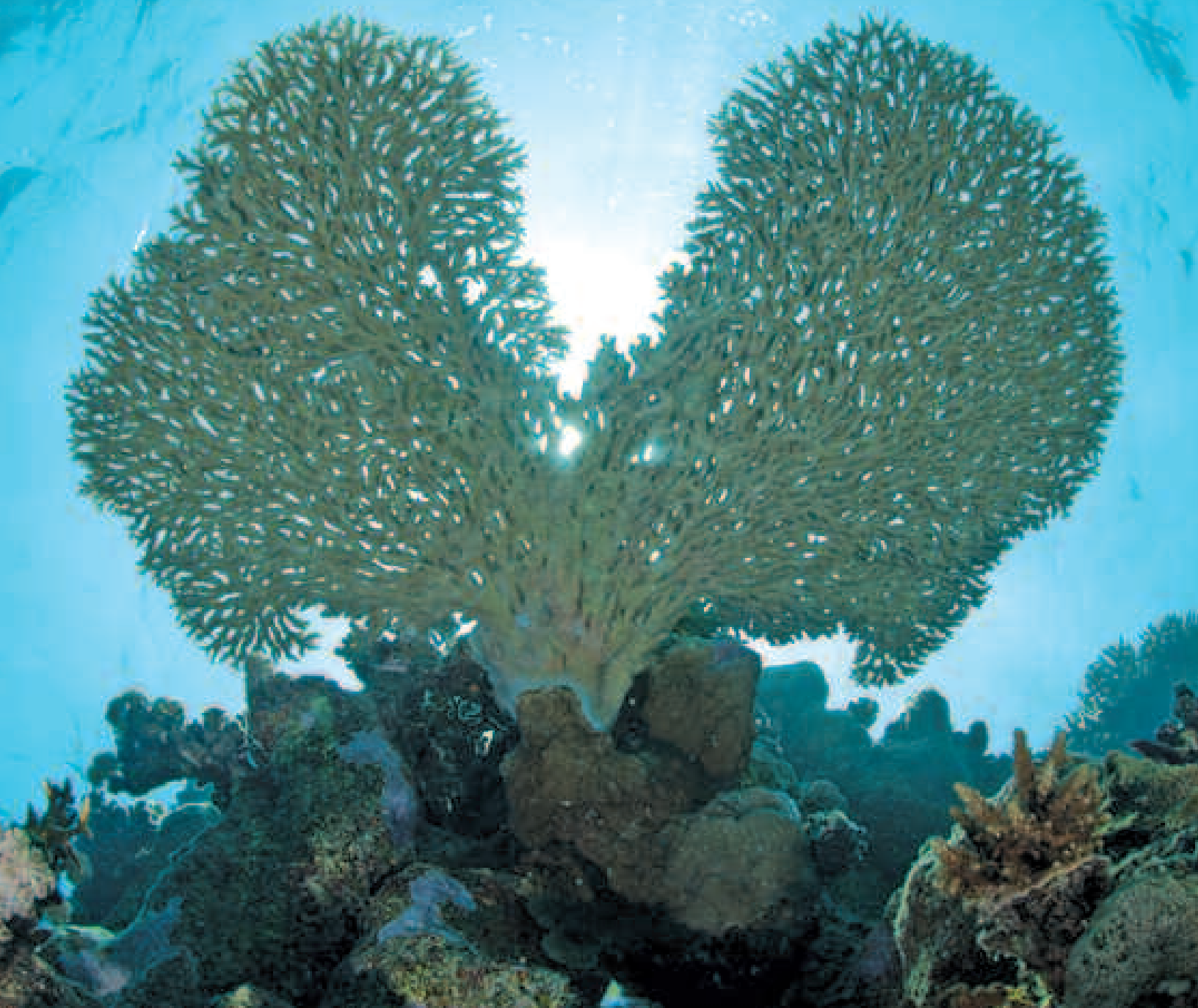




# Heart

Spring 2012

A Journal of the Society of the Sacred Heart, U.S. Province



# ...to Heart

*Dear  
Friends,*

It is part of the Society's ongoing "contemplative outlook on the world" that, with so much going on around us, at home, abroad and in the Church, that we should go to the ocean depths to find the image for this issue's cover. Contemplation, prayer and the interior life are central to our vocation and are the essential source from which our passion for life and mission flow. In recent years contemplative prayer has become a practice of increasing numbers of believers. One aid we use in contemplative prayer, or centering prayer, is to quietly allow distractions to float by as if on the surface of a deep ocean so as to stay in touch with the stillness of the deep, to be present there where the Spirit can work in us and speak to our hearts. What a lovely image this healthy coral is of the vibrancy and grace we find in this deep place.

You will read in this issue about many settings where the Spirit, speaking in the hearts of generous people, is bringing to fruition their good works in the face of deep human needs for justice and reconciliation, for education and for reverence and care for all of creation. They invite us into a contemplative awareness, to find there the core of the Society's call to discover and reveal the incarnate love of God. With the influences around us to the contrary, we want to be about God's work and we know we can count on God's guidance in both seeing and responding to what we see. These stories of people who continually strive to be persons for others can inspire in us the desire and generosity to be like them and to join in making of this world the household of God.

Let us pray for our Sacred Heart family with deepest gratitude, and let us ask St. Madeleine Sophie and St. Philippine Duchesne for a measure of the courage and confidence they exemplified in responding in their day to this sublime call each of us has received from God. It has been an extraordinary experience and a great joy for me to serve the Society and our extended family during these past thirteen years in province leadership, and I am filled with excitement about the path we are on as one body, united in mind and heart, moving into the future.



Devotedly, in the Heart of Jesus,

*Paula Toner*

Paula Toner, RSCJ  
Provincial



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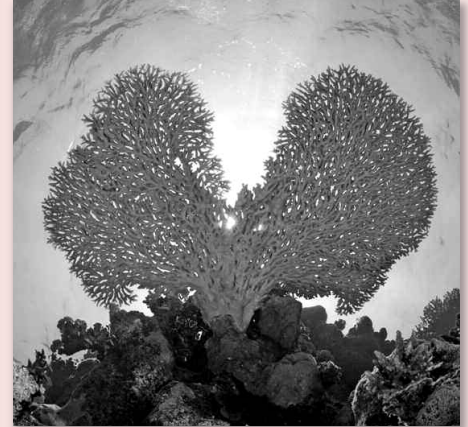
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ABOUT THE COVER: This species of coral usually grows in a circular form. This particular coral caught the eye of photographer Mark Doherty because of its unique heart shape, and we are glad it did!

# Heart

*Heart* is published two times a year to highlight the mission and ministries of the Society of the Sacred Heart, U.S. Province, for a wide circle of friends. The covers, photographs of hearts in nature, symbolic of Christ's presence at the heart of the universe, bear witness to the contemplative dimension of the Society's "wholly contemplative, wholly apostolic" mission: To discover and reveal God's love through the service of education.



© Mark Doherty / 2GoBelow Underwater Photography

The Society of the Sacred Heart was founded by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat in post-revolutionary France and brought to the United States by Saint Philippine Duchesne in 1818. For more information about the mission and ministries of the U.S. Province, please visit [www.rscj.org](http://www.rscj.org).

### **U.S. Provincial Team:**

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## Provincial team announced

Following a consultation with Religious of the Sacred Heart across the United States, Barbara Dawson, RSCJ, has named the provincial leadership team that will serve with her beginning August 1. Religious of the Sacred Heart Margaret (Meg) Causey, Sheila Hammond and Diana Wall have accepted the call to serve for a three-year term. Melanie Guste, RSCJ, will serve as the full-time director of planning.

The new team's term will commence soon after the provincial assembly, which will be held in St. Louis July 18-22. As Sister Dawson wrote to the province, "The assembly this summer with its theme and call *Open Hearts Transformed by the Spirit* gives us the opportunity to begin a serious province-wide, face to face conversation about our priorities, what ways of connection will support our life and our mission, and how we can be a vital part of building the reign of God in our country and beyond our borders." ❖

## Society's internationality showcased in profession ceremony

Jane O'Shaughnessy is the mother of two daughters and grandmother of three. She was an Associate of the Sacred Heart before following a deeper call to religious life after the death of her husband, Hugh. On January 15, she made her final vows in the chapel of the Villa Lante, the Society of the Sacred Heart's historic residence in Rome.

Nine RSCJ from five countries made their final profession in a ceremony that reflected the internationality of the Society of the Sacred Heart. The celebration included hymns in Congolese, Swahili and French; a religious ritual from India; a Coptic Kyrie and an Arabic instrumental piece. Readings were in French and English and each RSCJ pronounced her vows in her chosen language.

"... Trusting in the fidelity of God and in the love of my sisters, I make these perpetual vows. ..." Sister O'Shaughnessy stated, as did the other eight. "With joy and with gratitude and in the name of all our sisters, I receive your consecration to Jesus Christ in the Society of the Sacred Heart," responded Superior General Kathleen Conan, RSCJ.

"The Mission of the Society has become my own," Sister O'Shaughnessy said. "It is rooted in the Heart of Christ and open most particularly to the wounded and marginalized of our world. This frames my spirituality." ❖



Religious of the Sacred Heart at the January 2012 final profession (left to right): Ellen Collesano (Probation Team), Sally Salah Fahmy (Egypt), Obierge Makiese Batuvuamina (Dem. Republic of Congo), Rajani Prakash Khandagale (India), Nagwa Farhan Nagyb (Egypt), Elizabeth Nakato Nabagereka (Uganda-Kenya), Kathleen Conan (Superior General), Jane O'Shaughnessy (USA), Rachel Ngalula Tschimanga (Dem. Republic of Congo), Prisca Mathias Tirkey (India), Jolanta Olczyk (Probation Team), Consolata Khakaali Amisi (Uganda-Kenya).



*Open hearts  
transformed by the Spirit*

## Join us on the journey: Justice, peace and integrity of creation

Earlier this year, Religious of the Sacred Heart and their friends around the world were invited on a journey, the *JPIC Spiritual Journey from Lent to Pentecost*. The JPIC *ad hoc* commission of the international Society created an itinerary and a website ([www.rscj-jpic.org](http://www.rscj-jpic.org)) to guide

personal and communal reflection on the Society's Constitutions through the lens of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Religious and friends have joined together on this journey to "live deeply our common mission and spirituality in light of the cries of humanity and earth for justice, peace and integrity of all life."



Noëlle Favet, RSCJ, of the Province of France created the artwork that appeared on the cover of the *JPIC Spiritual Journey* booklet.

At Oakwood, the Society's retirement community in Atherton, California, RSCJ have established faith-sharing groups with bi-weekly meetings, using the directed readings and reflection questions in the *Spiritual Journey* booklet. Helen Rosenthal, RSCJ, has blogged about Sacred Heart spirituality as expressed in the Constitutions (<http://reflectionsofanrscj.blogspot.com/>). The community at the noviceship in San Diego devotes one of their community prayer times each week to a reflection on JPIC. Juliet Mousseau, NSCJ, commented, "One of the great things is knowing that all over the world, RSCJ are praying about these same issues."

The *Spiritual Journey* is just the beginning of the Society's coordination of JPIC at the international level. It also set the theme for this issue of *Heart*, as we share just a few expressions of the Society's commitment to justice, peace and integrity of creation.

Please join us on this journey. ❖

## Barat College book coming this spring

*Barat College: a Legacy, a Spirit, and a Name*, written by Martha Curry, RSCJ, will be published this spring by Loyola Press. In 1858, five Religious of the Sacred Heart journeyed to Chicago and founded an academy for girls on Wabash Avenue. Two years later the school moved to Chicago's west side. In 1904 the academy moved to Lake Forest, Illinois. Since the courses in the last two years of the academy were equivalent to the first two years of college, a four-year college was soon the goal.



Martha Curry, RSCJ

Barat College received its charter from the state of Illinois in 1918 and graduated its first class in 1920. In 1961, the academy moved to a new building on the property across the ravine and was renamed Woodlands Academy. The pending reunification of Barat's and Woodlands' property makes Sister Curry's history of Barat College particularly timely.

Sister Curry's book describes the collaboration of Religious of the Sacred Heart with devoted lay faculty, administrators, and trustees. Together with generations of students, alumnae/i, and benefactors, they created a college focused on the education of women, nurtured it, and responded responsibly to its decline. Sister Curry had access to previously unpublished material in Barat's archives and the archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart in Rome and St. Louis. The history also includes information from interviews with Religious of the Sacred Heart, former administrators, faculty and staff, and alumnae/i.

Sister Curry is an alumna, former faculty member, and former member of the Board of Trustees of Barat College. To order *Barat College: a Legacy, a Spirit, and a Name*, visit her website: <http://marthacurrybook.info/>. ❖

## An evolving Sacred Heart tradition: Educating boys and educating girls

The Network of Sacred Heart Schools welcomed fifty-five Sacred Heart educators to St. Charles March 15-17 for the conference *A Sacred Heart Tradition: Educating Boys and Educating Girls*. The conversations ranged from the differences between male and female brains to teaching Sacred Heart traditions, from discipline to spirituality. At the close of the conference, Frances Gimber, RSCJ, put the wealth of information into historical perspective: as with all things Sacred Heart, recognition of gender differences goes back to St. Madeleine Sophie Barat. In the early days of the 19th century, Sophie emphasized the education of the “whole child” with her and his unique differences. Her belief that the development of the person has to be the primary aim continues to be a hallmark of Sacred Heart education today.

St. Madeleine Sophie insisted on well-prepared educators. The Network’s conferences uphold this approach, in this case by providing nationally recognized experts in gender education, Margaret Ferrara, Ph.D. and Abigail Norfleet James, Ph.D. Dr. Ferrara is associate professor in the Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Department at the University of Nevada, Reno and editor of *Advances in Gender and Education*, a new peer-reviewed scholarly journal. She presented a session entitled *Are You More*

*Effective Teaching Girls? Or Boys? Or Both?* Dr. James is adjunct professor of education at the University of Virginia and the author of *Teaching the Male Brain and Teaching the Female Brain*. She gave two presentations.

As theology department and service coordinator at Stuart Hall High School, San Francisco, Ray O’Connor valued the scientific information about gender differences in the brain. “There is a pedagogical difference in teaching boys and girls and I wanted to learn more about that difference and how to best approach it,” he said.

O’Connor has given considerable thought to the question of how to present Sacred Heart traditions and stories of Religious of the Sacred Heart to boys. “The traditions and the sisters are interesting and attractive without many prompts,” he says. “For either boys or girls it’s best to make sure that we actively engage the students through visuals, readings, activities that can help them remember these unique traditions and people.”

As Sister Gimber noted, “Research of the kind we have been hearing about supports Sacred Heart education in its essence, in fact, is necessary if our education is to remain true to itself, that is, true to what Madeleine Sophie had in mind.” ❖



Mary Ann Ligon, Sacred Heart Schools, Chicago, and Julie Teixeira, Academy of the Sacred Heart, St. Charles, enjoyed an animated small group discussion.



Ray O’Connor, Stuart Hall High School, and Bo Belanger, Schools of the Sacred Heart-Grand Coteau, represented boys schools during a discussion of teaching Sacred Heart traditions.



## Duchesne Fund for Ministry: Creating change, supporting Gospel values

**O**n a dreary day in February in northern Indiana, the warmth in the Earthworks Market came from the bright smiles of the graduates. Brandon, Corey, Deborah and Hannah celebrated their completion of the first Project Ready course, an employment training program for young developmentally disabled men and women. Project Ready provides education through experience – in this case, in a bakery operated by Earthworks, a ministry directed by Sue Rogers, RSCJ, and sponsored by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. Earthworks' mission is to advocate for environmental education and action, teaching the importance of protecting our fragile natural resources. They have a baking program designed to teach the connection between food and the environment. As a natural extension, Earthworks collaborated with two local agencies to create Project Ready, a flexible eight to ten-week curriculum that provides critical job and life skills to an underserved community, that of developmentally disabled adults.

“At the heart of Earthwork’s mission is education. We seek to draw people into an understanding of our responsibility to protect the integrity of creation,” Sister Rogers said. “I believe this kind of education is critically important at this time.” In addition, young people with mild learning disabilities have few training options. Project Ready met both needs.

Start-up funds for Project Ready came, in part, from a 2011 grant from the Society of the Sacred Heart’s Duchesne Fund for Ministry. The Duchesne Fund for Ministry was established to bring about systemic change based on the Gospel values of justice, integrity, contemplative attitude and peace. Funded the past several years by an anonymous donor, the Fund advances the mission of the Society by providing financial support for ministry projects in line with province priorities. “We’re so grateful for the generosity of the friend who supports the Duchesne Fund,” said Kathleen McGrath, RSCJ, Duchesne Fund Committee Chair. “Every year we must turn away qualified organizations, or fund at a lower level than

requested, because we only have so much money available. We would be delighted to see this fund grow through the gifts of others who support the province’s priorities.”

The grant to Earthworks was one of twenty-six, totaling \$135,000. Gifts went to support such life-giving initiatives as an early intervention program for children suffering from trauma, legal services for immigrants, a safe house for victims of human trafficking (see article on page 10) and other programs for underserved groups. All projects have an educational component and all have a connection to an RSCJ, Associate or collaborator. The Duchesne Fund for Ministry Committee will select this year’s award recipients later this spring.

For Debbie, who just completed Project Ready, the impact of this grant is tremendous. She was encouraged to learn and challenged to test her limits. For her, the best part of the Duchesne Fund is, “I’m ready for a job now. I really, really want to get a job.” ❖



Sue Rogers, RSCJ, (third from left) doesn't hesitate to get her hands dirty during a baking class at Earthworks. Funding for the class comes in part from a grant from the Duchesne Fund for Ministry.

## In Mission for Life Angelic voices

By Shirley Miller, RSCJ



### ***In the ministry of mission advancement one learns to lean on miracles.***

We have experienced countless wonders during the five-year span of the *In Mission for Life* campaign as thousands of friends have made gifts of time, prayer and financial support for the spiritual and educational mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart and the care of our eldest members.

Gifts come in all shapes and sizes and in unexpected ways as we connect with old friends and renew relationships across the country. They come through the bonds with the Network of Sacred Heart Schools, the AASH and alumnae and alumni, the Associates, Children of Mary, families and collaborators in the ministries in which we are involved. They come through the insights of lay advisors and colleagues who assist the provincial team in serving and leading the province.

St. Philippine Duchesne leaned on the Lord for miracles, and God blessed her deep faith in countless ways: the Yes from Mother Barat, finally sending her to America; the men and women who provided schools and convents along the great rivers; the strength to persevere in the long, cold Missouri winters; the letters arriving from her homeland after months and even years of delay; finally reaching the land long desired, Sugar Creek, the home of the Potawatomi, and the courage to be resolute even when she thought herself a failure.



Far left: Catherine Karrels, Headmistress, Stone Ridge, with campaign committee member Toni Roddy and husband, Joe. Stone Ridge hosted a campaign reception for the Society on January 29.

Right: Patricia Geuting, RSCJ, and Eileen Mayer, Stone Ridge board chair.





It was a gathering of friends at a campaign luncheon at the home of Mary Dell Barkouras in Rancho Mirage, California. Left to right: Elizabeth Joyce, Mary Schumacher, RSCJ, June Gray, Leslie Daniels, Jo Faulk, and Jean King.



Jane Turner, Mary Dell Barkouras, Shirley Miller, RSCJ, (sister of Mary Dell) and Dorene Finocchiaro co-hosted the *In Mission for Life* campaign luncheon at the home of Mary Dell Barkouras.

***“Strengthen in us, O God, the work you have begun in us.”***

***—St. Philippine Duchesne***

Five years ago when we launched the \$40,000,000 campaign, we leaned heavily on God for miracles. Like Zechariah and Mary of Nazareth, we pondered in our hearts, “How will this come to be?” And we, too, have heard the angelic voices, “Nothing is impossible with God.” These voices have come through you, our faithful and generous families and friends.



Miracles have led us to 83% of our campaign goal (\$33,500,000). Annual gifts, major gifts and pledges and realized bequests have been received from RSCJ families, alumnae and alumni, collaborators, schools, former RSCJ, friends and volunteers. All those involved in the national campaign, from east to west, from north to south have heard stories, shared memories, rekindled hopes, and reconciled relationships. Our Great Story was created in the Heart of God and given to St. Madeleine Sophie and St. Philippine Duchesne and passed on to the hearts of each of us – the story of the transforming miracle of love.

Please join us in prayer for another miracle, the successful completion of the campaign by the end of 2012. Reaching our goal will provide a future full of hope for the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart and all involved in it and for the care of our eldest members.

Spring arrives, robins return, blossoms burst, and we celebrate the greatest miracle of all, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Darkness is turned into light and death into life. With the disciples, we say, “We have seen astounding things.” ❖

## *In Memoriam*

Please see [www.rscj.org](http://www.rscj.org) for biographical information on RSCJ who have died.

**May they live in the fullness of God’s love.**

***Louise Barrett, RSCJ***  
*December 20, 2011*

***Helen McHugh, RSCJ***  
*December 30, 2011*

***Patricia Phelan, RSCJ***  
*January 18, 2012*

***Kathleen Cox, RSCJ***  
*February 12, 2012*

***Anita (Nancy) Bremner, RSCJ***  
*February 27, 2012*

***Ethel Anna (Nancy) McAuley, RSCJ***  
*March 5, 2012*

***Jean Ford, RSCJ***  
*March 16, 2012*

***Rita Ryan, RSCJ***  
*May 3, 2012*

# MODERN SLAVERY IN A WOUNDED WOR



PACT-Ottawa poster designed to raise awareness of human trafficking.

Below: Sheila Smith, RSCJ, second from left, shows off the countertop display that will be placed at truck stops to raise awareness of human trafficking. With her are Kim Howson, Kristen Rob and Duncan Baird, part of the PACT-Ottawa team promoting the TruckSTOP campaign.



**N**o one knows how many people are held in slavery today, but estimates range from 20 to 30 million men, women and children in countries around the world, including the United States.

**These are real slaves, not much different from those throughout history.**

Today's slavery – also commonly referred to as human trafficking – is directly related to our global economy. Controlled by real or threatened violence, victims are forced to work and are not free to leave. Their status is kept hidden; it is possible you have seen slaves at work and have not recognized their status. Worldwide, these “invisible” victims are at work in the sex trade, as domestics and in mining, manufacturing and agriculture. The products of forced labor wind up in our stores and in our homes – every home.

Sheila Smith, RSCJ, of the Canadian Province, is a founding member of Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans (PACT-Ottawa, [www.pact-ottawa.org](http://www.pact-ottawa.org)). By networking with other anti-trafficking organizations, the group works to prevent and intervene in human trafficking and increase the protection of victims. Sister Smith is accompanying one trafficked woman on her spiritual journey. She is writing her doctoral thesis on human trafficking and frequently speaks to groups to raise awareness of the issue.

## WHAT WE CAN DO

In keeping with Sacred Heart tradition, Sister Smith emphasized the importance of education, not just for the victims, but for everyone. “We have to realize our part in this equation,” she said. “We have to become aware, and we have to speak up.” At the U.S. provincial assembly of 2009, Religious of the Sacred Heart committed to doing just that when they committed to taking action against human trafficking.

In the Menlo, California area, Mary Ann Foy, RSCJ, introduced the sisters at Oakwood to the issue. “Everyone was stunned” by the enormity of the problem, she said. Sister Foy began attending the meetings of a coalition of women religious in the Bay Area. The group meets monthly to exchange information and take action. For example, the coalition already has an educative campaign in advance of the America's Cup race in San Francisco in 2013. Recognizing that major sporting events can be catalysts for human trafficking, the women are contacting hotels and motels to inform management about the issue of human trafficking, specifically sex trafficking, and to ask them to educate their employees. The group will also contact local law enforcement agencies. “Coalitions of sisters are becoming operative in many cities of our country to

# LD: OUR RESPONSE



take action steps against human trafficking,” Sister Foy said. “This is very exciting to me!”

Irene Cullen, RSCJ, has had a similar experience in San Diego. Once she began researching human trafficking following the U.S. Province’s commitment in 2009, she quickly became passionate. She volunteers for a safe house and works to raise awareness in her area – and beyond. “I am working with one of our Uganda schools to start an awareness club,” she said. “Young girls who want a better life for themselves and their families are being recruited to go abroad for domestic work, only to be enslaved.”

Activism can begin at the store. Many commonly used items contain elements that come from slave labor, including coffee, cotton and textiles, rubber, computers and cell phones, even cosmetics. Diamonds, rubies and gold may come from mines that use slave labor. The cocoa and rug industries rely heavily on child labor. As consumers, we have the responsibility to make ethical decisions. “It is good for people to realize that purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act. Hence the consumer has a specific social responsibility ...” wrote Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate*. By refusing to purchase the products of slave labor, we send

a message. Companies will respond by taking steps to ensure that the conditions within their own supply chains meet consumers’ demands and respect human rights.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

So, how do you know what goods are produced through the toil of slaves? The information on just products is available; it is up to each of us to find it. One good starting point is the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center ([www.ipjc.org](http://www.ipjc.org)). The Society of the Sacred Heart is an affiliate sponsor of this advocacy and resource center. The website offers educational materials and actions to take as a consumer.

The Not For Sale Campaign has created the website [www.Free2Work.org](http://www.Free2Work.org) to provide consumers with information on how products relate to modern-day slavery. Its website provides in-depth information about trafficking and supply chains, and grades companies based on their efforts to make sure that child and forced labor do not exist in their supply chains. Another excellent resource is [www.ShopToStopSlavery.com](http://www.ShopToStopSlavery.com), which offers an even broader array of resources.



Sister Cullen offered guidelines on what each of us can do to fight human trafficking – slavery – in our world:

## EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Devote time to reading books, articles, and websites.
- Attend local organizations' meetings or public presentations to learn how law enforcement, legal and immigration services, Catholic Charities and concerned citizen groups in your area are raising awareness and aiding victims.
- Familiarize yourself with United Nations efforts, the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act and pending legislation nationally and in your own state.
- As parents, educators or school personnel, be aware that traffickers target school-aged children.

## GET INVOLVED

- Explore how you can help local organizations, like a safe house. Professionals such as doctors, lawyers, dentists, etc. are especially in demand, but if you can make a phone call, you can help.
- Network with your personal and professional contacts. Sister Cullen introduced the safe house to the San Diego Associates group and the University of San Diego Students for Life group, who have taken up the issue.
- Share with your friends what you learn about trafficking.

## BE A CONSCIENTIOUS CONSUMER

- Buy Fair Trade products when possible. Start with coffee and chocolate.
- Learn what products have slavery in their supply chains and refuse to buy them.
- Contact retailers and manufacturers to urge them to eliminate slavery in their supply chain.
- Make socially responsible investments.



As the Society of the Sacred Heart's non-governmental organization (NGO) representative at the United Nations, Cecile Meijer, RSCJ, advocates with governments, primarily on social justice issues. She approaches human trafficking from a global perspective and recently joined the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking. Through her participation in the group, she will be able to keep members of the international Society of the Sacred Heart informed of UN resolutions and other news and developments regarding human trafficking. Education continues to be the key.

The United Nations defines trafficking in persons as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” *Source: Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons.*

## EDUCATE YOURSELF! USEFUL WEBSITES:

[www.FairTradeUSA.org](http://www.FairTradeUSA.org)  
[www.FightSlaveryNow.org](http://www.FightSlaveryNow.org)  
[www.FreeTheSlaves.net](http://www.FreeTheSlaves.net)  
[www.NotForSale.org](http://www.NotForSale.org)  
[www.PolarisProject.org](http://www.PolarisProject.org)  
[www.SlaveryFootprint.org](http://www.SlaveryFootprint.org)  
[www.State.gov/j/tip/](http://www.State.gov/j/tip/) (U.S. State Department)  
[www.Unanima-International.org](http://www.Unanima-International.org) ✦

# Coast to Coast

## Healthy Waters Group educates for environmental justice



**Inbox > Message Detail**

**From:** Melanie A. Guste, RSCJ

**Sent:** Thursday, July 16, 2009 5:17:16 PM

**Subject:** A thought....and a question

Do you believe that it has been almost four years since Hurricane Katrina rocked the Gulf Coast? I am thinking about hosting a film screening and discussion of Jared Arsement's documentary, "***Paradise Faded: The Fight for Louisiana.***" It is about Louisiana's coastal wetlands, communities that are in jeopardy, and what must be done to help protect and restore the region.

If any of us wants to join in some follow-up advocacy, we can do it right then and there - write a brief letter, etc. I think that the whole issue is very relevant to our priorities ...

### **Eighteen Religious of the Sacred Heart responded to Sister Melanie Guste's email**

**invitation.** About a month later, the Healthy Waters and Coastal Restoration Interest Group was formed. The group's goal is to live the priority on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation of the General Chapter of 2008:

*Journeying with peoples of different contexts, races, and cultures, and listening profoundly to the joys and suffering of humanity have allowed us to be touched by the poverty, inequality, exclusion, violence, and environmental destruction that are present in today's world. We recognize with greater clarity the interconnectedness of global realities and the impact these have on our local situations. We are more aware of the marginalizing effects of globalization and of cultures of dominance and exclusion. (Chapter 2008)*

Group members participate in advocacy networks, sign petitions, and share information, resources and prayer. The calamitous 2010 oil spill in the Gulf was galvanizing, demonstrating as it did the intimate interconnections between the natural environment and the economy. Sister Guste, a member of the provincial team and a consultant to non-profits in Louisiana, said, "This ecosystem affects the livelihood of many poor, vulnerable and indigenous persons in our country. In this one place, we can see the devastating effects of massive over-industrialization. A fragmented view of the world is destroying unprecedented amounts of our coastal wetlands, the barrier reefs, and native wildlife."

## “This ecosystem affects the livelihood of many poor, vulnerable and indigenous persons in our country.”

Catholic social teaching recognizes that respect for all life, including the global biosphere, is a prerequisite for recognizing human dignity and developing a healthy economy. Blessed Pope John Paul II paved the way for the current environmental justice movement, which links respect for God’s creation with care for the most vulnerable members of our society.

“The human family is at a crossroads in its relationship to the natural environment,” Pope John Paul II said in 1993. “Not only is it necessary to increase efforts to educate in a keen awareness of solidarity and interdependence among the world’s people, it is also necessary to insist on the interdependence of the various ecosystems and on the importance of the balance of these systems for human survival and well-being. ... We must all learn to approach the environmental question with solid ethical convictions involving responsibility, self-control, justice and ... love.”

Members of the Society of the Sacred Heart believe that “to educate is in itself an act of justice,” (*Letter of the General Council*, June, 2006) so they educate themselves and others as citizens of God’s world and of creation. An important dimension to their activities is conscientious living, that is,



Eighteen RSCJ from the New Orleans and Grand Coteau/Baton Rouge areas at the inaugural meeting of the Healthy Waters and Coastal Restoration Interest Group.

making small daily choices in their lifestyle to reflect respect for creation. These activities go above and beyond recycling and turning off lights. For instance, at least one community uses a rain barrel for some of its water needs. They see it as a way to express awareness of and solidarity with the many people in the world who do not have access to clean water. Others are living more intentionally by daily composting, converting to alternative fuels, and using drying racks or clotheslines.

“As we live this call to the integrity of creation more deeply, it is leading us into the future in new ways of relationship with others,” Sister Guste said. “Our commitment is connecting us with others around the world.” An example occurred recently when the group united with Canadian RSCJ in resistance to the Oil/Tar Sands project in Alberta, Canada. (Not familiar with this issue? Visit <http://oilsandstruth.org>.) “I expect that these common bonds will continue to cause us to cross the boundaries of geography and to recognize the interconnectedness of global realities,” Sister Guste said.

The Healthy Waters and Coastal Restoration Interest Group now consists of thirty-two devoted members, literally from coast to coast – San Diego to Boston to Louisiana. This June 24-30, they will host *From Alligators to Zydeco* in New Orleans, to coincide with the event of the same name at the Academy of the Sacred Heart, New Orleans. Participants will listen to presentations, participate in coastal restoration work and pray together over the future of Louisiana wetlands. (For more information, contact Melanie Guste, RSCJ, at [mguste@rscj.org](mailto:mguste@rscj.org) or Diane Roche, RSCJ, at [droche@rscj.org](mailto:droche@rscj.org).)

The Healthy Waters and Coastal Restoration Group has a Facebook group open to anyone interested in learning more about living in harmony with the environment. Please visit the page and click the “ask to join” button. All members of the Sacred Heart family and friends are also invited to join the Healthy Waters Group and learn more about this critical issue. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Sister Melanie Guste at 314-880-0547. ✦



# Living in tune with God

*The presence of the unconditional love of God is so embedded in the Universe and within the Earth that to live in tune with the Earth is to live in tune with the reign of God.*

—Cletus Wessels in *Jesus in the New Universe Story*

**Growing up, Eleanor MacLellan, RSCJ, spent summers in a house on the ocean.** Some of her earliest memories are of sitting on the front porch, marveling at the beauty of the sunlight sparkling on the waves, and sitting in the window seat of her bedroom at night, watching the moon cast its light over the water. Seventy years later, she recalls the sheer joy of those moments. They inspired a love of nature and the desire to preserve it. Today, as a naturalist and educator on a farm in Massachusetts, Sister MacLellan is making good on her early commitment to God's Creation.

For more than twenty years, Sister MacLellan has worked at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, Massachusetts, about twenty miles outside Boston. She works primarily with elementary school children who visit the farm with their classes. Owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the organic farm is also a refuge for injured and orphaned wildlife. It offers a variety of programs that allow students to learn about nature and farming. With some guidance from Sister MacLellan, visitors can assist with farm chores, get to know the animals, explore ponds, forests and fields, and examine insects, seeds and plants.

The programs are fun and educational, but the emphasis is on relationships – between the animals and their habitats, between animals and humans and between humans and Earth. Sister MacLellan's role at the farm is not simply a job, it is the way she lives

the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart. "Everything depends on everything else, everything is important, and everything is a revelation of the Love of God," Sister MacLellan explains. "Therefore to destroy anything is to destroy a revelation of God. So in this light, what is important is to teach people to respect every aspect of creation, to know that they depend on it and to value it for what it is in itself."

So when Sister MacLellan shows off a snake skin, or a barred owl or the complex ecosystem in a cup of pond water, she is, in her own way, revealing God's love in our world. Children and adults alike are drawn by her passion. When she describes the risks of pesticides, both to the Earth and to farm workers, they know that the danger is real. When she urges her visitors to buy organic and buy local, they hear the message in a new way – because it comes from a place of love.

Sister Eleanor MacLellan has worked in the service of education on the same 200 acres for twenty years. She teaches about nature: animals, insects and farming, but her real lesson is relationships. Her foremost message is love. ❖



Top: Eleanor MacLellan, RSCJ, shows off a barred owl, just one of the creatures she works with at Drumlin Farm.

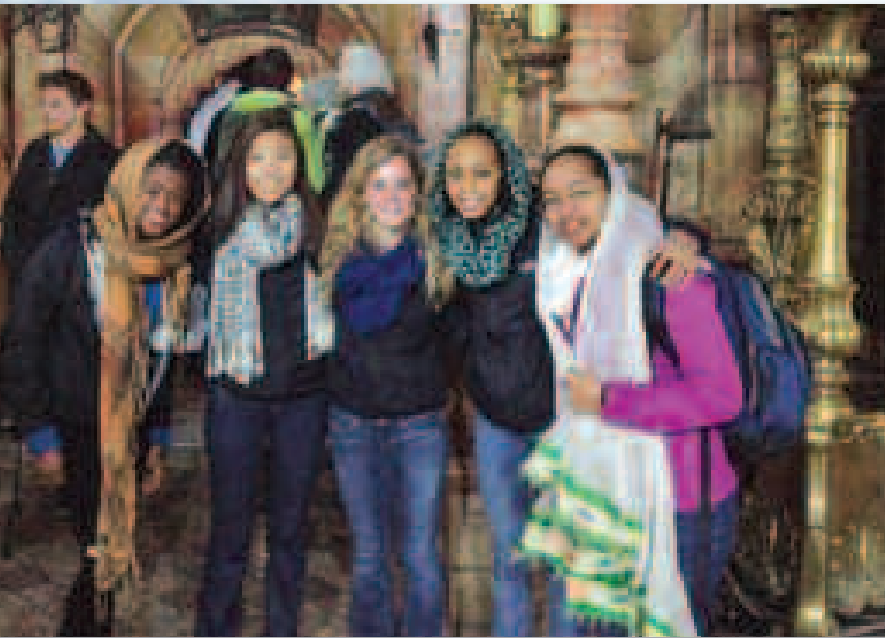
Below: Ponding is always a popular activity at Drumlin Farm, especially with Sister MacLellan leading the way.

# TEACHING PE

By Kisha Palmer, Program Director, Women as

**IMMERSION** is a powerful education, and international travel can be a game changer for students. The *Peace and Reconciliation* program at Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart is built on these truths. Piloted two years ago, the program uses dialogue, cultural immersion, reflection and peer-to-peer relationships to help students understand peacemaking and reconciliation. When students experience the world through new languages, forms of dress, tastes and sounds, suddenly they find themselves actively engaged in learning through experience. The program has already influenced students' college decisions, and has cultivated a strong sense of advocacy and leadership. It is, for many, a life-changing experience.

The *Peace and Reconciliation* curriculum is part of the Women as Global Leaders initiative at Forest Ridge. The goal of the year-long elective course is to provide the building blocks of peacemaking and reconciliation through a 360-degree exploration of the Israel/Palestine conflict, along with reflective and group work about identity and non-violent communication. The course is highlighted by a 10-day journey to Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Haifa, where students experience cultural immersion, home stays, and one-to-one interactions with experts in the fields of history, peacemaking and ethnic identity. The mission of *Peace and*



Forest Ridge students from left to right: Ana Sneed, Lindsey Kirkbride, Adele Parsons, Lidya Besrat and Menbere Kebede visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

# PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

Global Leaders, Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

*Reconciliation* is not to have the students take sides in the conflict, but to learn how to listen with compassion and neutrality and to identify the various sources of conflict before engaging in peace solutions.

Emma Murphy ('12) and Shireen Nori ('12) were part of the first *Peace and Reconciliation* class, and they travelled to Israel and Palestine with 25 of their classmates in 2011. During the 2011-12 school year, they became student leaders: facilitating dialogues, leading in-country exploration, and advising the teaching faculty. They created a student blog (see [www.ForestRidge.org](http://www.ForestRidge.org)) about their experience, and they encouraged other students to engage in the examination of the conflict from multiple angles. Blog posts examined such topics as prejudice, complexity and attentive listening.

Nori wrote the following from Jerusalem, "I have realized that no army, police force,

government or authoritative head can fix this ongoing conflict; only the people can. ... It feels hard to remain hopeful sometimes, but I know progress takes time. It's an investment (in) the future."

Recognizing the value of listening with an open heart, responding with compassion and working collaboratively for justice ... the future Global Leaders of Forest Ridge are off to a good start. ❖

I'm here to simply listen,  
to understand,  
to hear your tale with all my being.

—Excerpt from a poem by Emma Murphy





## Discovering and sharing God's magnificent design

By Georgie Blaeser, RSCJ

I am not a professional photographer, but I love photography because it has taught me to really see what I am looking at and to share it with other people. If we really see what is before us without objectifying it or analyzing it, without judging it by our often very limited and narrow criteria, perhaps we may find new ways to make a difference, and bring together, if even a little, our sadly divided world. I don't know exactly what difference my photography has made to other people; I do know that my heart has been stretched in inexplicable ways because of what I have seen.

I grew up with four siblings, the closest in age eight years older than I. Of course, if you are the baby in the family, you are usually looking up or following behind, watching, waiting, taking in everything. I believe it was this experience that formed me at a very early age in the ways of observing the world around me and of believing and experiencing it looking back at me, surrounding me with its light and its beauty, its hidden truth, its silent mystery. The natural world shouted out to me, "We are looking at you. Don't miss out, because each moment is the only one you have to take in the truth of what it means that we see you. Notice us and worlds will open to you."



It was in these moments that my heart first opened. The natural world was one of the great ways I came to realize and understand God's love for me and for the entire created world – the love shining out and revealing itself through so many faces and forms. It was the natural world that invited and often demanded that I meet it on its own terms and open myself to its revelations, its cries and shouts, its silence and peace, its suffering and loss, its wisdom.

Of the tens of thousands of pictures I have taken, there is only a handful that truly reveal what was revealed to me. They are those where the heart and soul of the subject shine through the paper because of the light or the frame or the moment. When something ordinary becomes sublime, when I am open enough to let what I look at summon me to see and respond, to care and empathize with another world I don't know, when what looks at me wakes me up to want to share it because I know it will never happen again in exactly this way, or when I know the subject has moved and changed me, then I am on to something a little better than average.

For all the photos I have taken, there are a million that have eluded me. But every now and then, there are those indelible moments when the visual elements all come together. Sometimes these moments require an electric reaction; other times they demand humility, excruciating patience, a willingness to be a guest in someone else's world – invited in to lose myself in the scene or the movement or the passing of the light, in the elusive shining element that is life itself.

As a place, Sprout Creek Farm is magic with light, the natural revelation of the seasons, detached in its naturalness from the intrusions of the world's chaos. It is one of the greatest photography teachers I have ever had, an inspiring place where people learn to grow and shrink a little at the same time. Even on the calmest days, it is alive and bright with energy. It is a spiritual place where my sense of who God is and who I am is renewed, refreshed, reinvigorated.

Gerard Manley Hopkins believed that every mortal thing did what its nature dictated and that the world was one of subtle and magnificent design. I think the call to me as an RSCJ photographer has been to discover that magnificent design, to love the designer and to share it with other people. This poem – “As Kingfishers Catch Fire” – speaks of the unique nature of each being and of how God utters God's self through each being.

*As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves – goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,  
Crying what I do is me: for that I came.*

*I say more: the just man justices;  
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is –  
Christ – for Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.*

—Gerard Manley Hopkins ✦



*Sister Georgie Blaeser serves as education director and unofficial photographer at Sprout Creek Farm in Poughkeepsie, New York.*



*This article represents a very short excerpt of a presentation she gave at Woodlands Academy in January. For the complete presentation, visit our website, [www.rscj.org](http://www.rscj.org) under Features/Spotlight. Or use your smartphone to follow this link.*

## Red Dye #40, inaction and the plot of our lives

By Mary Kay Hunyady, RSCJ



A long time ago, I took a course with Peter Henriot, S.J., during his seventeen-year tenure at the Center of Concern in Washington, D.C. Toward the end of the class, he said something along these lines: “I know that Red Dye #40 is bad for us, so on Mondays I refrain from consuming anything with Red Dye #40. We are boycotting this particular company’s products, so on Tuesday I eat nothing made by that company. On Wednesday, I fast for the sake of being in solidarity with those in the world who have no food to eat. On Thursday ...” And so on. But, “On Sunday, I do whatever I want.” His point: there are so many things to be aware of, and so many actions that we could take to live a more simple or justice-oriented life, that it can be overwhelming and stop us in our tracks. We end up feeling powerless: “I am only one person. I can’t do much. Therefore, I’ll do nothing.” This Jesuit spoke of this reaction as the work of the “evil spirit” – the spirit that tempts us to be apathetic (I can’t care about one more thing), arrogant (I can’t do much, so I’ll do nothing), and individualistic (I can’t do much ...).

Each of us can work for justice in small ways or in ultimately big ways that can lead to imprisonment or death. The latter is the plot of the gospels. The former is the plot of each of our lives. Some of the range of actions/activities for justice are noted elsewhere in this magazine. It is important, though, to know first what is at the core of this work for justice; otherwise, it’s easy to act self-righteously.

In the Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart, we speak about learning from the “dispositions of Jesus’ heart.” The confidence of Jesus’ disarming and gratuitous love, the knowledge that we are loved by the God who is the ground of our being, is the energizing force field that impels us to act for justice. Knowing that I am loved, imperfections and all, can



allow me to be bold and join with others to act for justice “in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable” (Chapter 2008). It helps to examine attitudes we carry in order to be aware of the temptation not to act.

An examination of attitude regarding how we treat other people in our imagination, in our speech and in our actions might unmask our own insecurities, yes; but at a deeper level, it might uncover that we don't live by the principle of just or right relationship. We need to be rooted in that love that first called us into being and act from that place of love in our exchanges with others. There used to be a television show called Joan of Arcadia, the premise of which was that the main character, Joan, never knew when she might run into God. God could be the gardener in one week's episode, might be the child at the grocery store in the next. Nancy Bremner, RSCJ, whose death is noted elsewhere in this magazine, spoke often and emotionally of the “indwelling of the Spirit” in each of us. What if we consciously and always acted from the space that recognizes that the Spirit dwells in the other with whom we speak or about whom we speak?

An examination of attitude regarding our use of the Earth's finite resources can expose that we need to make some changes in order to live more in line with our value of wanting a just and equitable distribution of these resources. The temptation exists to feel that there's just so much to change about our use of these resources that we end up making no change. Instead, what if we were to make modest monthly changes, decisions that over time add up to rather large changes in both use and consciousness? I recall making a retreat with a spiritual director who advocated that we go through our worldly possessions every six months; if we happen upon an item we haven't used in that time, we should give it away. Imagine that.

An examination of attitude with regard to acting on behalf of justice might reveal that we unconsciously rank different actions people can take. It's a personal call from Jesus Christ that is the foundation of any Christian's actions for justice. We cannot all risk arrest for a particular issue, but maybe some of us can; we cannot all engage in an hour of prayer for peace on a daily basis, but maybe we can join the peace prayer chain for

***This is what Yahweh asks of you:  
only this, to act justly,  
to love tenderly  
and to walk humbly with your God.***

—Micah 6:8, Jerusalem Bible translation

that one minute at noon. We take the next step that we can take, and there is always a next step.

In *Quest for the Living God*, Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, offers insight into the call to act on behalf of a just and peaceful world in solidarity with the Earth and with those who are most vulnerable:

“On the strength of [God's eschatological] promise, dangerous remembering challenges modern society which tries to anesthetize people against the sufferings of others with a culture of consumerism, happy optimism, and breathtaking banality that irons all sympathy flat. In place of this trite form of life, it impels people of faith to a meaningful life through action that resists unjust, domineering actions that are creating a new generation of victims.”

We are called by the “good spirit” not to be too easily overwhelmed by the struggles for justice in this world and the steps that we might be called to take to contribute to a more just world. What I label “examination of attitude,” Madeleine Sophie would have called cultivation of our interior spirit. The precursor to right action must be self-knowledge. We listen to the Spirit within and follow that course. Your next step might be an act of civil disobedience. It could also be to conserve water, buy Fair Trade products or avoid Red Dye #40. What is your personal call? What is your next step? ❖



*A member of the provincial team, Mary Kay Hunyady, RSCJ, holds a doctorate in psychology from the Wright Institute, Berkeley. She has served as a community organizer in Chicago and San Francisco; as a counselor at New College of California; as assistant editor for Creation Spirituality magazine;*

*and as a psychologist. Her service in Sacred Heart schools was at Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, Omaha; Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart; and Schools of the Sacred Heart, Grand Coteau.*

# Poems

## Written by Religious of the Sacred Heart



### Southern Sunset (at Grand Coteau)

Just above me a new April moon  
held cupped in its crescent a star,  
while the sun's last ray  
made a rosy delay,  
sending opal and mother-of-pearl to play  
on the slim white moon's curved bar.

I whistled goodnight to a cardinal who called  
an answer from a dark-branched pine.

All twilight was fraught  
with the beauty I'd caught  
from a moon-cupped star and a tall pine taut  
against a sky like burgundy wine.

—*Anna Mae Marheineke, RSCJ*



### Reflections on Peace, Justice, and the Integrity of Creation

Another woman raped in Congo  
And a group of former victims becomes her comforters.  
A brave, one-eyed journalist didn't make it home this time but  
we heard first hand of the shelling in Syria  
and her mother still waits for her bodily remains.  
Peace, justice, and the integrity of creation  
is our theme this morning.

The young doctor stares down a gun barrel  
to protect her hospital patients.  
The women in Haiti expand their biscuits by adding dirt  
But we can continue to build a school.

It is all too much!  
But  
the sophomores insist on holding a dinner to pay  
for  
plumpynuts to send to starving children in Niger  
and  
another bakesale for the school in Haiti  
and  
we will hope and work and educate in the face  
of such stark images  
because  
better to lose both eyes than to lose hope.

—*Sharon Karam, RSCJ*

# *Women of Prayer*

*making God's love visible in the heart of the world*

› *Become a member.*

Mary Pat White, RSCJ, [vocation@rscj.org](mailto:vocation@rscj.org)

› *Become an Associate.*

Anne Byrne, RSCJ, [abyrne@rscj.org](mailto:abyrne@rscj.org)

› *Support our mission financially.*

Shirley Miller, RSCJ, [smiller@rscj.org](mailto:smiller@rscj.org)  
or visit [www.rscj.org](http://www.rscj.org)



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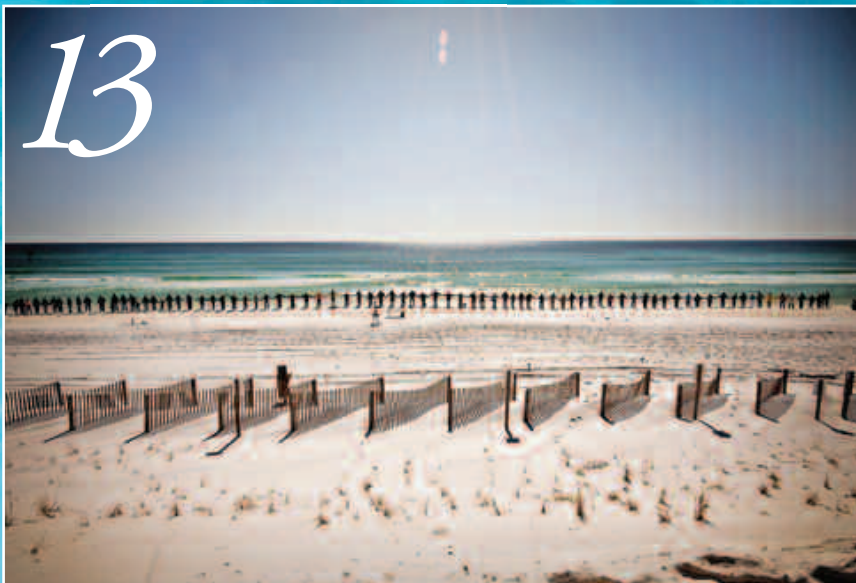


PACT-Ottawa volunteers in a theatrical performance to raise awareness of **Modern slavery in a wounded world.**



Photos by Georgie Blaeser, RSCJ

Georgie Blaeser's photography – like this from Sprout Creek Farm – allows her to share **God's magnificent design.**



RSCJ joined hundreds of people for Hands across the Sands. Their advocacy for healthy water extends from **Coast to coast.**

Chandler Williams Modusphotography.com