

## Sisters and Associates Help Fight Hunger During Catholic Sisters Week 2021

Each year, Catholic Sisters Week is observed in March as a way to say thank you and shine a light on the incredible contributions of women religious both past and present. This year, the Congregation of St. Joseph chose to focus our efforts on hunger and food insecurity during Catholic Sisters Week, so we partnered with ministries and non-profit organizations that make a real difference to so many in our communities. Due to the pandemic, job loss and health crises, the needs were even greater this past year. Below are just a few of the organizations we partnered with to help fight hunger.



### Care and Share, Crookston

Care and Share of Crookston, Minnesota, is a homeless shelter for men, women and families that assists with clothing, school supplies and other necessities, and works with residents to obtain benefits, employment, housing, medical appointments and more. Care and Share also operates a soup kitchen that serves hot meals twice a day. Last year, the Congregation was pleased to support Care and Share with a grant that went towards COVID-19 related expenses such as cleaning supplies. This year, as part of our Catholic Sisters Week initiative which focused on food insecurity and hunger, local sisters and associates helped purchase and donate food to Care and Share.

To learn more, visit [CareAndShareCrookston.org](https://www.CareAndShareCrookston.org)



### St. Vincent de Paul Dining Room, Baton Rouge



St. Vincent de Paul Dining Room in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is the number one meal provider to the area's poor, homeless, elderly and other vulnerable populations. They serve a hot meal every day of the year, as well as a brown bag supper. During Catholic Sisters Week in March, local sisters and associates teamed up to hold a food drive to benefit the Dining Room. They collected two truck fulls of rice

and bean sacks, along with monetary gifts which were then donated to the Dining Room.

To learn more, visit [svdpr.org/food-services](https://www.svdpr.org/food-services)

# NEWS FROM LOUISIANA



Sister Joan Laplace (and other volunteers) pitched in recently to help clean up Baton Rouge area woodlands that drain into local lakes in an effort to keep the waterways free from litter and pollutants.



Sisters regularly meet with other sisters who live in the same area to share in prayer and community, discuss their ministries and catch up on congregational business. Here is one such group in New Orleans. From left are Sisters Frances Duos, Helen Prejean, Barbara Hughes, Anne Bergin, Janine Beniger and Theresa Pitruzzello.



In May, sisters gathered at our center in Baton Rouge to verbally affirm the Congregation's pledge of support for Pope Francis' Laudato Si' initiative. From left are Sisters Joan Hartlaub, Lucy Silvio, Frances Landry, Anna Schellhaas, Julie Kraemer, Annie Ramagos, Cynthia Sabathier, Esther Hulin (seated), Dianne Fanguy (standing behind Esther), Kathleen Babin, Sandra Blanchard, Evelyn Mee (standing), Adele Lambert (seated), and Janet Roesener.



Sisters Ileana (Ily) Fernandez (left) and Pat Sullivan received a warm welcome from sisters and staff at our center in Wheeling, West Virginia, after their recent move from Baton Rouge. Both of these vibrant women serve as models of service in ministry to the Congregation and to the many lives they have touched, and continue to touch with their warm smiles and tender hearts.

# NEWS FROM MINNESOTA



This year, Sister Joanne Johnson began a new ministry serving as president of the Resident Council at Benedictine Living Community (formerly Villa St. Vincent/The Summit) in Crookston, Minnesota. In this role, Sister Joanne listens to resident ideas, concerns and requests, acts as liaison for the residents and staff, and leads Council meetings. Above, Sister Joanne acts as 'tour guide' for residents during a recent virtual trip to Paris.



Sister Pat Murphy recently received a Catholic Extension "Sisters on the Frontlines" grant to share with a person in need. She chose a young woman in Moorhead, MN, who is developmentally and physically disabled. The funds went toward temporary housing for the woman while work was completed on her apartment. The work done transformed her apartment into a more accessible and easier to navigate space.



In Crookston, CSJ Associates purchased food to donate to Care and Share, a local homeless shelter, as part of the Congregation's Catholic Sisters Week initiative in March, which focused on food insecurity and hunger (see cover story). From left are CSJ Associates Joyce Johnson and Gaye Wick, and Associate Inquirer Pat Froehler.

## What is a CSJ Associate?

To learn more about Associates of the Congregation of St. Joseph, visit us at,

[CSJoseph.org/as-an-associate/](https://CSJoseph.org/as-an-associate/)



Sisters Doreen Charest and Sue Torgersen have advocated for the rights of native and indigenous peoples for many years. On May 5th, they joined the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Task Force and other supporters at the Saint Paul, Minnesota, capital building in an effort to recognize, raise awareness of and help solve the issue of violence against indigenous women. Thousands of painted, cardboard red dresses were constructed by students and others and placed on the capital grounds, each one representing a murdered or missing indigenous woman. Center photo, Sister Sue, friend and volunteer Gary Gullikson, and Sister Doreen (also at right).

## Cancer Justice Network

### Collaboration Helps Vaccinate Vulnerable Populations in Cincinnati

In June, the Cancer Justice Network partnered with the Cincinnati Health Department's mobile unit, the Homeless Coalition and God's Favor Mobile Meals in an effort to vaccinate people who are homeless, are elderly, have disabilities, or other challenges, and also provide a hot meal and a hygiene pack to those in need.

The Congregation of St. Joseph has supported Cancer Justice Network with grant funding to help people with transportation to vaccine sites, and in their mission to assist low income individuals and minorities get early and timely screening and treatment for cancer.

Steve Sunderland, PhD, Director of the Cancer Justice Network, said even though it was raining hard the day they set up, people came and began a conversation with them on why they might take the vaccination.

"Some were ready and immediately walked through the rain to the Health Department's tent," he said. "Others were more cautious, wanting to talk about the dangers and their worries about what could happen if there was a negative outcome."

He said all of the partnering agencies worked together smoothly to provide the services and support. "We realized that we were planting important seeds of hope for this community," said Sunderland. "There was the chance for a real conversation over a hot meal with caring people who were urging safety. It was clear that many people had not had this opportunity and that they deeply appreciated the kindness of our approach and the supportive setting."

He said they plan to return in July to see if more arrive to get a vaccination. "It was a memorable beginning," he said, "and we thank you for your support."

To learn more, visit [CancerJusticeNetwork.org](https://CancerJusticeNetwork.org)



*Pat Lee, CEO of God's Favor Mobile Meals and Steve Sunderland, PhD, Director of the Cancer Justice Network*



*Cincinnati Health Department's mobile vaccination unit.*



*Volunteers pass out hygiene packs while Steve Sunderland talks to a patron.*

## Sisters Volunteer at U.S. Mexico Border

This spring, a group of our sisters headed south to serve our dear neighbors at an intake facility at the U.S./Mexico border. For two weeks, Sisters Rita Ann Teichman, Mary Pung, Marianne Race, Jackie Schmitz and Mary Jo Curtsinger volunteered at Catholic Charities Humanitarian Respite Center in McAllen, Texas, where thousands of refugees pass through each year.

While there, our sisters duties included organizing and finding clothing for incoming families in the “Ropa (clothing) Room,” distributing toiletries, baby formula and medicines at the “Hygiene Bar/Pharmacy,” and other work that addressed the essential needs of arriving refugees.

“We saw families with many beautiful children and an amazing number of pregnant women,” said Sister Rita Ann. “Imagine walking the distances they did while pregnant! Sometimes we helped simply by holding babies or occupying toddlers for their mothers while they took showers, visited the Ropa room, or just to give them a break.”

The refugees stay at the center approximately 2-3 days while waiting for their sponsors to be contacted. Once they are and a bus or plane ticket has been purchased, they are on their way to the next leg of their journey.

“This ministry was both heart-breaking and heart-warming,” said Sister Marianne. “We were honored to be able to offer care, respite and simple comforts to these incredible, brave people.”

To learn more, visit [CatholicCharitiesrgv.org/RespiteCenter](https://CatholicCharitiesrgv.org/RespiteCenter)



From left, Sisters Rita Ann Teichman, Mary Pung, Marianne Race, Jackie Schmitz and Mary Jo Curtsinger.



Sisters Mary Pung and Rita Ann Teichman sort clothing in the Ropa (clothing) Room.



Sisters Marianne Race prepares baby formula in the Hygiene Bar/Pharmacy.



A Honduran child's artwork from the Respite Center. On the right, two figures point to their hearts and to the USA.



Sister Mary Pung provides a much needed break for this infant's parents.

# Jubilee 2021

The following sisters from the founding community of Medaille are celebrating Jubilee this year. Jubilee is the anniversary of a sisters' entrance into religious life. Congratulations to all our sisters who are celebrating from around the Congregation this year!



Sister Dehra Elliot, CSJ  
(formerly Sister Mary Sheila)

70 Years



Sister Rita Lambert, CSJ  
(formerly Sister Mary Matthew)

70 Years



Sister Mary Ellen Proulx, CSJ  
(formerly Sister Monica Noel)

60 Years



Sister Cynthia Sabathier, CSJ  
(formerly Sister Maura)

60 Years

To view sister biographies, visit our Jubilarians page at [CSJoseph.org](https://CSJoseph.org)

## IN MEMORIAM † WE REMEMBER, WE CELEBRATE, WE BELIEVE



Sister Johanne  
Pedersen, CSJ

Entered into eternal  
life on September 19,  
2020, after 71 years  
of religious life.



Sister Gracelyn  
Soignet, CSJ  
(Sister Bonaventure)

Entered into eternal  
life on September 14,  
2020, after 64 years  
of religious life.



Sister Vivian  
Miron, CSJ  
(Sister Mary Julianne)

Entered into eternal  
life on August 11,  
2020, after 67 years  
of religious life.



Sister Jane Louise  
Arbour, CSJ

Entered into eternal  
life on September 17,  
2020, after 79 years  
of religious life.



Sister Leyla Cerda-  
Sanchez, CSJ

Entered into eternal  
life on September 14,  
2020, after 24 years  
of religious life.



Sister Clariet  
Perreault, CSJ  
(Sister Mary George)

Entered into eternal  
life on August 5,  
2020, after 70 years  
of religious life.

# Legacy of Caring

Dear Friends,

As part of our Congregation of St. Joseph family you are an integral part of our efforts to bring the message of God's love to the world in ways that inspire action on behalf of others.

In a year unlike any other in recent times, your support has enabled us to take risks to broaden our lives, expand our ministries and partnerships, and live out our promises in an active and inclusive way. This includes our commitment to care for our sisters and at the same time, more fully respond to the emerging needs of our neighbors and our world. New initiatives, ministries, and partnerships, new uses for some of our buildings and land, along with new ways and places for our sisters to live in community are all a part of our efforts today. They reflect our vibrancy, compassion and commitment to staying attentive to the needs of a world in desperate need of our care.

We celebrate the generosity by which you and others in our communities across the country have embraced us and have continued to support our mission, ministries, lives and needs. Thank you for helping bring God's message of unifying love to our communities. We pray for you in gratitude.

## Ways You Can Help

- > Use the enclosed envelope or make a gift online at **CSJoseph.org**
- > Make monthly gifts and become a member of our **Circle of Friends**
- > Make a legacy gift through your will or estate and join our **Heritage Society**

For more information, contact, Pat Milenius, Director of Advancement at [pmilenius@csjoseph.org](mailto:pmilenius@csjoseph.org) or 216.252.0440

## Spiritual Resources

### SPIRITUALITY CENTERS

While the pandemic has brought many changes to our lives and world, our need for reflection and spiritual support has remained. This summer, consider looking to one of our spirituality centers to find connection, perspective, education and stillness. Much of the programming offered by our spirituality centers is being offered virtually, including spiritual direction, retreats and speakers, making it accessible to anyone regardless of location.

For more information and links to their offerings, please visit our website at:

**[CSJoseph.org/spirituality-centers/](https://CSJoseph.org/spirituality-centers/)**

### MINISTRY OF THE ARTS (MOTA)

The power of the arts to heal, beautify, and transform consciousness is needed in our world now more than ever.

Visit MOTA's NEW website to browse and request digital art, music, poetry, blessings and more:

**[MinistryoftheArts.org](https://MinistryoftheArts.org)**

For inquiries or more information, email **[MOTA@CSJOSEPH.ORG](mailto:MOTA@CSJOSEPH.ORG)**

Follow and like us on Facebook  
**[@MinistryoftheArts](https://MinistryoftheArts)**



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Cleveland, Ohio 44111

## Spotlight Photo



Students from the 2021 graduating class of St. Joseph's Academy in Baton Rouge. Congratulations to all of this year's graduates!

 This newsletter is printed on recycled paper

What will you do  
with your one *wild* &  
*precious* life?  
- Mary Oliver



Sisters of St. Joseph live their lives in service to God and others. If you have a heart for God, ministry, justice and Church, and want to make a real difference in our world, we invite you to learn more about us. We would love to talk to you!

Visit us at [CSJoseph.org](http://CSJoseph.org)