

BRIDGES



May 6, 2022

JUBILEE CELEBRATION - Marillac & Elizabeth Seton Community



On May 1st, the Marillac and Elizabeth Seton community celebrated Jubilarians - the Sisters of Charity, Marist Missionary and our Religious of Jesus and Mary.

The RJMs had four Jubilarians celebrating anniversaries of profession: Therese Picard (red) 65 years, Fatima Viramontes, (white) 65 years, Lorraine Genest (being pinned by ESR Chaplain, Tanya Rybarczyk) 75 years and Lina Lavoie (in pink, and who unfortunately was in rehab in Jamaica Plain, MA) 65 years.



The service (below) was lovely, ...



Some of the RJMs attending: Srs. Roseline Marcoux, RJM, Therese Picard, RJM, Lorraine Genest, RJM, Fatima Viramontes, RJM, Pauline Joyal, RJM, and Gertrude Lavoie, RJM

and followed by a delicious meal and two-layer cake.

All in all, it was a joyous day!

- Sr. Vivian Patenaude, RJM



JPIC Committee Anti-Racism Project

We, as a province... commit to efforts at eradicating the evil of RACISM...

-Statement of Commitment, 2020 Province Assembly



TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

The members of the Province JPIC Committee have signed onto a letter protesting the racially disparate decisions of our government regarding the use of "Temporary Protected Status," **TPS**. Simply put, the letter states that *"the administration's processes regarding which countries are considered for TPS, and for how long, has led to a disturbing and undeniable outcome: the administration has thus far practiced a de facto policy of **refusing or delaying designation of TPS for Black and Brown majority countries** that clearly meet the statutory requirements."* The letter will be sent on May 10th to the Secretary of State, The Secretary of Homeland Security, and other officials in those departments.

TITLE 42

Title 42 is a policy which grants the government the ability to take emergency action to "stop the introduction of communicable diseases." The Trump Administration used this to designate hundreds of thoughts of migrants for expulsion, arguing that allowing these migrants to enter the U.S.A. may increase the spread of Covid. Since March, 2020, US authorities have expelled an estimated 1.7 million persons under Title 42. The vast majority are persons of color, and the motivation behind its use has always been suspect. RJM's have advocated for its termination. **President Biden plans to end Title 42 enforcement on May 23rd**, and there has been **significant pushback against this**. To **contact your senators** and urge them to support ending Title 42 open the attached communication from the Mercy Justice Team.

MIGRANT BORDER MINISTRY

Rosa Mejia, RJM has joined us again to be a listening spiritual presence with the migrants at the Catholic Charities' shelter in San Diego. Last month, there were many refugees from Ukraine. Due to the many problems at the Tijuana border, they are no longer crossing the border by car or walking.

Many migrants continue to arrive from Peru, Cuba, Central America and some from Nigeria who have been either in the streets or shelters in Tijuana for many months. They share the dangers they have faced, fear for their lives at the hands of violent gangs and Boko Haram who continue to engage in kidnapping, rape of young girls, and killings.

Please pray for a family from Nigeria who just gave birth to a baby girl, 'Precious' - and indeed, she is! One day after speaking with the husband, I didn't bring a psalm to leave with the people. He asked, "Nothing for me this time?". He taught me how such little things are much appreciated. Natalia, RJM had a cross like Pope Francis' which she walked back to leave with him - a reminder that the Lord, our shepherd, is always holding us close along the journey.

Natalia, RJM and I also continue to assist with clothing needs at the shelter and with Maria Gallleta, 'Cookie', at the border in Tijuana. We appreciate your prayers.

- Sr. Rosie Nicholson, RJM

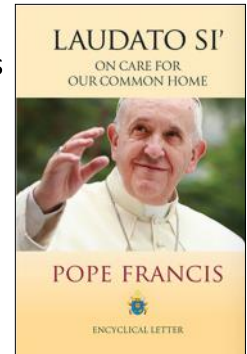


RESPONSE TO LAUDATO SI: RJM-JPIC International

JPIC Coordinators from all over the world met on April 30th to finalize the RJM Congregational response to the call of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*. Sr. Teresita Morse, chairperson of the Care for Creation Committee, joined Sr. Rosemary Mangan to represent the USA/Haiti Province in this follow-up to an earlier meeting held in March.

Over the course of the two meetings, participants shared the actions being taken in their delegations or provinces to promote “care for our common home.” The exchanges were informative and inspiring as sisters from developing countries and the first world, from urban and rural areas shared their initiatives and plans. The goal of the conversations was to arrive at a collective JM response, a congregational focus on specific *Laudato Si* goals for the coming year.

Conversations at the meetings made it clear that the suffering caused by the war in Ukraine, the increasing refugee crisis caused by this and other violence, climate change and poverty, and the continuing consequences of the pandemic on vulnerable populations were paramount in the concerns of RJM’s.



These concerns led to a decision to give priority to
***Laudato Si* Goal #2, “Response to the Cry of the Poor,”**
while also calling on the Congregation to continue efforts in
Goal #1, “Response to the Cry of the Earth,” & Goal #6, “Ecological Spirituality.”

To aid in concretizing our RJM response, a small group will work together to create support and suggestions for a congregational celebration of the coming ‘Season of Creation,’ Sept. 1 to Oct.4. Teresita has joined with other RJM’s to form this group.

The RJM commitment will be posted on the *Laudato Si* Action Platform, as well as on our websites.

- Sr. Rosemary Mangan, RJM

WELCOME TO SRS. ROSA AND FARZANA - 'Rivers of Hope' Program

At the invitation of the Province Leadership Team, two RJM’s will be coming here to take part in a one-week experience for religious who are accompanying people who live with trauma and fear. Srs. Rosa Mejia, of Mexico, and Farzana Philip, a Pakistani sister serving in Haiti, will participate in the *Rivers of Hope* program to take place in Marriottsville, MD from May 15 to 20th.

The program is designed to offer support for religious seeking ways to continue ministering with hope and strength in difficult situations, and to cope with the challenges they face. Sr. Rosa has come from Mexico to San Diego several times to work with Srs. Natalia Mejia and Rosie Nicholson in assisting those crossing the border in search of safety and refuge in the States. Sr. Farzana is part of the International JM Project in Port-au-Prince, where she has ministered in conditions of danger and civic instability, as well as the devastation of last December’s earthquake.

We warmly welcome Farzana and Rosa, pray that their time in Marriottsville will be enriching and supportive, and look forward to their sharing it with us.

**A one-week program for religious who accompany people
in ministry who live with trauma and fear
May 15 - 20, 2022
Bon Secours Conference and Retreat Center | Marriottsville, Maryland
Facilitators: Srs. Pat Farrell, OSF and Mary Elaine Anderson, IHM**



50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF ReFOCUS- Exeter, RI

On May 4th, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Church in Exeter, RI held the celebration of ReFocus' 50th Anniversary. Msgr. Sabourin was the main celebrant at the extraordinary liturgy and Sr. Antoinette Jacques, RJM was the honored guest.

Upon arrival everyone was warmly greeted and received a mask and a decade of the rosary. The liturgy began with the Blessing of roses and Rosary beads. Tables in the church held lovely photos of those who had lived in the group homes and have passed on. Beautiful vases of white roses decorated the church. A relative of one of the residents who had passed on, received a white rose. Those who were still with us, received a red rose from Sr. Antoinette (who is seated on right).



The readings for the Mass were carefully chosen, from Ecclesiastes, Paul's letter to the Philippians and the Gospel on the Beatitudes from Matthew. The responsorial psalm, *All I Ask of You is Forever to Remember Me As Loving You*. The selections were so meaningful they brought tears to our eyes. On the left, Chuck and Betty (who live with Sr. Antoinette) hold ciboria, while Msgr. Sabourin elevates the chalice at the Great Amen.

The reflections were given by Sr. Antoinette, Sr. Christine Kavanagh, RSM and Msgr. Sabourin. Sr. Antoinette began with "How Good God Is" and proceeded to express her gratitude to God for calling her to this ministry, those

who shared in her ministry, her religious community, and all who have given her support throughout these 50 years. It was so meaningful she received a standing ovation. Sr. Christine who had been with Sr. Antoinette from the beginning at St. Charles in Providence shared some of the history and Msgr. Sabourin closed with a few stories of his own. It was very touching.

Family members and friends of ReFocus were given a yellow rose at the time of the offertory and were invited to place them in a vase remembering a loved one. *I Have Loved You* was sung by the congregation.

This truly was a most touching and meaningful celebration of a 50th Anniversary. Srs. Claudette Lapointe, Doris Bissonnette and Diane Dube were so grateful to have been part of this memorable and loved filled day. May our good God continue to bless Sr. Antoinette and all who are part of this cherished ministry.

- Sr. Diane Dube, RJM

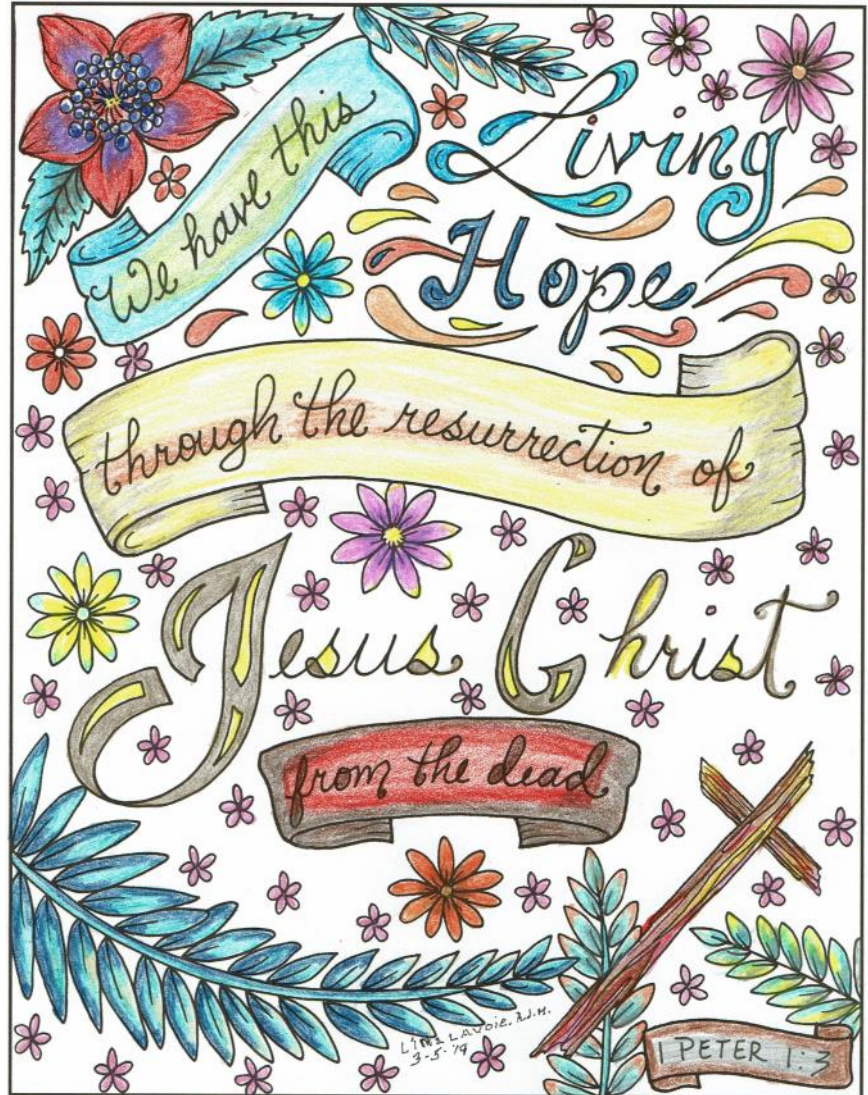
Adding my own thoughts, I was quite touched by the gentle way Msgr. Sabourin included individual ReFocus clients as participants in celebrating the Liturgy. He would simply call them up, indicate where to stand, whisper what to do, and remind them when to return to their seats. Very touching, indeed. It looked to be about 150 or so people were in the chapel, half of them being clients and the other half were their able helpers. Sr. Christine, RSM, who began helping Sr. Antoinette when she was a 16-year-old volunteer, was everywhere directing the operation. If it weren't for Msgr. Sabourin and Sr. Antoinette, there would not be the strong, organized, loving service of ReFocus that exists today. After the Ladd School disbanded, it was people like them who worked with small groups to house, feed, and help them grow as vital members of God's Church and society.

- Sr. Doris Bissonnette, RJM

Additional photos are attached to the Bridges email.

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR...

- Sr. Martha Maria Torres, RJM, who suffered a minor stroke;
- James Patrick “JP” Scanlon, the nephew of Sr. Kathleen Scanlon, RJM, who is recovering from surgery;
- Robert St. Laurent, the nephew of Sr. Pauline Ayotte, RJM, who is hospitalized and needs physical and emotional healing and for his family;
- Sr. Pat Dillon, RJM, who is returning home for continued rehab and recovery after a recent hip replacement;
- Frances Delasanta, a family friend of Sr. Pauline Ayotte, RJM, who has a new cancerous growth;
- Ricky Lopez (nephew of Sr. Fatima Viramontes, RJM), Katie Gerlach (relative of Sr. Rita Ricker, RJM), Alice Willard (sister of Sr. Claudette Lapointe, RJM) Bob Patenaude (brother of Sr. Vivian Patenaude, RJM), Ed Crepeau, (nephew of Srs. Mary Crepeau, RJM and Jackie Crepeau, RJM), and Claire Ethier (sister of Sr. Pauline Ayotte, RJM), who request our continued prayers;
- The repose of the soul of the father of Sr. Encarna Viarnes, RJM, General Councilor, who died after a short illness;
- The Peace and sovereignty of Ukraine and peace and prosperity in Haiti;
- The Life Care Center of Attleboro Community (Sr. Jacqueline Jacques, RJM) as this week’s community for special prayer.



**WE ALSO PRAY FOR ALL THE NEEDS OF OUR RJM SISTERS,
FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**

<https://rjmusa.org>

Praised Forever Be Jesus and Mary