



Highlights of 2011 SHCJ Associates Survey

We are grateful for the 46 Associates who took the time to fill out a *very long* survey in June. Your feedback has given the Director and Core Team many ideas of where we focus our future efforts. The key highlights of the survey are:

Spiritual Development

- Associates feel that they have grown in the Holy Child Spirit during their time as Associates and the vast majority feel that they live the Holy Child spirit in their daily lives.
- Associates are very happy with the Associate relationship in general as well as the various publications and communications that are distributed.

Relationships

- Personal invitation is the preferred method for inviting others to the Associate relationship. With only a few exceptions, current Associates were invited by a Sister to consider affirming the Associate relationship.
- Getting together frequently in a local setting is the best way to deepen relationships with other Associates.
- Depending on their location, Associates may be satisfied with the local community or feel isolated. Some suggestions were provided to link Associates.
- Although many enjoy learning about international Associates through newsletters, publications, and emails, many do not feel a connection with them unless there has been a personal link.

Leadership

- Activities that build the local Associate community will allow local leadership to emerge which will flow into leadership for the Core Team.

Development

- The vast majority feel that our current goals are reasonable but requested that more information about the Associate finances be communicated to Associates.

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As this issue is published, *Sharing Our Stories* will end with a regional gathering in Melrose (MA).

Planning efforts are underway for the National Gathering next June. See page 6 for details on how you can participate in creating a wonderful and inspiring weekend for Associates in Rosemont. Hope you can join us!

Look for the return of a few of our regular features in a future issue of the Newsletter!

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Action Not Words: Being Advocates for Social Justice by Cathi Duffy

Each person also has a right to the conditions for living a decent life, faith and family life, food and shelter, education and employment, health care and housing. We also have a duty to secure and respect these rights not only for ourselves, but for others, and to fulfill our responsibilities to our families, to each other, and to the larger society.

U.S. Catholic Bishops

Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility

We are at a remarkable crossroads for our nation. This summer we were reminded that we need to live 'within our means' not just as individuals and families but as a nation. What is discretionary spending? Just as in families that need to streamline spending, the debate in Washington and elsewhere comes down to what is a 'need' vs. a 'want'? Because we start with very different assumptions and goals, there is no unified answer to the question and hence the endless debates.

As Catholics, we have a wealth of Catholic Social teachings that help to educate our response to this complex question for the nation. Our responses to the issues relating to global poverty, access to clean water, housing, just wages, medical care, and so much more are all aspects of how we live our Christian faith - as individuals and in community.

What is our response? Where do we begin? Some Associates promote changes by letting government officials (e.g., senators, representatives) know what public policies create a just world - one policy at a time. This fall the debates may call more of us to engage in this important role of advocate.

Pray

Prayer is our first response when we experience or learn of the social injustices that are part of our social fabric. We pray also that we may be moved to follow our unique call to respond.

Learn

Educating ourselves on the issues and possible solutions gives us sufficient background to know the actions that we can and should take. We are fortunate to live in the age of the internet where there is information at the tip of our fingers. A few sites that you might want to visit include:

<http://www.networklobby.org/>

Network is a Catholic Social Justice Lobby founded in 1971 as a "network" of Sisters that "lobby for federal policies and legislation that promote economic and social justice." You can learn about federal legislation as well as the underlying issues and concerns on their website.

www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/index.htm
www.crs.org/globalpoverty

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) in conjunction with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) collaborate on "Catholics Confront Global Poverty". Its purpose is to mobilize and educate Catholics to advocate for US policies that address global poverty.

As this summer in Washington DC highlighted, big changes are being asked (or demanded) in how the government spends our money. Educating ourselves allows us to know what are political talking points and where the truth lies. The answers may not be clear and simple but the future for many calls us to know the possibilities that potentially await them.

At the state level, there may also be a Catholic Conference which is the public policy institute for the Catholic Church in a state. They each advocate for state policies that reflect Catholic social teachings.

Act / Advocate

On the websites listed, you can sign up for action alerts with timely info on the immediate concerns and/or legislation and how you might communicate to your congressional representatives. This form of advocacy can often be done via email, phone, or a letter on one's own schedule *within the constraints of legislative timelines*. For some, scheduling meetings with congressional representatives is done.

Promote Understanding

To mobilize greater participation, join a local group that helps to educate and engage the larger community. One of these local groups is the Advocacy committee at CRS Mid-Atlantic offices not far from our Rosemont office. A group meets to discuss the current issues, what CRS is doing, and what more can be done to assist in passing important federal legislation. Anne Ayella, CRS Diocesan Director for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and Michelle Dugan are both SHCJ Associates who participate on this committee. They hope more engage in advocacy as a way to bring about a more just world. As Michelle says "Let's make a difference!".

*As you listen to the news in the coming weeks,
ask God "How am I being called
to make a difference in the world?"*

Is mine a listening soul?

Cornelia Connelly

Connecting with Cornelia and Charism: Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ

*Our life is hid with Christ in God.
As we enter more and more deeply into this relationship,
God's power at work in us can touch the hearts of those we meet.
They will be led to know the Father's mercy and his boundless love
through the mystery of Christ among us.*

*For this is our mission: to help others to believe that God lives and acts in them
and in our world and to rejoice in the divine presence.*

SHCJ Constitutions 4

Sister Mary Ann Buckley assumed the responsibilities of Provincial Leader for the American Province at the beginning of June. As she starts her 6 year term, she took some time to introduce herself to us.

Tell us a little about yourself and your family.

My immediate family is very small, just my older brother, Paul, and me, and no next generation to carry our genes into the future, alas! We grew up in Chester, PA in a wonderfully supportive extended family of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, a mix of second-generation Irish and Italians. Our education was within the Philadelphia Archdiocesan system at a time when classrooms were bulging with more students than one solitary teacher should have had to manage, so strict discipline was the order of the day. Faith formation was strong and so was reading, writing and arithmetic. I lost my Palmer method of handwriting long ago, but I could still diagram a compound, complex sentence today, if I had to! When I look back at my class and neighborhood and special friends at this time, I realize that I grew up in a very multi-cultural environment. I could easily pronounce names of my classmates from Poland, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Greece, Italy, and even Haiti, and tell you something about their favorite foods and family practices too. I'm grateful that diversity was the norm during the twelve years of my elementary and secondary education – at St. Michael's in Chester and Notre Dame in Moylan, PA.

How did you come to know the Holy Child Sisters?

I first met Holy Child Sisters as a student at Rosemont College. My four years there were wonderfully broadening and deepening; they challenged me to think and to make interdisciplinary connections, and to identify and choose the values I wanted to live by. These were the Vatican II years when doors and windows were being opened wide to let in the fresh air of liturgical renewal, empowerment of the laity, and a faith that



Sr. Mary Ann Buckley
Photo by Michael Leslie

does justice. The sisters and other faculty who taught me were on that cutting edge, and I've always considered those years as the most significant time of spiritual formation I've ever known.

What do you enjoy doing for fun and relaxation?

I'm a gardener – I love to dig and haul, water and watch. I've inherited some gardens, or started others from scratch in various patches of the world. Then I've had to abandon them and move on, generally to start a new garden in the new place. Right now I take delight several times a day in five big pots of herbs on the steps behind the New Sharon kitchen. I think of this as the community herb garden, so please

come and help yourselves to fresh basil, rosemary, thyme, oregano, marjoram, mint, dill and chive. Maybe next year I'll start an organic bed of flowers and vegetables. (Does anyone have some perennials you're thinning out?) I'm a designer and a decorator, too, albeit an amateur. But I love to lay out text on a page, or compose furniture in a room, adding accents and splashes of interest and color. And I'm a reader, mainly by Kindle these days, mostly fiction, with some poetry and biography now and then. Right now I'm enjoying Ann Patchett's latest novel, *State of Wonder*.

You have lived in Rome and in Chile. How have these experiences shaped who you are today?

Italy has my heart. I loved living in Rome for twelve years, even though they were pilgrim years for me and I was away from Rome as much as I was in it. In spite of frequent travel, I grew to love local, everyday life in Italy, and the distinct Italian way of doing things, even when "their" way was a great source of frustration to my American approach. I can't say that we were deeply inserted into Italian life, however. We were foreigners, and sometimes that was painful and isolating, but that too was a good experience to have, especially for someone from a country that tends to think its way is best. Probably, the greatest gift of these years was the

Connecting with Cornelia and Charism (continued)

working relationship we had with leaders of many other international congregations. This gave us a global vision, sensitivity to cultural differences, and a concrete knowledge of human struggle and triumph in particular places worldwide. Since this “international community” in Rome spoke many languages there was always the challenge to stretch in order to communicate, even awkwardly, about matters of real importance.

In many ways living in Rome prepared me for living in Chile for four years, but my experience in Chile was unique in its own way. If Rome was primarily an experience of internationality, Chile was especially a distinct “national” experience. I think I came to appreciate national pride, shared history, and cultural values with new reverence. My conversations with Chileans often centered on what makes Chile “tick”. We talked over and over again about the brutal military dictatorship that oppressed Chileans for fifteen years, and the wounds of the past that are still evident today. Again and again, I pondered the divide between poor and privileged, and grew in respect for the quiet, steady efforts of many church workers to help bridge that gap. Most of all, I had an experience of relative material simplicity. Although Chile is a developed country where consumerism is rampant, SHCJ in Chile live in modest neighborhoods where many people struggle hard to find work or make ends meet on very low salaries. I’m still processing this experience, and realize that I miss the Chilean face of the world, and the essential simplicity of my life-style there.

With the new Provincial Leadership Team, you have created a vision for your term of working “together to promote the greater wholeness of our one province community”. What does ‘greater wholeness’ mean for you personally?

“Greater wholeness” means different things to me different days, so it’s a phrase that’s alive for me, and for all of us as a team, and it keeps growing in meaning. I certainly think of it in terms of each person’s deepest desire and need for health, meaning and balance, and a sense that the parts of one’s story make a coherent whole that is essentially good. Perhaps wholeness within and among persons is further explained by its absence, i.e. by fragmentation, wrangling, competitiveness, disunity.

I also think of wholeness in terms of our



international Society in Europe, Africa and the Americas. We all need the unique difference that each part of the Society embodies. Together we make a whole that enlivens and strengthens our mission in a globalized world. And “greater wholeness” applies to the unity of the whole Cornelian family, including Associates and our many other partners in mission. The founding grace that Cornelia received for the church and the world becomes more fully the gift it was meant to be when it is held in common and expressed in a variety of ways by women and men of diverse cultures, classes, languages and experiences.

Ultimately, I see our greater wholeness as an apostolic force. It has everything to do with our mission “to help others grow strong in faith and live more fully human lives” and “to help others to believe that God lives and acts in our world, and to rejoice in the divine presence” – all within a planetary context, as members of the Earth community with all creation.

Cornelia probably never used the word “wholeness” in her voluminous writings. But she did say, “I belong all to God ...” That we are God’s, and we are incomplete without God with us and within us is – this, I suppose, is the ultimate expression of greater wholeness.

What are your dreams for the Holy Child Associates in these next 6 years and beyond?

I’m delighted with the all the growth that has happened among Associates during the past 6 years. You’ve increased not just in numbers – although the numbers are impressive: 177 in the US, about 20 in the Dominican Republic and another 40 or so in Chile – but also in visibility as an integral and vital part of the Cornelian family. And by your processes of formation and commitment as Associates you give expression to a vibrant, lay, apostolic spirituality rooted in Cornelia’s spiritual legacy.

There is a natural progression from joining together, being formed, and making a commitment to being on mission. So I hope that in the next few years you will focus intentionally on your apostolic reason for being. I’m not thinking of grandiose schemes and projects, but of living with an apostolic mind- and heart-set, and seeking concrete ways to express that for the good of others. If I push my hope to a dream, I imagine that Associates and SHCJ together will be founders, perhaps of a new project or ministry, something that engages us together in responding, with the full force of our shared charism, to a crying want of our age.

Associates Survey Highlights (continued)

Supporting Ministries & Service Opportunities

- Decisions about sponsoring ministries and offering service opportunities are best done within a region.
- Several Associates are ready to explore service opportunities within their local region.

Communications

- Associates responded positively about the eUpdates and Newsletter.
- Overwhelmingly, Associates want to continue receiving the Newsletter on a quarterly basis.
- The use of Facebook had mixed reviews but is seen as a vehicle for reaching a younger generation of Associates as well as connecting Associates across the Society.
- No one is interested in the use of Twitter for Associate communications.
- Associates asked that updates on prayer requests be sent.

Associates National Gathering 2012

- Associates have a wealth of suggestions for the 2012 national gathering.

In each of the areas above, there are more detailed suggestions that will be part of future planning efforts. If you wish to get the details of the survey summary, please contact Cathi Duffy, cduffy@shcj.org or leave a message at the Province Office (610 626-1400 ext. 310).

Thanks again for sharing your insights about the Associate relationship!

My involvement with the SHCJ Associates has been instrumental in my spiritual growth and challenges me to continue to listen to and move with the Spirit. I do believe that through careful discernment and wise direction, the Associates can become a vibrant arm of the SHCJ, and that it will open new doors through which more people can be touched and served by those who share the charisms of Cornelia Connelly and the SHCJ.

from one of the survey responses



*A Time for Everything
France White, SHCJ*

*To see more of Sr. France's art, check out
http://shcj.org/white_reproductions.html*

*Give us, O Lord,
a love full of action*



Mark Your Calendars for these important events!

Sept 16 - 18, 2011

*Journey to Wholeness
Path of Holiness
Associates Retreat Weekend
Stone Harbor, NJ*

Saturday, November 5, 2011

*Associates Day of Service
Providence Center
Philadelphia, PA
10 am - noon
Spend a few hours with other Associates
helping this Holy Child ministry
in North Philadelphia*

June 22 - 24, 2012

Actions Not Words
Associates National Gathering
Rosemont, PA

All details will be sent this fall.

To be part of the planning effort, contact

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