in Green Bay. The invitation was "to discover together what it means to be in communion for the life of the world."

## CREATE WAYS TO FACILITATE INTERRELATIONSHIPS

- Carondelet provides tours to our sponsored institutions/ students/parishes/and all varieties of groups. These tours focus not solely on the history, but on the current spirit and purpose of the Sisters of St. Joseph
- Carondelet Motherhouse residents and staff engaged in a process of retreat and dialogue, which has resulted in a mission statement focusing on welcoming. The process and the statement inspire the motherhouse community to be a living witness of the charism of hospitality of heart.
- Carondelet provided two retreats to sisters in the St. Louis province as well as members throughout the congregation and federation:
  - » 2016: *Opening our Heritage, Discerning our Future*
  - » 2018: *From our Roots to our Future*

# PEOPLE OF GOD

The St. Louis Province has actively reflected on “Who are the People of God?”  
God’s People are everywhere and are met in a myriad of places and circumstances.  
We pray we will become even more welcoming ever willing to serve ALL God’s People.  
We have committed ourselves to work at Dismantling Racism as our top priority.

## EMERGING THEOLOGIES/UNDERSTANDING CONCERNS OF OUR WORLD

Sponsored Speakers/Presentations have included:

- Michael Morwood: *Is Jesus God? Exploring the Process of Adult Faith Development*
- Barbara Fiand: *Spirituality and the New Science*
- Ilia Delio: *Deepening Communion Within Our Earth Community*
- Sandra Schneiders: *Wake Up the World: The Prophetic Vocation of Vowed Religious in the Contemporary World*
- Megan McKenna: *Who Do You Say I Am? The Powerful Story of Transformation, Discipleship and Hope Through Story Telling*
- Brother Mickey McGrath: *Praying In the Spirit of St. Joseph*
- Diarmuid O’Murchu: *Religious Life in the 21st Century*
- Nancy Schreck, OSF
- Amy Hunter
- Multicultural Conversation course
- “The Face of Racism” Film Series
- Sister Miranda, SSJ
- “Welcoming the Stranger”

**Book Clubs** flourish across the province discussing traditional and emerging theologies future of religious life, dismantling racism, white supremacy, and a variety of other topics that stretch us beyond traditional understandings.

**Linger Over Breakfast** presentations on above topics in Kansas City and Denver. Green Bay has also formed a “house church,” which conducts outreach activities for homeless persons. Members of this church also serve on the board of a shelter for the homeless. Denver also does outreach with the homeless in that area.

## SING A NEW CHURCH

Our Province Leadership Team participates in the Annual Missouri Bishops meeting. The team has also met with each bishop where we sponsor educational institutions and have received endorsement from each of these bishops to move forward with the Ministerial Public Juridic Person for those five sponsored educational institutions.

“Nuns and Nones” are talking together. Sisters in the St. Louis province reflect on ways to welcome the fresh breath of the Holy Spirit by being present with and for those the Church has not always embraced.

We have engaged in creative liturgies, using a variety of ethnic choirs and dancers, calling on women whenever possible to preach, creating rituals for jubilee celebrations and funerals, which focus on using the gifts of women.

We are the only religious congregation in St. Louis to participate in the Pride Parade. Sister Nancy Corcoran’s work with the transgender community. The province sponsored Jeannine Gramick, SL who provided a workshop at the Carondelet Motherhouse on behalf of the LGBTQ community consisting of two sessions: *Safe Conversations* and *In Good Conscience*.