



President's Message

Margo Ritchie, CSJ

As you receive this newsletter, summer is coming to a close and many of us will be making our way to Ottawa for our Federation Assembly. There will be 225 of us gathered together "in good company." We believe that **Janet Mock's** talks on hope and "what on earth are we to do?" will evoke our desire for who we might be as women religious, as human beings in this moment of our history. And as always and everywhere, relationships with each other and within our global neighbourhood are what ground us in this mystery we call God.

Some have asked how they might participate even though they are not able to come to Ottawa. Through **Margaret Magee**, we have arranged to have audiotapes made of Janet's talks and we will be sure that each Congregation receives these. We also plan to pray together on Parliament Hill for our world which desperately needs the grace of a love that reconciles and wants the other, as well as ourselves, to thrive. Being with each other for informal conversations between times also deepens our connection to each other.

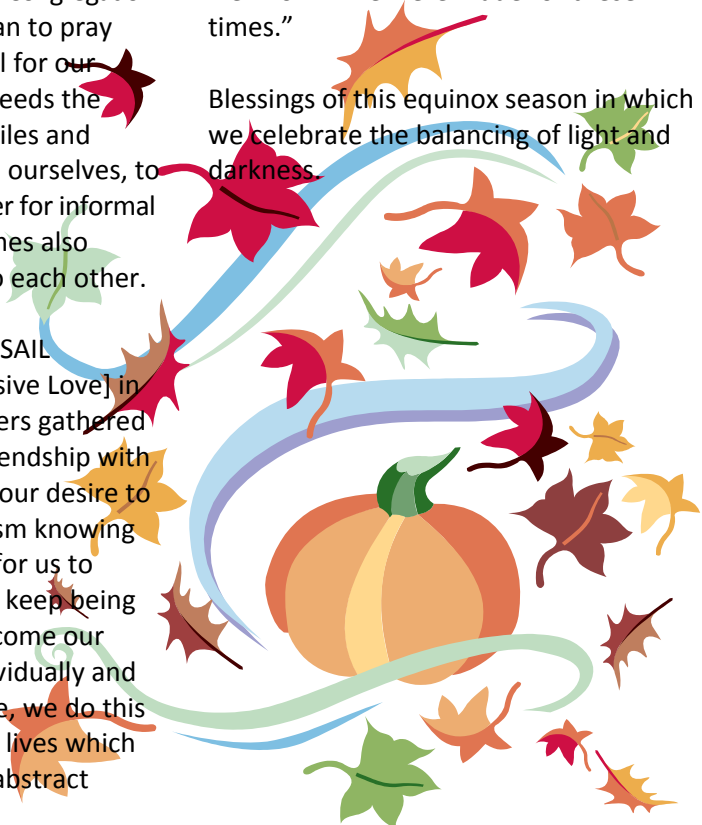
At our recent gathering of SAIL [Sojourners in Active Inclusive Love] in August, over 80 of our sisters gathered to once again enjoy our friendship with each other and to explore our desire to live the depth of our charism knowing that there is always more for us to embrace and embody. We keep being aware that we want to become our most authentic selves individually and communally. And of course, we do this in the everydayness of our lives which has its way of making the abstract

notion of self-emptying very tangible.

At our upcoming Federation board meeting in October, we have invited **Carol Zinn**, a Sister of St. Joseph from Philadelphia and former director of the CSJ NGO at the United Nations to be with us. She will engage the board in exploring the question of our csj "place" in the world.

We are at such an important moment in our history. **Clarissa Pinkola Estes**, a storyteller and poet wrote an open letter after the 9\11 attack to encourage people whose hearts were flagging because, after so many years of dedication to peace and to justice, neither seemed any closer. She acknowledged that times are tough. More significantly, she encouraged us all by affirming what we know. "We were made for these times."

Blessings of this equinox season in which we celebrate the balancing of light and darkness.



From the Desk of the Executive Director *Valerie Van Cauwenberghe, csj*

I ended my March 2010 Newsletter message on a note of “hope” and since then I have been aware of how many articles and publications have reinforced the importance of hope, to us and to the world. Recent global catastrophes add to the awareness of our responsibility as CSJ women to keep hope alive as we minister to the dear neighbour.

At the Federation office we are focusing on the upcoming September Assembly in Ottawa and very much looking forward to this event which has over two hundred registrants. Following this the London CSJ Congregation is hosting the October Board meeting with guest speaker **Carol Zinn CSJ**. We will share highlights of both gatherings in our Advent Newsletter.

On the international front, I continue my work on the Board of the International Centre which next meets in Le Puy September 27-30, 2010. The Board (*see photo right*) continues to focus on the development of financial sustainability for the Centre and recent work has



Centre Board—Back Row. L-R: Valerie Van Cauwenberghe; Martina Gmunder (Annecy), Ieda Tomazini, (Chambery) Kathy McCluskey (US Federation), Catherine Barange (French Federation) Centre Row L & far-R: Gemma Dalmasso (Italian Federation) Barbara Bozak (Facilitator) Front row: Sally Hodgdon (Guest), Janet Gagnon (Lyon)

included interviewing for a staff member to replace **Sister Martha** whose term of three years ends in September. We thank her for her contribution to the life and mission of the Centre.

As we watch the summer greenery turn toward autumn shades, may the communal gatherings and happy holidays we have enjoyed sustain us in the days ahead.

A CSJ Presence at the UN: Sr. Griselda Martinez

Griselda Martinez Morales, a Sister of Saint Joseph of Lyon from the Province of Mexico, assumed the job as representative of the Sisters of Saint Joseph at the United Nations in an NGO (Non Governmental Organization) in Oct 2009.

Her job involves attending meetings in the UN building or other offices, in which the topics for discussion would hold interest for Sisters of Saint Joseph, e.g., eradication of poverty, human trafficking, and issues related to promotion of women, climate change and environment, social

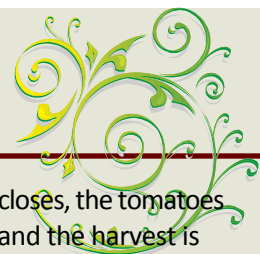
development, financing for development and migration, all of which usually involve education and health.

Added to this, there are meetings outside of the United Nations proper, such as with the RUN group, (Religious at the UN), which meets once a month. The religious who gather there exchange information about areas where their congregations are located; get updates on coming UN events of importance to them, and sign declarations relating to various questions.

In speaking about the diversity present in this UN organization, she says that "This service of planetary proportions also allows for a unique experience of communion... we are searching together to give life to a world of diversity, working on questions regarding the environment, water, and human rights."

The Green Window– Part 5

Reconnecting to Our Earth Roots



The sun is dappled through the cucumber leaves and the tomatoes are showing the first blush of ripening. We are entering into the season of harvest and are privileged to enjoy the abundance of our earth. The sweet scents of summer are yielding to the ripening of a golden autumn season.

Yet, we know, the harvest is not being shared equitably. As large corporations take over food production increasingly, small farmers are edged out. Agribusiness uses stealth and science to mask greed and control of the safety and diversity of our earth's food supply. How did this come about? As human beings we have lost our connections to the sacredness of earth, denigrating in many subtle ways those who work with soil and hands. As we know the hierarchical, patriarchal systems of our Western culture and religions have served to sever the ties to the holiness of women and earth. In a recent Sisters of Earth conference in New York, the Indian food activist **Vandana Shiva** and her sister **Mira**, a physician, shared with us the systematic and often ruthless ways global corporations have run roughshod over the poorest and hungriest in countries such as India.

Modern global corporations see the world as something to be owned, a commodity for maximizing their profits. Egregious corporations such as Monsanto determined that seeds are "intellectual property" and have sought patents. Many thousands have demonstrated against classifying seeds as property with rights of patent, it is a battle still being waged. In

India and in all documented cases, companies lure farmers with extravagant promises of increased crop yield from the use of these seeds. In fact, in India, the reality is that food production has decreased. Farmers who have saved their seeds for generations are forced to buy the GM (Genetically Modified) seeds and the now necessary Western commercial fertilizers. Monsanto claims that it "invented" wheat plants derived from a traditional Indian variety, which is nothing less than bio-piracy. Markets have been and are increasingly regulated so that only GM seed products are acceptable. Farmers in India have been incurring debt that has only deepened and spiraled each year, resulting in countless suicides. Such is the harvest in a de-sacralized world

There is, however, a different worldview, one of equality, diversity and respect for all beings. As **Thomas Berry** often noted, "the earth is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects." We live within a sacred global commons where the rights of all beings, human, animal, tree, river and wind have a place in the web of communion. There is much about which to despair but in equal measure there is much from which to draw hope. We can each have a role in this time where the sacredness of all creation is threatened. Prayer is one deeply important response; our minds and hearts can chart a course each day toward the healing of our earth. Key is an appreciation for and support of local farmers, advocating heritage seed saving, or growing a tomato plant. It is time to know that growing food for our sustenance is a holy task, a sacred agriculture.

As this reflection closes, the tomatoes are ripening yet and the harvest is still being gathered. The gift of a home-grown tomato sandwich is a celebration of deepest delight and a grace of holy communion. By this act we are reconnecting to our earth roots. May we bless all farmers and all beings for this gift of life.

See: Vandana Shiva, *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability and Peace*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press, 2005

KUDOS

Congratulations to:

Sister June Dwyer (T) on receiving the 2010 YWCA Woman of Distinction Award in the area of Health and Healing in May.

Sister Linda Gregg (Pet) on receiving her Doctor of Ministry Degree from the University of Toronto in June.

This year's new Leadership Teams:

In Toronto - **Sisters Thérèse Meunier, Annette Lacroix, Pat Boucher, Jean Gove and Theresa Rodgers.**

In Sault Ste Marie – **Sisters Shirley Anderson, Sarah Quackenbush, Claranne McFarling, Cecily Hewitt and Alice Greer.**

Book Publication – November 2010:

Cotter, Wendy. The Christ of the Miracle Stories: Portrait through Encounter.

Recommended for " ... all those interested in the miraculous in the New Testament ..."

www.hendrickson.com

**FEDERATION OF SISTERS OF
ST. JOSEPH OF CANADA**

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

**UNITED BY A COMMON STORY
AND CHARISM WE
SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF
CANADA FORM A FEDERATION
WHOSE PURPOSE IS
TO FOCUS AND EMPOWER
ONE ANOTHER
IN THE PASSIONATE LIVING OF
OUR MISSION OF ACTIVE
AND INCLUSIVE LOVE.**



Congregational Staff Profile— New Series on Congregational Archivists



**Lori Perrie – from the Congregation of
Sisters of St. Joseph in London**

Lori first considered a career in archives while attending graduate school at the University of Western Ontario in 2005/2006. After working as a Library Assistant at the London Public Library for a number of years, Lori decided to return to school to complete her Master of Library and Information Science degree. She continued to work at the library while completing her studies, and shifted her focus from public library service to archives administration.

Upon completing her degree, Lori volunteered

with one of her former professors at the London Life Archives. Working at London Life gave Lori the opportunity to participate in the daily operation of an archives. The knowledge she gained during this experience would prove invaluable once Lori started working as full-time archivist.

Lori accepted the position of archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph of London in 2007 and began work in June, approximately one week after the Sisters moved from Mount St. Joseph to their new residence at 485 Windermere Road. Lori works in the Archives and Archives office located on the fourth floor of the building. One of her first tasks when she began working for the Sisters was to help outfit the storage area with an environmental control system which maintains the temperature and relative humidity to archival standards.

Today, after three years with the Sisters, Lori oversees the archival collection, accessioning new items and continuing to improve upon the arrangement and description of the current collection. She also participates in the celebration of anniversaries and events, using archival material to create presentations, newsletters and exhibits. Lori regularly conducts research on behalf of the Sisters, and assists other researchers seeking out information about the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Lori recently completed a two-year term as treasurer for the Southwestern Ontario Chapter (SWOC) of the Archives Association of Ontario (AAO) and helped to facilitate the 2010 CAG (Catholic Archivist Group) Conference, after having served on its planning committee. Lori also works on the Sisters' website committee and is a member of their Eating Locally committee. She has also been working along with the other members of the Canadian CSJ Federation Archives Taskforce on an anniversary project.

An archivist's work is never done, and Lori enjoys the variety of tasks that continue to keep her busy in the Sisters of St. Joseph Archives. She continues to acquire new knowledge that she is able to apply to her work every day.