

# BRIDGES



July 21, 2023

## INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON SHARED MISSION

In the near future, we plan to have a Zoom gathering where participants from the USA-Haiti Province will share something of their experience at the recent *Encuentro* which was held July 5-9, in Mexico City, Mexico.



### JM in the building of the Global Compact on Education

Meanwhile, we invite you to click on the link below, containing the information given to all participants, including data on the speakers, and the “papers” tab with texts of the presentations: <https://colegio-regina.com.mx/encuentro/expositoresi.html>. The presentations include Sr. Monica Joseph’s *Opening Address*, a video from Pope Francis and Sr. Mary’s *A Revolution of Tenderness*.

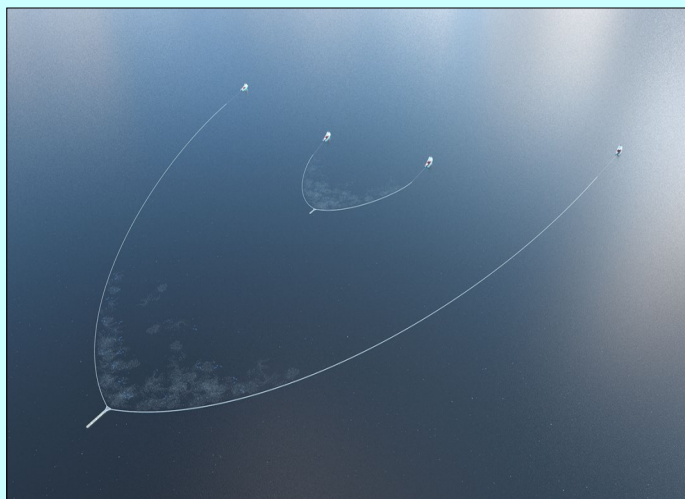
Shown here at *Encuentro* are Sr. Monica Joseph, Superior General, Dr. Beth Reaves, President of Washington School for Girls, and Sr. Mary Bourdon, USA-Haiti Provincial.





## Care of Creation Committee

**The Ocean Cleanup** is an organization that develops technologies to rid the oceans of plastics. Check out their website: <https://theoceancleanup.com>, suggested by Sr. Teresita Morse.



Ocean plastic accumulates in five ocean garbage patches, the largest one being the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, located between Hawaii and California. These booms help clean-up plastics already out in the ocean.



Rivers are the main source of ocean plastic pollution. They are arteries that carry waste from land to the ocean. According to our research, 1000 rivers are responsible for roughly 80% of river plastics that enter the ocean. This river boom is in Guatemala.

- Submitted by Srs. Diane Dube and Doris Bissonnette

---

## **TAKE ACTION - Help Stop the Violence in Haiti**

Below is an excerpt from a recent Sisters of Mercy email

***I join in the heartfelt appeal of the country's Bishops to "lay down weapons, choose life, choose to live together fraternally in the interest of all and in the interest of Haiti". I am close to the beloved Haitian people; I hope that the spiral of violence will cease and the nation can resume the journey toward a future of peace and harmony.*** - Pope Francis, Post-Angelus Commentary, 11 July 2021



The challenges in Haiti are numerous. Haiti has been consumed in violence, with armed gangs controlling large parts of the country. A major source of weapons is the U.S., both through illegal channels, and even weapons that supposedly are destined for the police force end up in the hands of gangs. The current government of Ariel Henri is viewed as illegitimate and there are calls for the U.S. to withdraw support for him and instead to urge dialogue and negotiations to bring all segments of society to the table to plan free and fair elections.

In terms of advocacy responses, the Mercy Justice Team is collaborating with the Quixote Center.

Representative Joaquin Castro introduced the Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act to "reduce the flow of illicit firearms to the Caribbean region". Castro's office is seeking co-sponsors in the House of Representatives. The Quixote Center posted a blog about this bill [here](#). This bill will work in concert with recently-announced initiatives from the Biden Administration.

- Support the Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act (H.R. 4015) in the House of Representatives.

The Haiti Criminal Collusion Transparency Act would require reporting on and sanctioning Haitian gang members in the U.S. and their supporters given how their activity facilitates more violence in Haiti itself. The National Haitian American Elected Official Network is prioritizing this bill, so we are following the lead of impacted people. This bill has recently moved from committee back to the whole Senate.

- Support the Caribbean Strategic Transparency Act (S. 396) in the Senate.

**Please click here to easily contact your Congressional delegation and encourage them to work to [stop the rampant violence in Haiti](#).**

Follow the lead of the Haitian diaspora and partners in Haiti. Send a message to your leaders today!

- submitted by Sr. Pat Dillon

---



## NEWS FROM GROS MORNE, HAITI

*“Like Claudine, let us work so that all children have the same rights.”*

This is the hope written above the stage and on the back of the bright yellow Camp Claudine 2023 tee shirts. That is no small hope given the continually deteriorating conditions in Haiti. (See: NY Times and Miami Herald articles attached to Bridges.)

Fr. DacheMY Destime (right) opened camp with a blessing of campers and counselors.



Camp Claudine is now in its second and final week. Below, Camp Directrice, Naphtalie Gercilus (yellow), introduces Mis Astride (blue), nurse at the local Hospital and Maison Bon Samaritan.



Mis Astride, shared with campers how to care for their bodies and emotional health. There was frank discussion of sexual development and appropriate behavior. Written questions were handed to the counselors for anonymity.



Below, campers show off the “Kits for Girls” that girls, 10 years and older, each happily received so that they would not need to lose time from school or camp just because they had their



period. These environmentally friendly, reusable sanitary pads and holder were provided by the Ladies of St. Ann in Maine (thanks Mercy Sister Dale Jarvis) and our Irish friends in Solèy Haiti.

Children shared responsibilities like cleanup after their hot meal. On the left, they are washing dishes.



Before camp started, the counselors had prepared materials and cut strips of Banana bark for the campers to make biodegradable bags to plant cherry tree seeds in.



Agricultural Tech Marline Jacques presented a session in which the children filled their "tach bannann" banana bark containers with good dirt mixed with sugar cane residue, put in two cherry seeds and covered them with a fine layer of dirt. The children were assisted by Met Lucker (on right holding a bucket with seeds three children brought from their homes) and Agronomist Teligene.



Later when new cherry trees are three weeks old, the whole container can be planted in the ground.



Camp Claudine children gave the environment a boost with useful brooms the children fashioned from recycled coke bottles, tree planters from banana bark, and reusable feminine sanitary supplies. And they had tons of fun!

- Sr. Pat Dillon



---

## CONFERENCE SERIES ON OUR COMMON HOME

*Laudato Si* and the U.S. Catholic Church is sponsoring a Conference Series on our Common Home. The purpose of this year's conference is to encourage a greater understanding of the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform's seven goals – Response to the Cry of the Poor, Ecological Economics, Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyle, Ecological Education, Ecological Spirituality, Community Resilience and Empowerment, and Response to the Cry of the Earth.



Watch recordings of previous sessions or sign-up to attend the free virtual remaining sessions by going to: [www.creighton.edu/catholicclimate](http://www.creighton.edu/catholicclimate)

Tuesday July 25 at 8-9:30pm (Eastern)  
**Response to the Cry of the Earth**

Thursday July 27 at 8-9:30pm (Eastern)  
**Closing Awards**

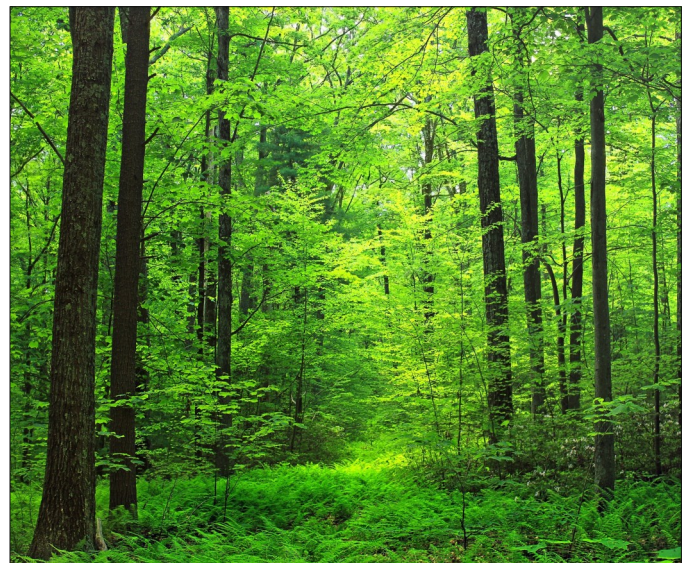
---

## RETREAT - *Laudato Si* and the Book of Creation

Come find your motivation to take better care of the Earth and yourself as you deepen an appreciation of its wonders.

We will begin with prayerful study of the highlights of *Laudato Si* and then practice "*reading reality in a Trinitarian key*". If you wish to see the world through the eyes of faith, you can practice with Creation.

Listen to the Spirit speak through the Book of Creation, describing how to live in community with greater love and possibility, as you meditate on videos and/or questions that draw you into deeper mindfulness and awareness.



**Dates & Times:** Monday, August 21 at 5pm through Sunday, August 27 at 11 am

**Fee:** \$650 (all inclusive)

**Location:** The Center at Mariandale  
299 North Highland Avenue, Ossining, NY 10562

For more information or to register, go to: <https://centeratmariandale.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/calendar/event/1219>

---



---

## **SR NORENE COSTA - Trip to East Timor**

Sr. Norene Costa is on her way to East Timor, where she will be sharing about the Montessori education model.

On the right, is Sr. Norene in Rome where she spent a couple days visiting with Sr. Monica Joseph, Superior General, and others at the Generalate.



On the far left, is Sr. Norene in Pune, India, visiting the RJM sisters there including these in formation, before she and Sr. Alma Carvalho, leave for East Timor in the days to come.

---

## **UPDATE ON DONATIONS TO HAITI FUND**

We are pleased to share that in response to our Summer Haiti Newsletter, we have received \$6,990 in donations as of July 20th.



We encourage our friends and companions in ministry to continue mailing in donations in response to the great need in Haiti. If you have friends and relatives who would like to receive the Haiti Newsletter, please forward their names, addresses and/or email addresses to [mshakeri@rjmusa.org](mailto:mshakeri@rjmusa.org)

We also look forward to launching a new online donation platform in August.

- Toby Harkleroad, Director of Mission Advancement

---

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THOSE WITH AUGUST BIRTHDAYS**



- |           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| August 1  | Marie-Jo Desir        |
| August 5  | Janet Stolba RJM      |
| August 6  | Rose Kelly RJM        |
| August 23 | Doris Bissonnette RJM |
| August 28 | Alice Coté RJM        |

---

## **PROVINCE OFFICE**

July 25 - 29 Mary and Janet in New York Tuesday, then at St. Tim's

August 4 Next Bridges published (articles due by Wednesday 8/2 at noon)

---

### **PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR...**

- Jennifer Morse-Meisenkothen, (niece of Sr. Teresita Morse), who has just been diagnosed with advanced ovarian cancer for which she's starting emergency treatment (chemo and surgery). Please pray that Jennifer beat this disease, for her husband Fred and their two teenagers;
- Sr. Antoinette Jacques, who is up and walking as she recovers from severe cellulitis;
- The repose of the soul of Pina Viramontes, sister-in-law of Sr. Fatima Viramontes, who died yesterday of heart complications, and comfort for her friends, family and many adult children;
- Brian Atkinson, son of a friend of former RJM Mary Ann Augello Berdoe, who is undergoing treatment for throat cancer;
- Prayers of gratitude that Bob Patenaude (brother of Sr. Vivian Patenaude) has been accepted into rehab at St. Antoine Residence in North Smithfield, RI;
- Continuing Prayers: an end to the war in Ukraine and restoration of the country and its people; the safety and security of the people of Haiti, and for God's blessings on all the efforts being made to bring peace and justice to this island nation;
- Madonna Manor (Srs. Bernadette Berard and Mary Sanchez) as this week's community for special prayer.



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

---

**Praised Forever Be Jesus and Mary**