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From the Editor

Welcome to our May/June 2022 edition of “Adelante Junt@s”. We trust that you will enjoy the variety of articles presented. If you have any comments or questions, please address them to me at terry@fcjcentre.ca.

Now that our newsletter is in its twentieth year, we are wondering if you would like to suggest a new name for it. Perhaps “Adelante Junt@s” which means Going Forward Together still fits the bill. Maybe it is time for something new.

Theresa (Terry) Smith, f.c.J.



Insights Gleaned from the Bees!

In the garden of the FCJ Centre in Calgary, Fr. John, rector of the Cathedral Rectory (our parish) has a honeybee hive. Last year, we enjoyed some of the delicious honey from these bees! I did not pay much attention to it last year but this year I did. I'd like to share a few insights gained from my visits to the honeybee hive.

The hive was wrapped up with black plastic to protect it from the winter cold winds. There was a little opening at the very bottom of the hive which let some air in and, on sunny, warmer days some bees out. So, I walked over one sunny, winter day and stayed by the hive for a while. I saw no activity at all! Even though I was hoping for at least a few bees to explore, they did not. As I looked, I began to realize that there was a lot going on inside that hive even though I could neither see nor hear anything. The bees were doing what they were meant to be doing and things were happening, growth was taking place! Isn't this a lot like us in our spiritual growth, I thought. So often, at least for me, change and growth seems so slow. Yet, God is at work and change, growth is happening as long as I am open to it. I may not notice it but it is happening.

Lord, help me to be like the bees in that I keep being open to what You are calling me to be or do and just be faithful to that. You will take care of the progress and at the right time, I will also notice the changes happening! I do not need to see the on-going progress!

In early spring, I was able to go to the hive one afternoon with Fr. John when he was going to open the top of it to give the bees some honey paste to provide them nourishment as the season began to invite them to movement out of the hive. At first, I stayed a few feet back from the hive but then as I saw Fr. John so close and no bees bothering him, I moved right up to the hive so I could see what was happening. He offered me protective 'beekeepers gear' but I really did not feel I needed to wear that. It was fascinating to see how quickly the bees (on the first rack of the hive which we could see) moved towards the honey. (in the photo) There must have been hundreds of bees on that first rack. A few of them ventured off into the air close to the hive but most of them stayed put on the rack and little by little moved toward the honey paste. John put the top back on, leaving the honey paste there and I had other ponderings on what I had seen.



Fr. John knew what would be good for the bees and he generously provided it. He did not force any of them to take the honey nor lead any of them towards it in any way. No, he just provided and enjoyed seeing them appreciate it! As I reflected later I thought of our generous, loving

God. How God has provided for me in my lifetime in so many ways. Bringing nourishment and sweetness into my life especially after some 'winter' darkness or dryness! God never compels but usually invites in such a gentle, loving way. Oh yes, sometimes there is a little strong push to get my attention and wake me up to what He is offering!

Loving God, please help me to be open to what you are providing for me each day. Give me the graces I need not to miss the daily 'nourishment' You provide in Eucharist and in all the other ways You bring life-giving moments to me every day.

My last insight came today as I went out to visit the hive. It was a lovely, sunny, warm spring day and I knew that the bees would be flying around the hive and beyond. Maybe even gathering some pollen from the few spring flowers that are in bloom. What a feeling I got in my gut as I looked over to where the hive was! No hive to be seen! I have not been able to check out where it went but I know Fr. John was in close contact with a beekeeper in a more country spot in Alberta so I'm guessing it went there. Was I ever surprised! What surprised me even more was the feeling within myself –I really felt a sadness and a loss! I stayed outside for a while in the sun and sat with the feelings. Then I began to get the insight. I had the joy of the beehive for as long as I did and it was a blessing to me. I guess I had learned the lessons that God wanted me to have from it and so it moved on! Isn't that similar to what I have experienced especially in my FCJ missioning in my life? Aside from my very difficult college years, I have loved every one of my missionings! In each of them, God asked me to leave and move along to the next call. Every one of my missions have been truly a blessing to me and have led me to many areas of personal and spiritual growth. But God asked me to let go and move on! I did not go alone, no, He was and is always with me!

Loving God, I thank you for the gift of the beehive which I had for this brief time. I am grateful for the insights gleaned from it. Thank you for Your faithfulness and for all the ways You bless and strengthen me. So often, like today, I feel a sadness and disappointment about something or someone I have to leave behind but then I see the blessing that person, event or happening has been to me and I give thanks. Help me to grow in trust in Your loving guidance in my life and let me continue to say "Yes" gladly to what You ask of me.

So, I guess now you all can see how the bees taught me a few wonderful lessons during their stay in our back garden! I hope I recall them as I see other honeybees flying around in the future.

Ann Marie Walsh, FCJ





Resurrection Encounters

Resurrection moments happen in the reality of everyday life – can we not see them?

Creation is alive with Easter revelations: The birds wake up the dawn with their chorus of Alleluias; the trees and shrubs are displaying green buds as they wait for full blooms; the daffodils, irises, tulips are bringing colour and beauty to winter gardens; the cherry blossoms, magnolia and forsythia are decorating our city parks. Easter is certainly a time of new beginnings, of rebirth, of transformation in all of nature. Likewise, there are Resurrection encounters in everyday events and experiences. I want to share just a few of my recent encounters:



Paula and I were preparing to go to Guelph for a weekend retreat on Trees and I decided to take a walk to Union train station, Toronto, just to get a sense of ‘the lay of the land’ so that we could easily take either a bus or train to Guelph. Union Station had been renovated in recent years and I was told that the bus terminal is connected to the train station. When I entered Union Station, I felt completely out of my depth. It was like a modern airport with crowds of people going in many different directions, escalators going up and down, announcements of trains going North, South, East and West. How would I ever find the bus station? In the midst of my confusion and sense of chaos, a young man of African roots approached me. Smiling broadly, he said, *“I’m so excited; this is the first time this year that I can go to Lake Ontario and have my coffee while I look at the lake”*. I smiled and said, *“Wow!”* Then he said, *“I just wanted to share my good news with someone.”* I thanked him and as he backed away, dancing with delight and with coffee in hand, he repeated, *“Shalom, Shalom, Shalom.”* I said to myself, this is a resurrection appearance and I felt really peaceful. With renewed energy, I made my way across a bridge to the bus terminal with the aid of one of the maintenance women. Of course, later on when I booked a bus ticket for Guelph on the internet, it didn’t leave from Union Station at all!!!!

My second resurrection encounter took place when Paula and I were returning from Guelph. One of the retreatants dropped us off at Kipling subway station. I am unfamiliar with this station so I asked a man to tell us which train heads to Bathurst Street. He said he was getting on that train and was getting off at the stop

after ours. When we got off the train at Bathurst, there he was on the platform smiling and saying that he wanted to make sure we were OK. Then he led us out of the station. This is what I call, “*going the extra mile.*”!

My third resurrection moment took place when I was going to visit Frances McKenna FCJ. I was walking along Bloor Street and a young woman approached me and said that she needed to buy Kleenex. I said that I was sorry, but I had no cash. Then she asked me if I would go into the store with her and pay with a credit card. This I did, and when we came out of the store, she asked me if I would pray with her. I said, yes of course, and I asked her about her faith preference. She said she was a disciple of Christ and I said, I am a companion of Christ. We went over to the side, away from the pedestrians, and she offered a beautiful thanksgiving prayer which made me so glad that I took the time to help. We parted after she asked me to pray for healing for her. I said, we all need healing and I would be happy if she would pray for healing for me, too.

We often say that Jesus enters our lives unobtrusively or in disguise. How many resurrection moments do I miss because I limit Jesus’ appearances to my own limited expectations or preferences? Ron Rolheiser says: “... *the Easter feast is a reminder to all of us to open our eyes and our ears and to witness what is happening all around us, all the time, everywhere.*”

Susan Donohue, FCJ



FCJ Prayer Garden at St. Philomena School of the Sacred Heart, Portsmouth, RI

After three years in the making and through delays caused by the pandemic, we are overjoyed to welcome the completed FCJ Prayer Garden to our campus. This space, completely funded by a generous grant from the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus, creates a prayer and gathering space to honor Mary, Our Mother of Courage and Confidence and call us all closer to a life of faith, service and love through her Son, Jesus!



FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR NEW PRAYER GARDEN:

- The garden honors the FCJs who founded and owned our school until 2021 and is dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus, in honor of her important status in the life of the Society and Catholic Church.
- The garden is located outside of what was the convent for the sisters during the time they lived on our campus (Now the Learning Common).
- There are five benches that have our five school FCJ virtues inscribed on them: *hope, dignity, excellence, companionship and gentleness*.
- Mary is featured as the focal point of the garden under a tree planted by SPS students in 1976 in honor 200th anniversary of the country.
- The statue of Mary in our garden showcases a courageous and confident Mary who is smiling, joy-filled by her faith in God, throwing her arms out to embrace the world through the love of her Son and with one foot stepping confidently forward towards the unknown plans God has in store for her. She reminds us all to claim that same spirit, joy and openness as people of active faith and joy in the world.
- The Sisters FCJ made this prayer space possible through a generous grant in honor of the 200th anniversary of the formation of the Society.



All are encouraged to come, reflect and pray with Mary, our Mother of Courage and Confidence, that all of us might discover, develop and use our God-given gifts and talents to transform our world for good!

Brain Cordeiro, Principal
St. Philomena School of the Sacred Heart





Understanding Friendship

In January of 2022, the world lost another famous celebrity, Betty White. When the news broke about Betty's death, a trademark theme song "Thank you for being a Friend", played continually on the air waves for several weeks leading up to the official celebration of her life which was held in the media on what would have been her 100th birthday, Jan. 17, 2022.

At the time of Betty's passing, I was doing an online- zoom retreat with fellow CiMs led by Gerrie Beebe. We were using ***The First Spiritual Exercises*** conceived by St. Ignatius but adapted by Michael Hanson, S.J. In January, we started week three, ***Inner Peace, Friendship with Jesus***. It was in my daily readings, and weekly input from Gerrie, that my friendship with Jesus grew stronger. Some of the lyrics of Betty White's theme song really resonated with me beginning with "Thank you for being MY friend...." The weeks we spent coming to understand how much Jesus loves each and everyone of us were overwhelming. He truly is "a pal and a confidant"! Through our Month of Week Three, we were reminded how Jesus thought of everyone as a friend....and gently modeled for people how to be a friend. He taught us all to love and forgive and not judge. He accepted people for who they were.... nudging them to be who he wanted them to become. He understood no one is perfect and loves us all despite our shortcomings. Each day is a new day to do the next right thing. At this time, I came to truly believe that Jesus loves me, 'warts and all'! In our readings and weekly discussions in January, I was reminded of the tenet of our Apostles' Creed, that of the Communion of Saints, and had time to truly thank my friends in heaven for who they were in my life. This included treasured family members who loved me unconditionally; deceased members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who on a daily basis, reminded me of "How good is the good God"; special saints whose lives inspired me; and my dear departed FCJs who meant so much to me. They taught me so much about Jesus' love for all of us. Companions in Mission has been a gift in my life, and I treasure and am grateful for the gift of friendship with so many sisters, and companions who love me for who I am.

Jennie Abbate, CIM



What Dancing Can Do for Us



I have a passion for dancing, which always lifts up my spirits and helps me to keep in shape.

According to scholar and dance researcher Richard Powers, for centuries, dance manuals and other writings have lauded the health benefits of dancing, usually as physical exercise. More recently we've seen research on further health benefits of dancing, such as stress reduction and increased serotonin level, with its sense of well-being.

Most recently we've heard of another benefit: Frequent dancing apparently makes us smarter.

A major study added to the growing evidence that stimulating one's mind by dancing can ward off Alzheimer's disease and other dementia, much as physical exercise can keep the body fit. Dancing also increases cognitive acuity at all ages. Dancing integrates several brain functions at once — kinesthetic, rational, musical, and emotional — further increasing your neural connectivity.

I believe we need to dance, as often as we can.

Cheers!



Nancy Angel Doetzel, CIM Calgary



A Missed Opportunity

Imagine walking on a path through woods the day after wet snow has fallen. The sun is shining and snow clumps are falling from the trees. Is this the road to Emmaus? The beauty and freshness in the air is wonderful. Don't you feel sorry that Jesus did not have an opportunity like this? I do and did the other morning in Lindsay Park.

Theresa Smith, f.c.J



Freepik.com



Sister Marguerite Goddard's Farewell in Salta

After 20 years of work and service in Solidaridad, Sr. Marguerite Goddard returns to her native land on the 20th March 2022. These days, hundreds of the neighbours have come to say good-bye to their friend, who accompanied them and helped them to a better life. Yesterday, a Mass was celebrated to give thanks for the presence of the Congregation of the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus in the Barrio.

Many people came to say good-bye to Sr. Marguerite Goddard who today is journeying to her native country, England, after having lived and worked for



twenty years together with the people of Barrio Solidaridad, in the south-east of the city. Before coming to Salta, she was in Tarija, Bolivia and in Santiago del Estero.

Yesterday, at midday, dozens of the neighbours came to the house of the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus to celebrate a Mass with them. In a few weeks, the house where Sisters Marguerite and Paula live will be closed.

“We would like to remain here, but we are not able to” said the Religious who belongs to the Community founded by Marie Madeleine d’Houet with Ignatian spirituality.

They insisted that Marguerite has been a “gift” for many. She was always attentive to the needs and concerns of every-one; she visited sick neighbours and supported those in need of comfort. Together with the neighbours, she involved herself in any work to improve their living conditions. She looked for and acquired help to resolve difficult situations.

Sister was regretful that she had to leave but admitted “it’s time to return. I would have loved to stay until the end, but one has to recognize that one is from another country and it is right to return to one’s own people.”

She assured us that she has many friends from Salta - “Very good people, full of love.” She confessed that she was surprised that they accepted her, being “a poor English woman.”

She remembered one time when the Town Council gave recognitions as outstanding neighbours both to herself and to a former soldier who had fought in the war of the Falkland’s Islands. Marguerite was filled with emotion when she realised the significance of these two neighbours, added to the fact that the school where the ceremony was held was named after an Argentinian ship that had been sunk in the Falklands’ War resulting in the death of 323 Argentinian soldiers.

She told us that in Salta she learned to value each person and each moment “more than before”. “The Argentinians have great faith, although some perhaps never go to Church. They say they don’t believe in God “but they have good values.”

Sister expressed her sadness that there are so many involved in drugs and alcohol and she highlighted the warmth of those most vulnerable. “I have many friends who live in very poor conditions, some without proper shelter. Sometimes they come here to ask for food; we give them a sandwich and they say “Thank you and God bless you”

She lamented the fact that there are many corrupt people who take advantage of others.



“I know many who suffer for lack of justice. Many, who are in prison, end up worse than before and many leave prison more addicted to drugs than before they began their sentences. Life is very difficult for many, but there is a spirit of wanting to change, to struggle, and to keep going.”

A great Sower

“She sowed many seeds and this is her harvest”,

Luisa Hoyos assured us, pointing to all the people who were there to say goodbye to Marguerite. “She was one of the first sisters whom I met. She is a gift of God and a very special person for us, as she is for many people in the city of Salta”

Luisa also shared that she learned much from the Sisters, “above all to know God and to see my sisters and brothers in a different way.” She said that Marguerite “goes like the wind” and mentioned that that’s how the neighbours saw her when she was walking around the barrio helping all those she could.

Alicia Morales remembered that when she first arrived in “Soli”, her mother was very sick and Marguerite was always visiting them. In this way she developed a great friendship with her, and her mother admired Marguerite very much. “She was a pioneer. She did wonderful things very well. She always tried to imitate Jesus. Wherever she went where there was sadness, she sowed happiness.

*(Original in Spanish in the newspaper of the city of Salta, “El Tribuno”).
Translated by Anne Morrison FCJ*





unsplash.com



unsplash.com

Joyful Surprises

A word.....It seems as though the covid and cough times are just about flatlining me and I hope not everyone.

Before the cough set in in earnest I was given the joy of a visit from a dear friend who travelled to Calgary from St. Louis...Truly an unexpected treat....We enjoyed a live presentation of "Steel Magnolias",,, good to get out and about replete with masks 😊 then a surprise followed with an opportunity of going to the Calgary Civic Symphony to enjoy two hours of instrumental music with a headline performer named Pavlo who brought about a dynamic presentation. Joining with three other musicians the atmosphere was changed into 'feel-good' joy and enthusiasm. What a spirit lifter Pavlo and his music were! Pavlo showed all that drive he had living out his father's famous words "Have the courage to do what you love, and the drive to do it well." That he did.

Pavlos' invitation from the music director of the Calgary Philharmonic brought together a great afternoon's enjoyment. I hope you will be able to experience Pavlo in your city.

God provides many joys to send off the recurring winter/spring blues, for sure!

Happy Spring!

Helen Kampel, FCJ





Wheat & War

As I glanced through the daily paper during breakfast one Saturday morning in March, a headline in very large font on page 3 caught my attention in a powerful way: *Wheat and War*. The article pointed out the worldwide effects, as regards wheat availability, of the devastating war in Ukraine. It's one of the largest wheat producers in the world.

However, my train of thought that morning --and since -- did not lead me in the direction of the economic impact of the war. No for me the connections went like this: wheat.....bread....worldwide staple food...Eucharist.....This is my Body given for you; war....evil...recurring sin...as old a human reality as the story of Cain and Abel.

Wheat is mentioned in Dt. 8:8 when Moses describes to the chosen people the benefits of the Promised Land the Lord is providing for them. Wikipedia tells me that "wheat was first cultivated in the regions of the Fertile Crescent (Middle East) around 9600 BCE" ...so it goes back deep into human history, into the ongoing relationship of Creator to creature....into the network of Creation...as does war. "Wheat is associated with being sown, fallen, crushed, and buried, but then springing up for bread to feed multitudes" (catholic.com). Wheat provides food...nourishment....a basic necessity for human beings across the globe. Wheat is one of the Creator's gifts to us humans.

I also did some online searching about the meaning of "war". It seems that from a psychoanalytic viewpoint, war brings to the external world the inner rage, resentments, fears and thirst for power, of some human beings. Projection gets involved, when humans transfer their inner grievances onto another human being or a group of people. Usually people from a country are drawn into war by leaders who come to the point of having cold disregard for human life.

So....the current war in Ukraine puts before us in stark relief once again the great mystery of evil/sinthe mystery of the Cross....of human evil and suffering. In the midst of horrifying disregard for human life and terrible destruction of cities, towns, and villages there are so many examples of human heroism, compassion, and self-sacrifice: This is my body, this is my blood, given for you.

In this post-Easter time my reflections take this direction: wars come and go in human history. The wheat of the Eucharist remains constant and available – as does the faithful love of our Creator. We live in the midst of mystery.

Our FCJ Constitutions remind us:

"The Father calls us
to follow his Son in faithfulness,
to stand at the foot of the cross
with Mary and the holy women,
there, as Faithful Companions of Jesus,
to be one with him in his thirst
for the coming of the kingdom."

Fr. Richard Rohr writes:

“The crucified Jesus offers, at a largely unconscious level, a *very compassionate meaning system for history*. Without such cosmic meaning and soul significance, the agonies and tragedies of Earth feel like Shakespeare’s “sound and fury signifying nothing” or “a tale told by an idiot.” The body can live without food more easily than the soul can live without such transformative meaning.

If all our crucifixions are leading to some possible resurrection, and are not dead-end tragedies, this changes everything. If God is somehow participating in the suffering of humans and creation, instead of just passively tolerating it and observing it, that also changes everything—at least for those who are willing to “gaze” contemplatively.”

(website of the *Center for Action and Contemplation*: April 23rd, 2017)

So....we stand at the foot of this particular cross of our time....not understanding but rooted in trust and hope...perhaps reflecting upon the weeds among the wheat in our own lives...



pexels.com (Tymur Khakimov)

Here is a poem by D. Levertov and some words from Pope Francis to help us ponder the mystery.

A Poem by Denise Levertov

For the New Year, 1981

I have a small grain of hope—

one small crystal that gleams
clear colours out of transparency.

I need more.

I break off a fragment
to send to you.

Please take
this grain of a grain of hope
so that mine won't shrink.

Please share your fragment
so that yours will grow.

Only so, by division,
will hope increase,

like a clump of irises, which will cease to flower
unless you distribute
the clustered roots, unlikely source—
clumsy and earth-covered—
of grace.

Pope Francis in a GENERAL AUDIENCE

Wednesday, 12 April 2017

“Jesus brought new hope into the world and he did so in the manner of the seed: he became very small, like a grain of wheat; he left his heavenly glory in order to come among us: he “fell into the earth”. But this still was not enough. In order to bear fruit, Jesus experienced love to the fullest, allowing himself to be split open by death as a seed lets itself split open under the ground. Precisely there, at the lowest point of his abasement — which is also the loftiest point of love — *hope burgeoned*. Should one of you ask: “How is hope born?” — “From the Cross. Look to the Cross; look to Christ Crucified and from there you will receive the hope that never disappears, which lasts to eternal life”. Indeed, this hope sprouted from the very force of love: because the love that “hopes all things, endures all things (1 Cor 13:7), the love that is the life of God, has renewed everything that it touched.”

Joanna Walsh, FCJ



A Shawl

For twelve years I have been enjoying Ukrainian lessons for twelve weeks in the fall and another twelve in the winter. It is not a language in which I am immersed but it is an enlivening exercise for the brain. Although I would not be able to carry on a conversation, I am always encouraged when I realize that I know something more than I did the previous week. Another blessing has been the gift of forming friendships with wonderful people whom I would not likely have met elsewhere.

Towards the end of our recent course, our grammar teacher, Deborah, sent an email to ask if she and our conversation teacher, Tanya, could come for a visit since Tanya had a gift for me. What a surprise that a teacher should want to gift a student but she had kept believing in my ability to speak Ukrainian when the conversation classes were well above my head!



So what did she bring me? A beautiful blue-fringed, flowery shawl! To have that around my shoulders gives me a great feeling of being wrapped in love - love of many people which speaks strongly to me of God's love.

Now that Ukraine, Tanya's homeland and home of Deborah's family, is suffering in war, I pray that all may sense God's immense love for them and that that love, mediated through people from around the world who are reaching out to help, might give them peace and courage.

Perhaps in our little communities we could use a shawl as a symbol of being loved and take turns blessing one another with a few words as we place the shawl on a person's shoulders. Isaiah 49:1,3,5b might express a blessing by changing pronouns.

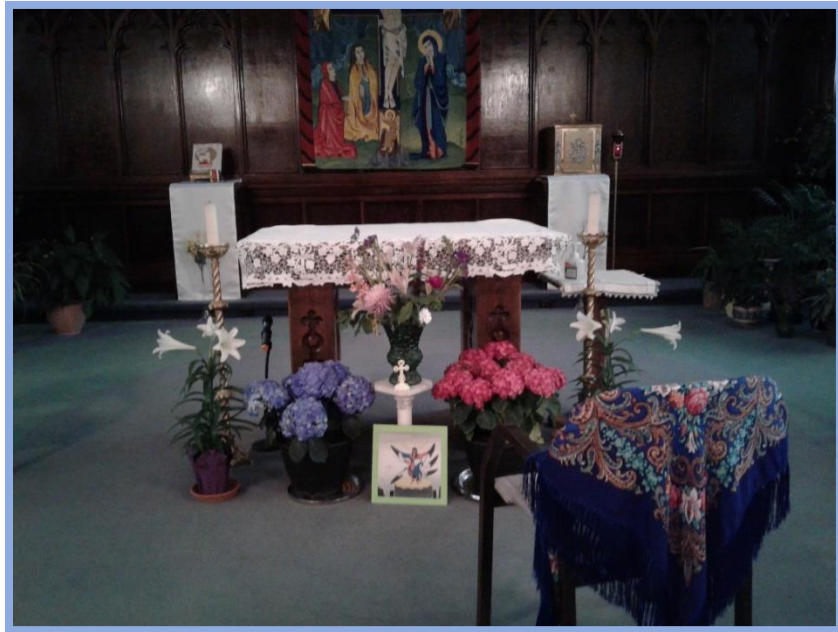
"The Lord who called *you* before you were born . . . said to *you*, 'You are my servant, name, in whom I shall be glorified.' . . . *You* were honoured in the eyes of the Lord."

Another passage that can give the feeling of being wrapped in love is Psalm 71: 5,6.

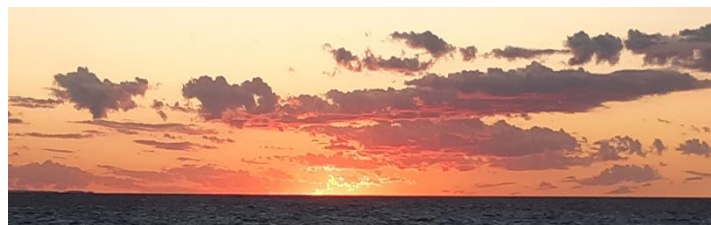
"For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth. Upon you I have leaned from my birth; it was you who took me from my mother's womb."

May we let the love that God pours on us flow to all with whom we come in contact. "God knows how to decipher the whisper of our voice that abandons us when we need to speak and knows how to gather with love each of the words we leave in silence." (José Tolentino Mendonca, Thirst, p. 13)

Theresa Smith, FCJ



FINAL FCJ DAYS IN SALTA



Perhaps you saw the Salta TRIBUNE's front-page spread featuring an English nun who had spent 20+ years in Argentina and was about to return to her native land. The article was written by



reporters who came unexpectedly to a farewell party organized for Marguerite. Many, many people came to the event, all with tales of Marguerite's kindness to them or the effect she had had on their family during her 20 years in the barrio.

Our parish priest celebrated Mass, offering a beautiful reflection which linked with the work that the FCJs have done over the years in this area of the city. Mass was followed by a delicious pot-luck meal, lots of chat and laughter, and some tears too. For some time after Marguerite's journey north, we met people who had read the newspaper article and had some story to tell about Marguerite.

Patricia Binchy fcJ was asked by Sr. Bonnie to meet Marguerite in Buenos Aires and get her safely to the plane for Manchester the next day. Then Patricia travelled on to Salta, March 22nd, to help Paula with the last phase of moving. Yes... a FINAL date was set for the 5th of April. Another good friend, Juana Rios, had already arrived from Tarija, Bolivia, and gave wonderful help with the final clear-out. There was no lack of other people of good will wanting to give a hand in one way or another.

The farewell events, which had begun before Marguerite left for Manchester, continued apace: families invited us for meals; one family shared their country home with us for a day's escape from packing; a lovely gathering was organized by Sembrando Esperanza, a group founded by Patricia Binchy in the early days of the barrio, and strengthened and amplified by the encouragement and work of Marguerite. As well as managing the Centre for Children with Handicaps, this directive team runs a program of skills training for women, and also supports a sports program for the prevention of addictions. The farewell meal was preceded by a tour of the newly finished extension to the Centre.

The anti-trafficking network of northern Argentina organized a lively farewell gathering for Paula of representatives of some of the six groups that she had helped form in the five northern Provinces. Some members travelled 3 to 4 hours to be present.

Our Companions in Mission organized a 'high tea' farewell, held on April 2nd. Patricia, as the CiM link on the General Council, was able to put faces on names as each one presented themselves and the party progressed. Paula and Marguerite will continue to be in contact with the group via zoom encounters.

During the final days of our stay in Salta many people came to the house to say goodbye and recall the good as well as the difficult times lived together. There was a strong sense of gratitude for the Sisters who over the years accompanied the families as the barrio grew and flourished. (Among them Patricia Binchy and Alicia Perez (founders of the Salta community), Stephanie Earl who died in Salta and is the only FCJ buried in Argentina), Marguerite, and the latest member, Paula.) One neighbour remarked that he appreciated the fact that the Sisters did so much good in the area, and did it WALKING!



Farewell time culminated in our parish the night before our final withdrawal from Salta. A beautiful farewell Mass officiated by Padre Jorge Manzaráz, (pictured here with Paula and Patricia) marked the beginning of an evening of celebration and 'remembering'. His usual very meaningful homilies were topped by this one during which he praised and thanked the FCJ Congregation for their more than 20 years of loving labour in the parish. He also noted that our congregation 'cared for its members', as evidenced by the visit of Lois Anne fcj when Paula was ill, and of Patricia who had come to help with the final days of closure. Ely Peralta, a former FCJ, led the singing. At the conclusion of the liturgy Patricia thanked the parish and parishioners for their hospitality and their caring relationship with the Sisters. Everyone brought dishes of food and delicious goodies to share.

Paula and Patricia were to leave for Buenos Aires the afternoon of April 6th. The day began with the doorbell ringing at 7am to announce the arrival of a neighbour who brought us sweet buns to share at breakfast. She was followed by a steady stream of friends who just wanted one last chat and hug. We were not only accompanied to the airport, but also met in Buenos Aires by a Sister friend from Salta, who spent the night with us (providing supper), and got up at 4am to see Paula off on her way to Toronto.

We are very grateful to Bonnie for allowing Patricia to give us a hand in the final stages of packing and of handing the house over to the parish. The house will be used as the site of retreats for small parish groups. And we are very, very grateful to the parish priest and members of the parish who at all times supported and loved us as we did our best to support, love and accompany them.

Finally it seems fitting to mention here the names of all the FCJs who worked either in Argentina or in Bolivia during the almost 40 years of presence in these countries. During this time four houses were opened, the first being in Cordoba, Argentina, followed by Clodomira, also in Argentina, and then Tarija, in southern Bolivia. When Clodomira closed, the community moved to La Banda in the same Province. After Mary Kavanagh returned to the USA, the house in Cordoba became the home of Patricia Binchy and two aspirants, until it was eventually closed. The Salta community was established in 2002 as a middle point between La Banda and Tarija and as a novitiate house.

FCJs who lived/worked in Argentina: Mary Kavanagh RiP (from the USA), Shirley Majeau RiP (Canada), Trudy Youngberg (former FCJ, Canada), Paula Mullen (Canada), Marjorie Perkins (Canada), Stephanie Earl RiP (England), Marguerite Goddard (England), Patricia Binchy (Ireland), Alicia Perez (Spain), Yustin Tukiye (Indonesia), Bing (Annabelle) Delos Santos (Philippines).

FCJs who lived/worked in Bolivia: Paula Mullen (Canada), Anne Morrison (Australia), Marguerite Goddard (England), Juana Rios (former FCJ, Bolivia), Theresa Smith (Canada), Lorenza Magagnin (Italy), Mary Murphy (England).

Over the years there were a number of postulants, novices and Professed Sisters. For one reason or another, none of these lovely young women felt able, or called, to continue the journey with us. We thank them for their contribution to our life in South America.



May the seeds that were sown, bear fruit in abundance!

Paula Mullen, fcj



Who is Jesus for you?

I found this reflection among my treasures and I honestly do not know if I made it up years ago or if I found it somewhere and saved it! However, it seemed a good season in which to share it as we look at our Risen Jesus appearing to His disciples and hear about the early Church passing along the Good News!

If you want to look at the question: *Who is Jesus for You?* a little differently, let your imagination come into play. Think about the possibility of Jesus living in today's world rather than in the Holy Land long ago. Who would He be for you? What relationship would you have with Him? Would He be a carpenter's son, coming to help you complete a project that you have planned for your home? You have heard that he works really well, completes the task in a reasonable time, and that his prices are just. Do you meet with him to discuss the project? Would he be the local forest ranger, keeping an eye out for the safety of the forests and woodlands, and all the people enjoying them -- knowing all the types of trees, bushes and wildlife. Would you be with him following and learning about nature, about the importance of doing something about Climate Change Awareness? Would Jesus be a taxi driver in your city or town? Knowing the way to so many places, really being present to the passengers, sharing meaningful conversations with them? Would you be His co-driver – a new hire being trained--seeing how he interacts with each person, learning about people and places from Him or would you be a passenger who feels the warmth of His interest and concern? Would Jesus be the person in town who seems to be coming up with new ideas and rattling the serenity and security of so many people? What is it about Him that draws you to listen to Him, to be with Him, to join in his efforts towards change? You can come up with many more ways – these are just a few ideas. Enjoy Jesus walking among us!

Ann Marie Walsh, FCJ



The Power and Wonder of God's Love

As I have been travelling through these Easter Weeks with all the beautiful Scripture Readings presented to us, I have been dwelling more and more on the wonder and power of God's love in my life—in all of our lives! Jesus is gift to us—to each of us. Jesus is such a reminder of how much God loves us – God sent His Son into our world—Jesus shows us how to live. So, it is really important that we come to have a deeply personal relationship with Jesus and realize more and more that we are part of God's on-going creation.

In the age in which we live, thank God, we are becoming more and more aware of the call to an ever deepening realization that we are part of God's wonderful on-going creation. The entire universe is deeply loved and held by God. We are deeply loved by God and we are connected to all other loved beings in this universe. Hildegard of Bingen says: "When the Word of God spoke at the moment of creation, God's sound was implanted in every creature, and gave life to every creature." Yes, God continues to speak; continues to show His Love throughout the ages! In this age, God is doing this in and through us!

The sign of the covenant that God made with His People is a rainbow crossing the skies. Rain and the rainbow doubtless existed long before the time of Noah's flood but after the flood the rainbow took on new meaning as the sign of the covenant with Noah.... A sign of God's love. Every time it appeared it was a reminder of the covenant -- of God entering into an agreement—really entering into this new relationship with humankind – a relationship of love. How are we living up to this covenant relationship? How are you being invited today to enter into this wonderful covenant relationship in a more meaningful way? Maybe by coming to a deeper 'knowing' of Jesus!

So, as we think of our relationship with our loving God, I'd like to look at Jesus. In so many of the Easter Appearances, the Disciples did not recognize Jesus. Are we not like them at times? Jesus comes into our lives with a thought, a prayer, an invitation to do something or say (or not say) something, and we miss it!

Maybe we need to think about the question Jesus asked during His public life: Who do **YOU** say that I am? Who is Jesus for you? What name do YOU give to Jesus as you respond to His question? Who is Jesus for you at this point in your life? Is Jesus someone whom others have told you about, someone you know from reading about Him and His life or is Jesus the one with whom you have a special personal relationship. Who do you say that Jesus is for you?

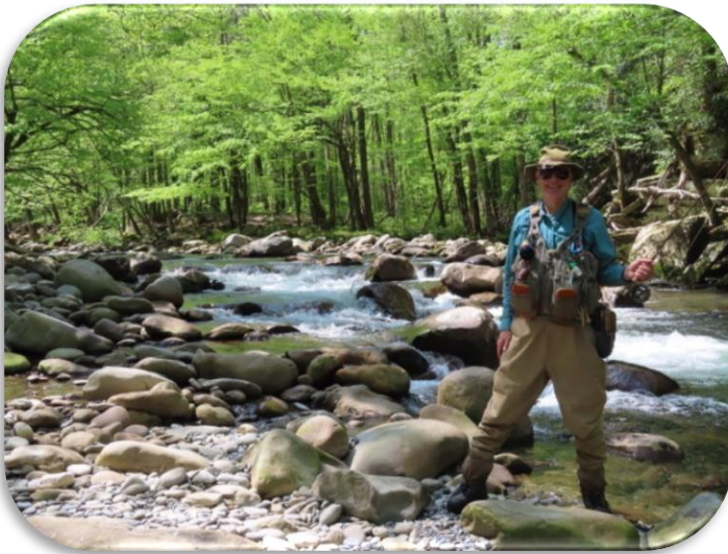
The question "Who do you say that I am" is an invitation to deepen our relationship with Jesus by looking at who Jesus really is for me/ for us—for each of us—each of us saying WHO IS JESUS FOR ME? Our name for Jesus may be different at different times in our lives. When I was in the midst of my college studies, I called Jesus my rock, my stronghold, my strength. As I have gone on in years, although He is still my strength, my rock, my stronghold, I now call Jesus my Beloved. I encourage you to take time during this Easter-tide to be with Jesus and to hear Him ask you: *Who do you say that I am?* Respond to Him from the depth of your own heart, speak His name as you call Him. Our answers to who Jesus is, will be different, for each of us will have a unique response because Jesus' relationship with each of us is unique. Jesus loves each of us as we are

and each of us loves Jesus in the way in which we can love Him! We are so blessed! Let us be ever grateful for the wonder and the power of God's Love at work in our lives.

Ann Marie Walsh, FCJ



Fishing and Catching



My husband has been my teacher of fly fishing. One of the places we go almost every April is the Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee. We have been going there for more than twelve years to fly fish. There is beautiful wildlife and scenery, miles of streams to fish, woods to hike, flowers to identify and time to spend together.

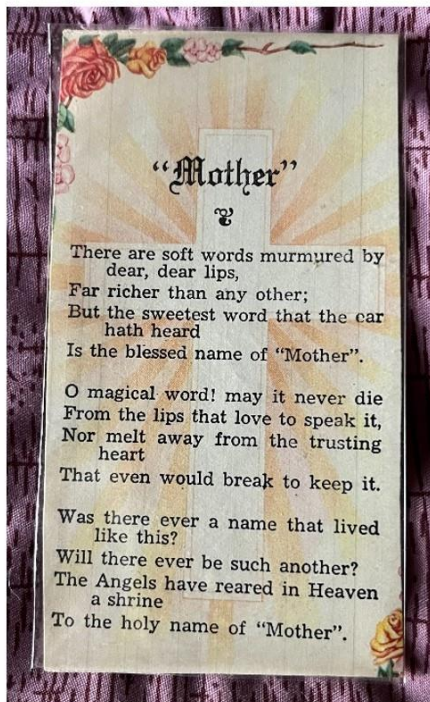
There is a lot of gear to bring along for this adventure. Fishing waders and boots are pretty essential. Almost at our destination we realized I forgot my wading boots. We had the usual conversation with our voices raised "I thought you packed them.....". Well one solution was to drive home (five hours) and get them. That wasn't going to happen. So my husband says we'll buy new ones. Women's fly fishing gear and sizes are sometimes difficult to find. Miraculously, we found two stores that had my size. We just had to make it there by closing time, and we did!

There are certain spots that are our favorites that we return to searching for that same feeling we had when we caught so many rainbows. Each year when we return to the same streams, there is always something different. One year it was fire that had destroyed parts of the forest. Another year large hemlock trees falling in the water that were diseased from woolly adelgid. Some of these changes alter the streams so much you must adjust how you approach them to fish. Some of the paths are gone, and some new ones created. Some years we catch more fish than others.

Spending outdoors for the entire day, there is so much time to contemplate. And pray deeply. My mind opens up to so many emotions as I think of changes going on in the world and in my personal life. The Russian / Ukraine war, inflation, politics, friends and family members that are ill and that have died. I feel so fortunate and also a bit guilty to be able to have this special week to myself. Some of my catching is the recharge the fishing gives me to be able to return to the streams of everyday life and current events.

The streams are constantly flowing, they never stop. If there is an obstacle the water flows around it sometimes creating a beautiful pattern or waterfall. Many plants, pieces of wood, logs, rocks can be carried down stream. The fish are constant too. They are always working their way upstream. Knowing that they never give up keeps you casting and trying to find them. That's how you cast, upstream. The cast is short lived, with a fly lightly touching the water to imitate a real insect. So when you hook one of these determined creatures, you feel like you have won the lottery. Even if you don't "catch" one on your hook, and you just get a hit on your line or a jumping fish, it is very exciting. Just knowing the fish are always there is very comforting like God's love.

Jo Ann Burden, CIM - North Carolina, USA



Happy Mother's Day ♥

To Mary the Queen of heaven

and to all mothers with us on earth

and who have gone to heaven before us.

Jo Ann Burden, CIM

Lent - In the Company of Ignatius and Seven Strangers



I have no idea why I signed up for an online Lenten retreat for seven (count them) seven consecutive Monday evenings. It was definitely a casting of the net on the right side of my boat. Who would be there? How much homework would be required between the sessions? Was I really going to learn anything new? I had many questions that were just thinly disguised excuses for why I shouldn't sign up. But God knew what I needed ... so on February 28th at 7:00pm I was reluctantly sitting in front of my computer screen. The only thing I knew was that St. Ignatius would be the foundation and, with Sr. Ann Marie as one of the

facilitators, I might meet Jesus anew, in the company of a group of strangers. Each week we were given a Prayer Guide-which I likened to a menu at a spiritual cafe. The selections included: Scripture readings with which to pray and journal daily, the Grace of the week, several Considerations, a prayer, and a few graphics designed to pull us into the material. The latter taught me about praying with images and not with words. And if these menu items were not enough, enrichment materials, which I likened to an inviting nutritious salad, were offered weekly. Living in right relationship, discernment, and humility were among my favourite ingredients.

Was it worth it? Quantitatively I produced 46 pages of journal entries crammed with prayers of imagination held with several Biblical characters (some of whom I had avoided for years), painful probing and insights, and exuberant bursts of gratitude. And the seven strangers? By the end of the seven weeks I couldn't wait to catch up with the latest news and insights from my pals on Monday night.

Laura Krefting, CIM - Edmonton, Alberta



A REFLECTION

One day while faced with my fear and praying for trust, I let my gaze wander out my window
... and found some help!

Trust

A Magpie Showed Me How

I saw her land on a high wire outside
my window.

She pecked at something at
her feet.

She looked up
then jumped off the wire
(like a diver jumping off
a diving board)
and dropped down
wings close to her body
streamlined

— no resistance —
falling six feet
before opening her wings
and flying away.



Yes, jumped
not fell off
but - as if intentionally -
jumped
saying "yes."

No holding back.
No resistance.
No fear.

Radical trust.

Liz Poilievre, FCJ





TO MY TREE AND THE TREE OF ALL OF US

I don't know who you are and yet you seem to be "everything"
You are peace, I think, the oxygen, the hidden wind
The source of the elements that give me life,
the shade that protects, that keeps the nests
so that the joyful creatures can keep singing, keep playing, keep caring.

You are food and provider, you are medicine, you are wisdom
You are the silent healer that allows the music to be heard
You are my home, my shelter, including the door that keeps me safe
but always opens for my brothers and sisters
You are the window that lets the light come into my darkness
You are my table, that place where I nourish my body and my mind
when I share with others food and thoughts.

You are the chair that gives rest to my tired feet
You are the bed where I go to dream every night
The box that keeps my memories and the cross that keeps my hopes
You are the faith I have that there is generosity in the world
You are persistence that lives in paper books, notebooks,
you are the paper that wraps the love that we give in gifts,
the paper that cleans a mess
and compassionately wipes the tears of my eyes.

And then, when there is only little pieces of you,
you become fire to keep me warm
and help me reflect on who you really are...
or perhaps on who I really am
and I then realize I want to be like you!
I want to be aware of my roots, allow myself to grow,
take only what I need, give generously,
stand strong but if I break, know how to continue,
and continue all the time that I am allowed to exist
until I become ashes or dust
and then return to this blessed land,
this loved land, this wonder land!

*With permission from Maricela G. Fauchaux
Sr. Susan Donohue, FCJ and Maricela were both on retreat at Guelph. Susan asked for
permission to share Maricela's poem with all of us.*