

Adelante Juntos



Forward Together

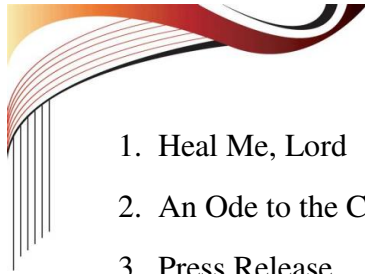


Table of Contents

1. Heal Me, Lord	Madeleine Gregg, FCJ
2. An Ode to the Church	Susan Donohue, FCJ
3. Press Release	Bonnie Moser, FCJ
4. All-Ireland Excitement	Ann Marie Walsh, FCJ
5. A Glimpse through Time	Theresa Smith, FCJ
6. Celebrating 65 and 60 Years	Pat Mac Donald and Terry Smith, FCJ
7. Now I See the Forest Dancing	Douglas Krefting, CiM
8. Dancing Lessons	Douglas Krefting, CiM
9. The Need to Dance	Laura Krefting, CiM
10. Reflection from a New Companion	Janice Fraser, CiM
11. Reflections on a Weekend in Central Alberta	Helen Kampel, FCJ
12. A Note from El Salvador	Loly Rico, CiM
13. Synod 2018	Ann McGill, FCJ
14. Towards an Understanding of CiM Leadership	Maria Di Castri, CiM
15. Healing in Ireland	Ann Marie Walsh, FCJ
16. Closing of Hope House, Tuscaloosa	Ellen McCarthy FCJ

From the Editor

Welcome to the second edition of "Adelante Junt@s" for 2018! Sincere thanks to all who have contributed this time. We seem to be continuing the path that Marie Madeleine followed of intimately sharing in the suffering, death and resurrection of our Faithful Companion. The accounts of joys and sorrows or struggles are treasures.

Theresa (Terry) Smith, FCJ





Heal Me, Lord

Sister Madeleine Gregg fcJ

C dm

Heal me Lord, my light has gone dim Heal me Lord, As

4 G em am dm G

you healed him A-long with Bar-ti-mae-us I too want to see from

7 C am dm G 1, 2 C C7 3. C

all my weak-ness-es I long to be free so heal me Lord Your Lord
As

11 F G em am

grace and truth cre-ate the beau-ty I long to find Yet
Faith and hope are born with-in me I look a-round to

13 dm G C C7

weak-ness traps me, fear-ing that I'll be left be-hind You
oth-ers, for com-pan-ions who are long-ing to be found to-

15 F G am

stretch a hand out to me call-ing "Come and walk with me" Your
geth-er as we jour-ney in your joy-filled com-pa-ny We

17 dm G D.C. al Fine

Word's migh-ty pow-er gives me strength to come and see so I pray
know that our task is to grow in har-mo-ny, so we pray



An Ode to the Church

In the light of what is happening in our church today, Carlo Carretto (1910-1988) offers us some hope in what is described as an *Ode to the Church*. Carretto loved the church deeply, but he wasn't blind to its faults and failures, and he wasn't afraid to point out those shortcomings. It reads this way:

How much I must criticize you, my church and yet how much I love you!

How you have made me suffer much and yet I owe much to you.

I should like to see you destroyed and yet I need your presence.

You have given me much scandal and yet you alone have made me understand holiness.

Never in this world have I seen anything more obscurantist, more compromised, more false, and yet never in this world have I touched anything more pure, more generous, and more beautiful.

Many times I have felt like slamming the door of my soul in your face – and yet how often I have prayed that I might die in your sure arms!

No, I cannot be free of you, for I am one with you, even though not completely you.

Then, too – where would I go? To build another church?

But I cannot build another without the same defects, for they are my own defects I bear within me.

And again, if I build one, it will be my Church, and no longer Christ's.

No, I am old enough to know that I am no better than others.

I shall not leave this Church, founded on so frail a rock, because I should be founding another one on an even frailer rock: myself.

And then, what do rocks matter?

What matters is Christ's promise, what matters is the cement that binds the rocks into one: the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit alone can build the Church with stones as ill-hewn as we.

Ron Rolheiser OMI included this *Ode* in his weekly column on September 3, 2018. He believes that "Carlo Carretto's Ode can help us all, whether scandalized or pious. To the pious, it can show how one can accept the church despite its sin and how denial of that sin is not what's called for by love and loyalty. To the scandalized, it can be a challenge to not miss the forest for the trees, to not miss seeing that, in the church, frailty and sin, while real, tragic, and scandalous, never eclipse the superabundant, life-giving grace of God."

Submitted by Susan Donohue FCJ



SAINT PHILOMENA SCHOOL


St. Philomena School - Portsmouth, Rhode Island: Exciting News for Our Future!

"Have courage and confidence. We must never say, 'I cannot do that, I am not capable of doing this'. God will not fail to give you the grace to do all that He has asked of you."

-Venerable Marie Madeleine d'Houet, Foundress of the Society Faithful Companions of Jesus

St. Philomena School of Portsmouth, Rhode Island not only has a strategic plan for the future, but also a strategic vision. Leadership of the Catholic independent elementary school is pleased to announce exciting news with regard to the school's future. "The Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus opened our school in 1953," said Board of Trustees Chair John Bohan. "Since that time, their support, care, and concern for the school has been unwavering, and they have pursued various partnerships that have paved the way for the school's success today. The existence of our Board, largely made up of lay people working in collaboration with the Sisters, is an example of this spirit. Today we announce another exciting partnership that is beginning for St. Philomena School. As of September 18, 2018, St. Philomena School will be formally entering the application process to become a member of the Sacred Heart Network of Schools of Canada and the United States."

The Society Faithful Companions of Jesus is an international order of Roman Catholic Sisters living and ministering in Asia, Australia, Europe, and the Americas with headquarters in England. While the Sisters fcJ operate schools internationally, St. Philomena School is their only educational ministry in the United States. Sister Bonnie Moser, fcJ, is the Provincial Leader for the Sisters in the Americas. She explains, "We recognized that being a part of a Network of schools guided by a strong religious charism similar to our own would not only be a great support to school leadership, but would also provide many benefits to all aspects of school operations. The complementary nature of our Society to that of the Religious of the Sacred Heart is remarkable. Not only were the foundresses of our two Orders contemporaries, but our Orders both had their earliest beginnings in the city of Amiens, France within twenty years of each other. The similarities continue in our values and beliefs, particularly with regard to the importance of Catholic education in today's world." The Network of Sacred Heart Schools, reflective of the educational mission of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, consists of 24 Catholic independent schools in the United States and



Canada, and additional international Network of schools in 30 countries. Sacred Heart Schools include elementary and high schools, as well as co-educational and single-gender schools, and the range of schools represent a variety of organizational models and structures. Being part of the Network provides access to a wealth of resources as well as various formation and leadership programs for both educators and students. It secures the future of Saint Philomena School as a strong Catholic independent school continuing to serve new generations of young people with *courage and confidence*.

St. Philomena School will carry forward a tradition of holding a unique status as being the only educational ministry of the Society Faithful Companions of Jesus in the United States and only the second school to enter the Sacred Heart Network of Schools from a different religious community. This pioneering spirit echoes “***Courage and Confidence***,” a motto of the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus, and qualities revered in the two foundresses, Venerable Marie Madeleine D’Houet and Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat. The application process for St. Philomena School to join the Network of Sacred Heart Schools is an approximately two-year, detailed and multi-phased process for application, review, and acceptance into the Network. St. Philomena School Principal Brian Cordeiro will take a leadership role in the application process. He said, “I couldn’t be more excited about the forward thinking of our Sisters fcJ, this strategic vision, and all the opportunities it will bring to St. Philomena School, our students, faculty and families. This partnership will ensure our school is anchored in excellence, committed to our faith and motivated to build upon our rich fcJ traditions for generations to come. The Sisters have our gratitude for securing the future for us. The Sacred Heart Network of Schools is known for its high standards in educating and forming students of character, courage, and confidence. The Network is an exceptional collaborative body of schools dedicated to academic excellence committed to bringing Catholic education into a bright and vibrant future. This is a very exciting time for our school.”

Submitted by Bonnie Moser FCJ





All Ireland Hurling Championship Excitement at Maryville

I had never seen a hurling match till I came to Ireland. However, I began to watch and learn and find it to be an interesting and skilful game. The closing weeks of the hurling season held much discussion around our table in Maryville since Limerick had such a good team this year! They had reached the semi-finals and won!! So, the week leading up to the All-Ireland Finals between Limerick and Galway brought much excitement to Limerick and to our FCJ community. That week, on Friday morning, Evelyn (Nurse Manager) told us that a Sr. Prayto (emphasis on the O) had called and was coming to lunch with us. The carer who had answered the phone had not asked any questions so nobody seemed to know who she was, what order she was or what FCJ she knew! However, Maria, Marie and Josephine were on retreat so we thought perhaps she knew one of them since none of us knew her. Her name sounded Italian to us but we figured she must have relatives in Limerick if she was coming here for the Sunday match.

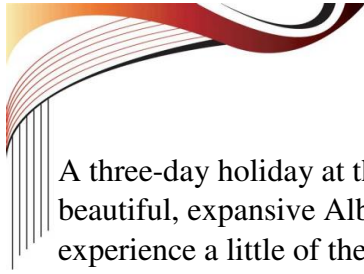


As lunch time approached, someone said that Sister had arrived and she was in a wheelchair but was quite 'posh', dressed in the Limerick green and white! Needless to say, there was some anticipation as to how this visit would go. Well, lo and behold, as we came into lunch, we were introduced to Sr. Prayto Wynne (see photo of Sr. Prayto with Mary O'Neil and Mary Condron) and discovered the correct pronunciation of her name was "Sister Prato Wynne - *pray to win*". She was a staunch Limerick supporter but was very quiet, a great listener, and did not want to eat - she just enjoyed being with us all and would stay with us until the end of Sunday's game! There were many laughs around the table as we shared how we had questions about her before her arrival! The carers were delighted that they had really 'duped' us all as they 'constructed' her and prepared us for her visit!

The following morning, Fr. Simon a Redemptorist from the Philippines who comes for conversational English with Mary Condron, celebrated Mass for us. After Mass, he came for coffee and we told him that we had a Sister visiting for the weekend. We explained that she had arrived yesterday etc. Phyllis brought Sr. Prayto in from the common room and Simeon enjoyed a hearty laugh as he saw the fun of it all. God bless Evelyn and the other carers for planning this and giving us lively conversation and a good laugh. The photo of Sr. Prayto with her hand up in victory will give you a hint that Limerick won by one point!! I guess her prayers did the trick for the Limerick team which played VERY well in the match!



Ann Marie Walsh, fcj



A Glimpse through Time

A three-day holiday at the end of August provided beautiful, expansive Alberta scenery with time to experience a little of the flavour of some small towns. The photos and words below help me reflect on the mystery of time as well as on relationships with people and the earth.



70 million years ago dinosaurs roamed what is now south central Alberta. The Horseshoe Canyon's ruggedness (*at left*) must have been a good home for the giant reptiles.



Some eons later the First Peoples arrived on the prairies and lived a nomadic lifestyle. They hunted buffalo which they used for food and clothing. The hides helped with providing shelter. Fr. Albert Lacombe, OMI, loved participating in a buffalo hunt with Metis from his mission in southern Manitoba. In 1853 he was sent to Lac Ste Anne (NW of Edmonton). Soon he established a mission in St. Albert in the land of Cree and Metis. Eventually he moved among the Blackfoot in the south.

When Canada was expanding westwards and wanted the railway to reach the Pacific, Government officials needed to speak with the inhabitants of the land. Fr. Lacombe* helped the Blackfoot understand what the Government was offering in exchange for the right to build the rails. Treaty Seven was signed at Blackfoot Crossing on September 22, 1877. At that site now is a marvellous interpretive centre that presents the history of the Blackfoot pre- and post-Treaty. The view of the Bow River from the centre is beautiful. (*Right*) [*Fr. Lacombe is the missionary who welcomed the FCJs to Calgary in 1885.]



Rosebud (*left*) and Big Valley (*right*) were important railway towns when grain was being shipped principally by train to large terminals. My maternal grandfather was a CNR station agent. He and his family lived in Rosebud from 1936 to 1951. The hamlet no longer has trains passing but instead it has



become known for its dinner theatre and production of a Passion Play each summer in neighbouring Drumheller. Sr. Joan de Grace, FCJ who died in 1997, grew up in Big Valley, a town that had had the

Canadian Northern Railway until 1923. Many years after that a smaller railroad carried grain from elevator to elevator.



A very well designed arboretum is in Trochu.. Trees and bushes are labelled and people can walk along the attractive pathways, stop by a fountain or sit on an inviting bench to soak in the beauty and tranquility.



Another place of interest while on a trip in central Alberta is Joffre. As the website of NOVA Chemicals says,

"Ethane, a component of natural gas, is the primary feedstock for ethylene production at Joffre. The ethane used at Joffre is extracted from natural gas in Alberta and is transported to the site via pipeline. In addition, a Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) pipeline delivers propane to the site as required, providing feedstock flexibility for ethylene production."



Intriguing that the marine life from 300 to 400 million years before the dinosaurs has contributed to the petroleum industry! Debates seem unending over the effects of oil and gas on the environment. In my opinion both sides need to be heard and endeavour to find the best solutions together.

Theresa Smith, FCJ



Celebrating 65 and 60 Years of FCJ Vowed Living



Celebrating 65 Years of Vows as a Faithful Companion of Jesus, Sr. Marilyn Matz arrived early on August 17 to welcome her visitors. Sr. Bonnie and Edmonton FCJs delighted Marilyn with their presence. CiMs Laura and Doug Krefting and other friends from Edmonton and Killam added to the joy of the day. A special gift was the arrival of Marilyn's niece, Kim, with her family who had travelled from Oyen which is about four hours east of Calgary. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Ephrem Kadouh, CSB of the Melkite Rite and good friend of our community. All in attendance were awed by the strength with which Marilyn renewed her vows. A beautiful reception prepared by the kitchen staff of our Centre was enjoyed after

Mass.



On July 28 Sr. Pat MacDonald celebrated 60 years of vowed life as a Faithful Companion of Jesus. Fr. Eric Nelson, known to the family since school days in St. Joseph's parish, presided at the liturgy. Pat was very grateful for the many cards and good wishes from FCJs all over the world. Sr. Bonnie and FCJs from Edmonton travelled to be present in person. Her brother, sister, their spouses, along with nieces, nephews and friends helped make it a memorable day.

Now i See the Forest Dancing

The photo shows a strip of mixed boreal forest along the edge of the North Saskatchewan River as it flows through Edmonton. Along the river's edge the forest is being drawn into the river to begin its journey to the Hudson's Bay. Some of the participants in the forest dance are shown below.



my life begins to fall
away after i become
part of the Dance
and the concrete
that encloses my
mind is shattering
now i can begin
my final Quest to
find my way home



Dancing Lessons

The Quest

For what do i search?
*That which is searching
for me.*

When will my search
end?

*When all boundaries
are erased and i
become*

part of the One.

The Way of Desire

desire
consumes me
like a log on fire
ashes
fall to pave
the way Home
Spirit
leads me to the One
who always bears me

Our Unique Way

not one of us should or can try
to make another's way our own
for we are each a complex creation
never duplicated
and when we seek
we find
God leading us into
experiencing her
each in our unique way

Right Attitude

what you think
is what you've learned
along your way
and while you walk
Spirit teaches you
to think the Way
of the be-attitudes

Reality

now I know there is
a different Reality
that holds everything
I can see and feel
including me

Faith

a bell not yet struck
starts me on the Way
and fire not yet burning
tells me Love is the Way
i am being carried to the One
who creates everything



The Need to Dance

Of Being

*I know this happiness is
provisional:*

*the looming presences—
great suffering, great fear—*

*withdraw only
into peripheral vision:*

*but ineluctable this shimmering
of wind in the blue leaves*

*this flood of stillness
widening the lake of sky:*

*this need to dance,
this need to kneel:*

this mystery:

Looming, suffering and fear. I grabbed at the three words; they confirmed my current feelings. What looms is the total unpredictability of the lives of three of the people I most love: my mother, father, and husband. And it is not just suffering and fear but **great** suffering and fear. “Father, if you are willing, remove this chalice from me.”

What am I thinking? This is normal, this is how life goes. In fact almost everyone I know is preparing for, or grieving a death. Similarly many have spouses with an illness that torpedoed their carefully planned lives together. Why should it be different for me? For the last 25 years I thought I was living the second part of Jesus’ prayer in the garden. “But not my will, but your will be done”. More often than not I was kidding myself. Good thing our God has patience and a sense of humour.

The word ineluctable was new to me. I pressed the pause button on this poem by Denise Levertov, and discovered it meant ‘unable to be avoided, inescapable’. It confirmed my feeling about the future—yup, bad stuff coming, prepare yourself, gird those loins. Then I realized that the adjective was describing ‘*this shimmering of wind in the blue leaves.*’ The wind, flood of stillness, widening of the lake of sky created in me a spacious, light feeling which overwhelmed those first three scary words. Each time I read those last six lines I was soothed.

Often I choose to see the world through the lens of those looming presences and close myself to the daily gifts of God and the hope that he promises. I am well aware of my ‘doom and gloom’ outlook. It is a habit that is harder to break than my former pack a day cigarette addiction. As a hunched over pessimist, I am planning for the worst so I will not be disappointed. Like today. Dad had an appointment at the hearing aid centre because one of his almost new hearing aids got

lost. I woke up feeling a kind of dread, a heaviness of body, and anxious. So many things could go wrong. He might forget the appointment and not be ready. Or refuse to take his oxygen and be breathless and unnecessarily confused. Or have to go to the toilet in the middle of the testing. Or have two other places he needed to go on the way home, both of which are 30 minutes in the other direction. While making breakfast I developed Plan A and Plan B to head off each of these hypothetical events. I also burnt my toast. What I needed was a few moments with the last six lines of Levertov's poem.

Working with Levertov's poem reminded me of another one. As she was dying of leukemia Jane Kenyon wrote,

*There is just no accounting for happiness,
or the way it turns up like a prodigal
who came back to the dust at your feet
having squandered a fortune away.....*

*Happiness is the uncle you never knew
about, who flies a single-engine plane
onto the grassy landing strip, hitchhikes
into town, and inquires at every door
until he finds you asleep mid-afternoon
as you so often are during the unmerciful
hours of your despair.*

Kenyon knows there are beauty and moments of surprisingly deep connection with God even in the worst of situations. The uncle and the airplane is an odd way to describe happiness but the details of the stanza left me with a feeling of being totally and unconditionally loved. Kenyon drags herself from under the covers of despair, opens to the knock of God's goodness and writes this poem just weeks before her death. What makes me dance and kneel and open the door to God in even the darkest times?

*Receiving notice from the library
that the book for which
I have been thirsting
has arrived
(after the 114 plodding readers ahead of me have finally finished).
Reading the first chapter in the Starbucks
and realizing the book was already quenching my thirst.*

And you?

Laura Krefting, CiM (Edmonton)



Reflection from a New Companion

I feel so privileged today to make this commitment to the Companions in Mission; and am amazed to walk alongside all the CiMs and Faithful Companions of Jesus as a spiritual sister within our international community. I am proud to stand boldly “in the spotlight of God’s gaze” together. I find this broad cosmic calling to attend to our world’s thirst and my own thirst, truly moving.

I am a little surprised to find myself on this beautiful journey. The discernment process has been three years. Yes- I am so grateful that I took that first step to come, taste and see and now every step has been leading towards this resonant, deeply abiding and “enduring” joy I experience today, as St. Ignatius taught. For I too have also known the kinds of joy that do not last, fade or leave me hungry, empty or never satisfied.



Although I have been connected with the FCJ since 1984 when I lived in l' Arche Calgary, it was not until I engaged in this formation process towards becoming a CIM that I came to better understand the deeply interior life, work and spirituality of the FCJ sisters and Sister Marie Madeleine. I have discovered why I feel so at “home” when I am at the FCJ. It is like being family: this rich tapestry of our lives where we find God in all things including our joys, successes, sufferings and failures.

As well as revealing the feminine side of Ignatius' spirituality, Sr. Marie Madeleine's gentleness, abandonment into love, steadfastness, clarity, obedience, humility in the face of much persecution and her exemplary “courage and confidence” all found at the “rallying point” of the women (we have loved) at the foot of the cross, draws me in! I love her example, her feisty spirit, and vision to meet the needs of girls and women, rich and poor alike, with an indomitable energy.

I love how this spirituality reflects a fierce independence and can be lived outside the confines of the institutional church. Being open to the mystical experiences of every day life, living out of our mysteries and contemplating them while in action and serving others who “thirst”, beckons me.

I know I must rely on our beautiful community to help keep me grounded in the call to follow Jesus and to bring love and action into all those desert places. Our world, and Canadian society and culture today make it very hard for me to live out of my Christian faith alone. I need the example and help of my sisters to grow and deepen in humility.

I want to grow in surrendering to the abandonment of Jesus, in me and everyone I meet, to God's Care. I know I must grow in my faithfulness to living out this yearning- “I believe, God, help my disbelief”.

Thank you to everyone who has bit by bit picked me up, dusted me off and set me on my way over and over again towards a more abiding companionship with God and with all of you!

Janice Fraser, CiM (Calgary)

Reflections on a Weekend in Central Alberta



What
makes a
holiday
long or
short?

It is
giving
time for
living in

the present moment

Whether it be

Watching the rolling hills, new mown hay



Feeling the grand openness of the Alberta skies

Seeing and enjoying the life forces of people in their
world.

Their God is good in their lives and mine

A time for breaking from the usual.

I breathe deeply

And say once again, "Thank you, God."



Helen Kampel, FCJ



Visit to El Salvador for the Canonization of Monseñor Romero.

Jacinta Goveas (a member of the FCJ Refugee Centre Board) and I went to El Salvador for the Canonization of Monseñor Romero. You will ask why we didn't go to Rome where the official ceremony was taking place? I didn't go because he became a Saint with the Salvadorean people, and the people were organizing different events around the country.

It was impressive to go where his tomb is at the Cathedral. There were lines and lines of very humble people with flowers, singing to him, reading poems. The *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* group that meets at the crypt was decorating the area with a lot of love and seriousness; you could see the friendliness as they welcomed everyone who didn't look "local".

On the day of the Canonization, San Salvador rose with a lot of festivities. You could hear fireworks everywhere. We started our pilgrimage by visiting the Church where he was killed and his humble house. It was full of buses with visitors from the rural areas and even indigenous peoples from Guatemala. They decorated the area with palms as a sign of welcoming the Good News.

We paid our respect and listened to stories from the Carmelite Sisters who take care of the place. Some of them were present when our Saint was murdered. Every time I go to El Salvador I always go to visit his house, but this time when I got there I started feeling very emotional. We always say how San Romero had been the voice of the voiceless, and to have the privilege to be with the people made me feel how important it was to be present there.

After the visit we walked to where the pilgrimage of the Youth started and we walked with them to the Cathedral. It was a very big party and well organized. I realized that many of the people organizing the walk were from the *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base*. They were very well organized and came from every part of El Salvador. It was a sign of Hope, because during the civil war many of the members of the Communities were dissolved and destroyed by the army because most of them were peasants. For many years it was very difficult for them to reorganize and continue with the work of Monseñor Romero. But this year it was a wonderful show of many of the Communities and especially the Youth; it was like Romero was risen in them. They were full of happiness and energy.

At the Cathedral we were singing the *Popular Mass* and it brought back many memories, such as the funeral of San Romero where the National Guard fired on the crowd and killed many. Now there are banners in front of the National Palace bearing some of Romero's famous phrases. The Mass in El Salvador was a very popular and symbolic Mass, recognizing the suffering of the people during the civil war and how they are still suffering from poverty and violence. Yet everyone was singing with a lot of Hope.

It was beautiful to see at the time of the communion a sea of priests walking among the thousands of people to give communion.

After Mass we were waiting for the official Mass to be televised from Rome. I was walking around and I found people with tents, sleeping on the ground, waiting for the big moment.

At the time of the Canonization, around 2 in the morning, everyone was very attentive to the official ceremony. It was touching to know that Pope Francis was wearing the cincture of Romero. As the commentators on TV were describing it, many people were crying with happiness. Suddenly everyone was clapping, white balloons were released into the sky, fireworks went off and everyone was filled with

joy. We, the world, have a new Saint, a Saint that represents the voiceless people, the poorest ones, the forgotten.

This is a symbol and proof that the people of El Salvador were blessed and recognized around the world for all that they suffered. It was a day in which the Leadership of the Catholic Church recognized that they have a martyr who was always advocating for the most vulnerable.

On that day Marie Madeleine came to my mind and I see that the two of them have a lot in common. Marie Madeleine was always helping the poorest and the forgotten people with serious illnesses whom no one wanted to take care of. Both have been our Patrons at the FCJ Refugee Centre, but on that day I imagined both of them more closely. I invite all our Sisters and my CiM companions to enjoy together the Good News that we have a new Saint, especially at this time when the world has become so unjust for the most vulnerable and voiceless. We now have a Saint that doesn't want to be idolized as a Saint but to ensure that his words would continue to denounce injustice. We have a big commitment to continue his Legacy. I invite you to follow his work.

Submitted by Loly Rico CiM

"The cause of all our problems is the oligarchy" (on the government building)

Mural in hospital grounds where St. Romero was assassinated in the chapel



Overnight vigil in San Salvador

Chapel where St. Romero was assassinated

(In the middle)

Portrait of St. Romero in the cathedral



Synod 2018: Young People, Faith, and Vocational Discernment

From October 3 to 28 the Synod on Youth is taking place in Rome. In October 2016 “The Holy Father, after the customary consultation with the episcopal conferences, the *sui iuris* Oriental Catholic Churches and the Union of Superiors General, as well as hearing the suggestions of the Fathers of the last Synod assembly and the opinion of the 14th Ordinary Council, has established that in October 2018 the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will be held, on the theme: 'Youth, faith and vocational discernment'.

"The theme, an expression of the pastoral care of the Church for the young, is consistent with the results of the recent Synod assemblies on the family and with the content of the post-Synodal apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. Its aim is to accompany the young on their existential journey to maturity so that, through a process of discernment, they discover their plan for life and realise it with joy, opening up to the encounter with God and with human beings, and actively participating in the edification of the Church and of society.” (Summary of Bulletin, Holy See Press Office 2016.10.06 - press.vatican.va)

The Vatican sought input from youth aged 16-29 from around the world via an online questionnaire and in local groupings of youth in parishes and other settings. In some of the local meetings youth had opportunities to interact, question, and offer their input to their local bishop. The information gathered from this process would serve to guide the preparation for the Synod. Later a presynodal meeting took place in Rome.

“The purpose of the Pre-Synodal Meeting, to take place in Rome from 19 to 24 March 2018, is to provide the opportunity for young people to produce a document, which expresses their view on the state of things, their ideas, their feelings and their recommendations, to be presented to the Synodal Fathers, who will meet in October 2018 to treat the topic: *Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment*. Participating in this meeting will be 315 young people, representing young people from the 5 continents. At the same time, we want, as much as possible, to involve young people the world over. By means of the social network, those who do not physically take part in the Pre-Synodal Meeting, can interact with those who will meet in Rome. Everyone is invited to join together in the discussion and to make their voices heard, so that the fruits of the Pre-Synodal Meeting will best express the ideas of young people throughout the world”. (www.synod.va)

The following two documents produced following the presynodal meeting were circulated from the Executive of the National Association of Vocation and Formation Directors (NAVFD). They give us a sense of how young people today see themselves and a sense of the church they desire.



A “SELFIE” TAKEN BY YOUNG PEOPLE

From the Final Document of the Pre-Synodal Meeting (FD), we can gather some ideas on how young people perceive themselves in today's reality. They seem, at times, contrasting because of the diversity of the contexts, the experiences, the stories, the cultures, etc. Here are some ideas for this "selfie":

1. Young people who are in search

- Young people seek identity by remaining rooted within their family traditions and striving to stay true to the way they were raised (FD n.1).
- Young people move away from their family traditions, hoping to be more “original” than what they see as “stuck in the past” and “old fashioned” (FD n.1).
- Young people appreciate groups, associations and movements because their identity is also shaped by such interactions and membership (FD n.1).
- Young people have a passion for “the fire” of contemporary and charismatic movements that focus on the Holy Spirit (FD n.15).

2. Young people who are suffering

- Young people suffer the pressures of social exclusion and the pressure to shed their cultural identity and assimilate to the dominant culture (FD n.1).
- Young people are full of hope despite the many wars and intermittent outbreaks of violence (FD n.3).
- Young people seek the opportunity to work towards building a better world (FD n.3).
- Young people are forced to emigrate in order to find a better economic and environmental situation (FD n.1).
- Young people have to migrate in order to find a good place to work (FD n.5)
- Young people due to economic instability abandon family and culture (FD n.5).

3. Young people who are dreaming

- Young people, in many Western countries, have dreams centered on personal development and self-realization (FD n.3).
- Young people dream of safety, stability, fulfillment, and of a better life for their families (FD n.3)
- Young people are especially attracted to the “Western myth”, as depicted through media (FD n.3).

4. Young people who are struggling

- Young people find it hard to make long-term decisions (FD n.3).

- Young people who consider themselves “spiritual but not religious” and who relate to God solely on a personal level (FD n.7).
- Young people strongly want to know Jesus, yet often struggle to realize that He alone is the source of true self-discovery (FD n.5).

5. Young people who are distant

- Young people who look for a peaceful life end up dedicating themselves to alternative philosophies or experiences (FD n.1).
- Young people with parallel lives: often they tend to separate their behavior into online and offline environments (FD n.4).
- Young people’s loss of identity linked to a misrepresentation of the person, a virtual construction of personality and the loss of grounded social presence (FD n.4).
- Young people are carried away by the culture and dictatorship of appearances and suffer loss of concentration linked to fragmentation (FD n.4).
- Young people who are influenced by digital spaces are blinded to the vulnerability of another human being and are prevented from self-reflection (FD n.4).
- Young people’s faith has become private rather than communal (FD n.7).
- Young people infrequently seek the answers to life’s meaning in the context of faith and (FD n.5).

6. Young people who are disillusioned

- Young people, having lost trust in institutions, have become disaffiliated with organized religion and would not see themselves as “religious.” However, young people are open to the spiritual (FD n.5).

7. Young people who are digital natives

- Technology is a permanent part of young people’s life. Social media is a significant part of their identity and way of life (FD n.4).
- Young people are more receptive to a “literature of life” than an abstract theological discourse (FD n.5).
- Young people consider the culture of openness as extremely healthy (FD n.15).

8. Young people who are committed

- Young people who are deeply vested in and concerned about topics such as sexuality, addiction, failed marriages, broken families as well as larger-scale social issues such as organized crime, human trafficking, violence, corruption, exploitation, femicide, all forms of persecution and the degradation of our natural environment (FD n. 1).
- Young people who respect others’ thoughts and freedom of expression (FD n.2).
- Restless young people who try to make sense of a very complicated and diverse world (FD N°2).
- Young people who share the same innate desire for the higher ideals: peace, love, trust, equity, freedom and justice and who seek to engage with and address the social justice issues of our time (FD n.3)
- Young people who are aware of being the primary ambassadors of the faith to their peers (FD n.7).
- Young people have a passion for political, civil and humanitarian activities (FD n.12).
- Young people who desire for social outreach and evangelization to people struggling with illnesses and addictions (FD n.14).
- Young people drawn towards silence, meditation, traditional liturgies, contemplative prayer and Eucharistic Adoration (FD n.15).

- Young people, digital natives, who wish to commit themselves with the Church in evangelizing through the social media and online multimedia (FD n.15).
- Young people who allow themselves to be challenged by the lives of the Saints, by their paths to holiness and fulfillment (FD n.15).

Profile of a Church which young people desire

In the Pre-Synodal Meeting, the young people have verbalized the Church they dream of. Although they are aware of their "being Church", they realize that there are styles that block the relationship between them and the Church (as institution and as community of faith).

→ The Church's being and nature

Young people dream of a Church who ...

- appreciates her roots and her treasures, who does not renounce being herself (FD n.1) • loves everyone without exception (FD n. 1)
- not only holds fast to her teachings, amid unpopularity, but also proclaims them with greater depth (FD n.5)
- is a living testimony to what it teaches and witnesses to authenticity on the path to holiness (FD n. 7)
- speaks in practical terms about controversial subjects such as homosexuality and gender issues, etc. (FD n.11)
- knows how to present in a clear and attractive way what the Sacraments truly are for the life of a Christian (FD n. 14)

→ The Church's way of relating

Young people dream of a Church who ...

- is welcoming, merciful, tenderness personified (FD n.1)
- helps young people to find their vocation, in all of its senses (FD n. 3)
- is solicitous and sincere, admits its past and present wrongs, is not afraid to allow itself to be seen as vulnerable, is made up of persons who are capable of error and misunderstanding, but, with humility, knows how to ask for forgiveness (FD n. 7 and n. 11)
- eliminates indifference, judgment, and rejection. Unfortunately, many persons leave the Church due to these negative experiences (FD n.7)
- takes the young people seriously by giving them space for dialogue and exchange (FD n. 15)
- adopts a language which engages the customs and cultures of the young so that all people will have the opportunity to hear the message of the Gospel (FD n. 15) Youth Ministry Series – N. 14/2018 22
- knows how to value more and more artistic expression in the field of evangelization through music, visual art, architecture, design etc. Young people especially respond to and enjoy being creative and expressive (FD n.15)

→ The Church's way of organizing herself as an institution

Young people dream of a Church who ...

- examines how it thinks of young people and commits itself for them, in order to be an effective, relevant and life-giving guide in the young people's journey (FD n.1)
- deepens its understanding of the role of women and values their unique contribution (FD n.9)

- lives pastoral conversion by involving young people in its decision-making processes and offering them leadership roles (FD n.12)
- prepares seminarians and religious men and women to have an even greater ability to accompany young leaders (FD n. 12)

→ The Church's prophetic action

Young people dream of a Church who ...

- addresses the widespread crisis of pornography, including online child abuse, as well as cyber-bullying and the toll these take on our humanity (FD n. 4)
- reinforces initiatives that fight against human trafficking and forced migration, as well as drug-trafficking (FD n. 14)
- is "mother" and therefore, supports, provides, assists the healing of her children who suffer under the weight of mental illness and physical disabilities (FD n.3)
- with authority, exerts pressure on governments so as to ensure social justice, peace and security for all (FD n. 3)
- meets the young people "in the periphery", because the place in which they wish to be met is the streets, where people of all kinds are found (FD n.13)
- is present in the schools and universities in a stronger and more effective way (FD n.13)
- is accessible also through social media as well as other digital spaces, to more easily and effectively offer information about the Church and its teachings, and to further the formation of the young person (FD n.13)

Submitted by Ann McGill, FCJ



Towards an Understanding of CiM Leadership

Here in Alberta, Canada, the subject of CiM leadership has come up in our groups and at our provincial gatherings. Leadership in our CiM groups has mostly emerged with reluctant members coming forward because someone has to take the helm, and seeing a dearth of volunteers, we step forward. I was somewhat uncomfortable with this because surely a leader of CiM ought to offer more than their general aptitude for organizing, facilitating and caring for the continuance of CiM. There must be qualities that the FCJ charism adds to the general characteristics of leadership that enrich and distinguish it.

We haven't any program of formation for leaders and for a time asked to have one. Sister Bonnie Moser suggested that we begin first with the organic approach of recognizing and developing the leadership of every member. I asked our members in Edmonton to keep the subject of CiM leadership in the back of their minds as we met for monthly meetings. The object was to see if we might find something in what arose from our sharing/discussions of

designated topics that would also contribute to a description of what CiM leadership should look like. We did have a few meetings where we actually addressed the topic of leadership directly at the end of the meeting but it was not long before I began jotting notes to myself during meetings when something came up that could be added to the description. This meant we didn't have to reserve time for the topic at our already lively and likely to run overtime meetings. What has emerged so far verifies what Sr. Bonnie was getting at inasmuch as we can see that these qualities are ones that all of us strive to develop as CiM.

What follows is a work in progress. We do not claim to have pinned down the essentials but this is what we have recognized as part of our vision of CiM leadership. You might want to make CiM leadership the focus of one of your own meetings or try what we have done. If you want to enter into discussion with us on the subject, feel free to contact me. Your comments will be most welcome!

A CiM leader seeks to reflect the goodness of God and takes the perspective of putting first what is good for the community and the cosmos. They exhibit stability, calm and openness to dialogue. They are able to distinguish and put aside their own motivations in favour of operating out of love. A CiM leader always seeks inner freedom and the honesty to put aside their own expectations in favour of seeking where God is in a situation. They are open to all possibilities and rely on trust rather than control, recognizing that we do not control what will happen - it is God who does for us.

A CiM leader recognizes their own gifts given for the sake of others, is sensitive to and honours the inner gifts of each person (even when they are not obvious to all), and waits patiently for these gifts to manifest themselves within the community.

A CiM leader recognizes the weaknesses and faults of members, and sees hope within the disturbances caused by these, because they show the possibility for growth.

CiM leadership is practical. It is sensitive to the demands each person is struggling with. CiM leaders acknowledge the many ways in which we are the hands of Christ and do not make unrealistic demands. Members are often unable to exercise their gifts fully within the CiM community because of the many responsibilities they have in their lives – these being, in many cases, their call to mission. CiM leaders are, at the same time, able to “warn the idlers, give courage to those who are apprehensive, care for the weak and be patient with everyone.” 1Thes. 5:14

Maria Di Castri, Local CiM Co-Coordinator for Edmonton





God Writes Straight on Crooked Lines

I bet most of us have quoted these words more than once in our lives, I know I have! Yet, I go on learning how true this is in my own life. As you know, I came to Ireland for a sabbatical year in July 2017 and was due to return to the Province in Spring of 2018. However, that changed as the need for knee replacement became more and more a reality in my life. That had certainly not been in my mind, or in anyone else's as I began my time away. Thank God, I could get it done here in Ireland with an excellent surgeon in Galway, and recuperate in Maryville residence. I thank so many of you who walked with me at a distance or close at hand during the months of waiting and then recuperating from the surgery. The prayers, cards and good wishes through e-mail or Skype brought me great joy and consolation as I moved to a much slower pace of life! My second knee was done on September 16th and aside from having to spend two extra days in the hospital because the wounds were still not full drained, all went well as it had for the first knee in May. God has really aided me in so many ways in this journey and so many people have reached out in great kindness, care and concern. I am seeing the surgeon on October 23rd and I am sure he will be pleased with my progress and I will not have to see him again. I am walking with one crutch or a cane these days and have stiffness but very little pain, thank God.

Another way that God wrote straight on crooked lines for me had to do with an expected visit from Kevin and Patty McCarthy from Portsmouth, R.I. very good friends of mine from my years at St. Philomena School. During a trip to Ireland, they were to come to Maryville for a visit on the day after I got home from the hospital. But then, the doctor would not let me home that day! I was very distressed and disappointed to say the least! I tried to convince him that I could go home—we had a nurse here who would change the dressing, be sure there was no infection etc. My Dad used to say to me that he thought “I could sell ice cubes to Eskimos” but I could not sell going home to the doctor! No go, he was not to be convinced! So, very disappointed and sadly, I e-mailed the McCarthys and said I would not be home, so they were not to drive to Limerick. In a few hours, I had a message back from them saying they had looked at a map and where they were staying was not too far from Galway, so they would come to the hospital to visit! They came the next day and we had a wonderful couple of hours together. I was even able to walk to the cafeteria and have a cup of tea and a cookie with them --- ‘God wrote straight’ once again in my life!! On the line of USA visitors, on the Saturday after I got home, Anne Marie and Michael Coakley also good friends from St. Phil's, came and we had a lovely visit here at Laurel Hill.

I hope in sharing all this, I will draw you to recall the times in your life when God has written straight on crooked lines!! Thanks again for being part of my journey.

Ann Marie Walsh, FCJ



With Hope as Our Charism Takes Root and Grows - The Closing of Hope House FCJ, Tuscaloosa, AL

After 25 years of FCJ life, love, service, and Faithful Companionship in the city of Tuscaloosa in the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama a Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell for the Sisters took place, fittingly, on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, June 3, 2018, at St. Francis University Parish.

Over the years several FCJ Sisters have ministered in various capacities and for varying lengths of time. However, for the past three years Sr. Ellen McCarthy has been the lone FCJ residing at Hope House, with Sr. Ann McGill, non-resident Local Leader visiting from Toronto from time to time. Since the departure of Sr. Madeleine Gregg, Ellen has been sharing the house with Elizabeth Pellegrini, a doctoral graduate student of music at University of Alabama. Elizabeth, having completed her studies, moved out in early May.

In the week preceding the Mass various FCJs arrived for the celebrations and for the annual CiM retreat. Sr. Susan Donohue from Edmonton, Alberta arrived on May 27. Sr. Ita Connery, Sr. Madeleine Gregg and Sr. Helen Kampel arrived from Calgary, Alberta on May 29. Sr. Bonnie Moser, Area Leader, and Sr. Ann McGill arrived from Toronto, Ontario on June 1. So we were seven FCJs in total, which for Hope House was unusual and more than could be accommodated. Thankfully, however, Srs. Madeleine and Helen were hosted for the duration of their stay by Madeleine's friend and colleague from The University of Alabama, Diane Sekeres.

On Wednesday May 30 the Companions in Mission annual retreat led jointly by Srs. Susan and Ita began with 10 CiMs in attendance. Sadly, due to travel difficulties JoAnn Burden, CiM from Durham North Carolina – who had joined the group for the retreat the previous year – was unable to attend. The theme of the retreat was focused on leadership and ministry. The days were filled with opportunities for input and prayer and times of reflection. A poignant moment in the retreat was a prayer experience when the FCJ's and CiM's had an opportunity to spend some quiet personal time visiting the various rooms and prayer spaces both inside the house and outside in the gardens, remembering and saying goodbye to their favorite places.

On the last day of the retreat Saturday June 2, Sr. Bonnie commissioned Rene Bailey, CiM – who had just returned from the international CiM meeting in Gumley, and Genevieve Snipes, CiM as the co-coordinators of the Tuscaloosa CiMs. Rene and Genevieve are both long time members of CiM and are committed, active, generous, and faith-filled women who obviously have the trust and support of the other members of the group. The retreat concluded with a ritual of hand washing led by Rene and Genevieve. There was an opportunity for sharing of feelings and blessings in light of the departure of the Sisters. As each one spoke, the trust among the members was evident in their honest and at times tearful sharing of feelings. As they shared

their hopes and desires as individuals and as group, we FCJs witnessed their taking ownership and embracing the leadership for the group. There was a great sense among the FCJ's that the group was being left in capable hands. A delicious potluck meal and socializing brought the retreat to a joyful conclusion. Our great gratitude goes to Srs. Susan and Ita for sharing their wealth of knowledge and deep spirituality, and for the joy of their companionship.

The next day, Sunday, the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell took place at 3.00 p.m. with Fr. Rick Chenault, presiding assisted by Fr. Michael Deering the pastor of Holy Spirit Parish, Tuscaloosa. Fr. Rick is Diocesan Vocation Director and Campus Minister and is a good friend of the FCJs. At the beginning of Mass Sr. Bonnie offered words of welcome and acknowledged our privilege in serving with and among the people of Tuscaloosa these 25 years. After Holy Communion, Madeleine gave an informative and at times humorous recollection of our time and ministry in Tuscaloosa. She also drew attention to the fact that while the Sisters may indeed be leaving, the seed of our charism has been planted here. Through the ministry and relationships developed over the years at the University and at St. Francis as well as at Holy Spirit school and parish, but in a particular through our Companions in Mission we know that Marie Madeleine's legacy will live on. Our hope is that it will continue to grow and flourish.

At the Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell, FCJs, CiMs, and colleagues served in various roles as music ministers, lectors, reading the Prayers of the Faithful, presenting the gifts, and as extraordinary minister of the Eucharist. Following the Eucharist, a reception to which everyone was invited, took place in the parish hall which had been carefully and lovingly decorated with beautiful flowers from the Hope House garden and the gardens of Genevieve Snipes, CiM and Mona Runge, CiM. Delicious finger foods and beverages were served and there was great socializing, some reunions and much fare-welling. There is, as always, great sadness that there will no longer be any FCJ Sister(s) in Tuscaloosa, yet we are confident that God will do great things through the instrumentality of our CiMs.

Thank you to everyone who supported us through your prayers and messages of support and goodwill. Please continue to hold in prayer the people of Tuscaloosa and the growth and development of our Charism in Tuscaloosa.

Ellen McCarthy FCJ

