



July 19, 2024

SMALL WORLD OF RJM CONNECTIONS

Whenever we meet migrants approaching between the 2 border walls, Sr. Sandra Salazar (bottom right) announces that she is a Religious of Jesus and Mary, that all the food, water, needed back packs are free, and asks if anyone is hurt needing medical assistance.

On a recent day a migrant woman shouted back 'Jesus-Maria, Jesus-Maria'. She had been with our sisters for a year in Equatorial Guinea. There our sisters prepared women with a skill - cooking, sewing, etc. for future employment. Elvira was now seeking asylum and ready to present herself to the Border Patrol.

Once picked up by Border Patrol, processed at the 'welcome center' she was then brought to the Catholic Charities shelter. When Sandra went to the shelter and knocked on

different room doors to do her spiritual accompaniment, Elvira greeted her. She was in need of medical assistance as her baby was almost due. The Catholic Charities shelter promptly gets the migrants medical care at the local hospitals. As you see, Raphael is her new born son. Elvira received a call that a friend of their family was in Houston and offered to take her and her son into their home. What a blessing as this was also the location she was given for her court appearance.

Our community purchased some baby clothes and a cuddly stuffed animal - almost as big as the baby!

What a small world of JM connections, graced moments of spiritual accompaniment and little miracles of friends ready to welcome a woman and child in need of a home...Jesus in our midst of every day moments...please keep Elivra and Raphael in your prayers for a hope-filled future.

- Sr. Rosie Nicholson



REGLECTIONS ON "GIRLS GO GLOBAL" PLANNING TRIP

I returned on July 13th from a marvelous experience in England with our sisters there, their "companions in mission," and our own "companions" from the Washington School for Girls.



Given below are accounts from Beth Reaves and the two staff members who joined her in encounters that set a foundation for collaboration between St. Claudine School for Girls in London and our own WSG: *Girls Go Global*.

For me personally, to spend time sharing with Sr. Helen Mary Haigh (far left) "comparing notes" has been invaluable. Through numerous chats over several days, we shared so many common experiences, both challenges and gifts as well as the seeking of new approaches to life for our provinces.

Enjoy reading these accounts, and Google St. Claudine's Catholic School for Girls in London, England to learn about WSG's new friend from abroad.

- Sr. Mary Bourdon

Beth Reaves, President, Washington School for Girls:

Last summer, I had the opportunity to travel to Mexico City with Sr. Mary Bourdon and the RJMs as part of the International Meeting on Shared Mission. As the leader of the Washington School for Girls, founded by Sr. Mary, it was an important opportunity for me to reflect on our school mission, particularly noting how RJM continues to infuse and support the spirit of our work with our students.



While at that meeting I met two colleagues from England; Carol Charles (right), from RJM Felixstowe and AnnMarie Sylvester Charles (left), from St. Claudine's School in London. I felt an immediate connection to them and their work, and remember the initial enthusiasm we shared thinking about the possibility of connecting our schools from across the globe together. What commonalities do we share in a time when our world seems so divisive? How might we together support and empower these young women under our care in our schools? What if girls in Washington DC and London were able to connect via a spiritual growth experience together?

Fast forward to this summer, and we took the first big step towards making that dream a reality. With the generous support of the RJMs, two WSG Staff members and I traveled with Sr. Mary Bourdon to London and Felixstowe, England. Here we are with sisters from Felixstowe and students and staff from St. Claudine's School.





Our primary focus was on joining the St. Claudine's school students on their annual retreat at Felixstowe, themed "Finding God in a Leaf." Over the course of 3 days, we prayed, explored nature and contemplated the responsibility we all have for care of the earth. After a nature walk, the girls made colorful collages depicting nature's beauty.



It was great to be with the students and RJM Sisters at Felixstowe together, reflecting on life's experiences (the Sisters have wonderful stories to share!) and thinking about and praying for our shared humanity.

We hope to repeat this trip next year with our WSG students from Washington DC, traveling to England. We want our students to see beyond their own community and learn more about life for their peers in another part of the world. Allowing our students to spend time with peer students from London and in community with RJM sisters provides an incredible learning opportunity that could never be taught in a textbook. It is a vibrant in-person experience of sisterhood that can give the exposure we all need to be able to build bridges and understanding with others.

Essence Moore, Instructional Coach, Learning Specialist, Campus Dean at THEARC, WSG:

I was intrigued with the rich history of London, the tour of St. Claudine's school and their wonderful staff, lots of tea, and all the sights to see. Below are the tents that the WSG girls camped in.

Further into the trip, I was able to travel to Felixstowe, a little quaint town with a beach outside of London. During my time at Felixstowe, I must say it was such a joy the sisters welcomed us with open arms, fed us, told us great stories of their lives, and I felt like they were my best friends! I was overjoyed during my time there and I look forward to a time where I can fellowship with my new found friends.



Annie Jensen, Institutional Giving Coordinator, WSG:

I am delighted to play a role in getting WSG's new program for travel, Girls Go Global, off the ground. Back in high school, I was able to travel with my school to London. My memories from that trip remain vivid, and I recall the many academic and life lessons that I learned through the experience. I came away as a much more informed and well-rounded individual and it sparked an interest in learning about different places and cultures that persists today. I am so excited that our girls at WSG will have the opportunity for a global experience that I believe will shape them academically and spiritually for the rest of their lives. I am so grateful for the generosity the RJMs have extended to our school as we make this program a reality for our girls.

SEEKING POLL WORKERS



Franciscan Action Network is recruiting nonpartisan **poll workers*** to be trained and ready to help in November. You, as a person of faith, hold a unique position within your community to encourage an environment of informed, engaged, and peaceful participation in the electoral process.

What does a poll worker do? Poll workers are not elected or appointed positions. They are nonpartisan and do not represent parties or candidates. While qualifications vary depending on state and locality, in many places poll workers simply must be registered voters in the precinct where they are working.

As a poll worker, you will be helping to facilitate a smooth and equitable election process inside the polling facilities. Poll workers are occasionally paid a small amount in some precincts, but first and foremost they are public servants. They arrive early to set up polling sites, test machines, and ensure there are enough ballots and resources for people to vote. Throughout the day, poll workers are checking in voters, keeping lines orderly and moving, providing ballots, carefully explaining instructions, and answering any questions voters may have. All this requires training to ensure a smooth process on election day.

Please consider participating. Simply reply to gmartinez@franciscanaction.org to be connected to information to sign up as a poll worker in your local district.

Thank you for your commitment to being a Franciscan-hearted peacebuilder and helping the 2024 elections to run smoothly!

- Gabriela Martinez, Associate of Campaigns

****Please note** that signing up as a poll worker – a person who will actually participate in helping the electoral process run smoothly—is different from being a poll chaplain, who will remain outside the polling place as a de-escalating presence. Currently, poll chaplains are only being organized in ten states (AL, AZ, FL, GA, MI, NC, OH, PA, TX, WI), while poll workers are being recruited in all fifty states. If you are interested in being a poll chaplain rather than a worker, please email Michele Dunne at mdunne@franciscanaction.org*

ADVOCATING FOR HAITI

One root cause of the current situation in Haiti is the presence of weapons trafficked from the United States. Our government has not put a stop to the trafficking of weapons by criminal elements. A [2023 United Nations report](#) traced the origin of weapons in Haiti to 5 states in the U.S. with lax gun laws. Cartels purchase weapons and traffic them out through the chaotic Miami River port.

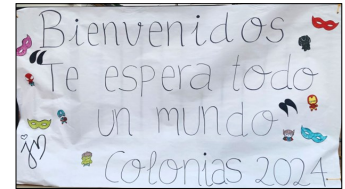


The Quixote Center, which partners with us for initiatives in Gros Morne, is sponsoring a July 30th webinar and September advocacy action day. RJM is a co sponsor of this. [Here is the direct link for registration.](#) Please spread it far and wide!

PINOS PUENTE (GRANADA, SPAIN) - AN ADVENTURE BEGINS

The closing of the school year and the beginning of summer camp are highly anticipated moments, both by children and by educators and young adult camp counselors. These experiences not only mark the end of a formal learning cycle, but also open the door to a season of fun, encounters, new friendships, and adventures. This year, I was fortunate to participate in both events, and my experience in the Pinos Puente community was simply unforgettable.

The closing of the school year was simple and very playful. The children, full of excitement and energy, could not wait to show their parents what they had learned and achieved during the year. The theme for this year was, "A whole world of relationships, of cultures, of experiences".



The first days of the camp were dedicated to getting the children to know and to feel comfortable in their new environment. "Getting to know you" games and team activities were essential to breaking the ice and fostering a spirit of friendship.

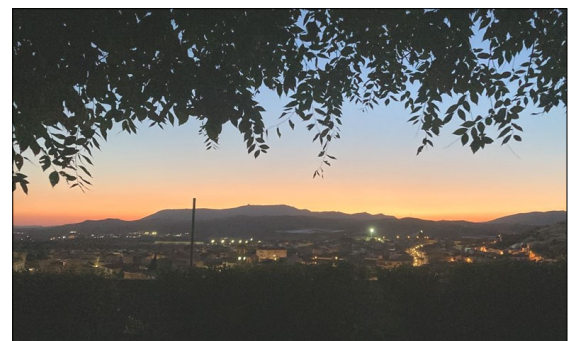


Every day brought new adventures - from swimming in the pool and handicraft workshops to how the children became involved in the activities.

Throughout these experiences, it became clear that both the closing of the school year and the summer camp were much more than isolated events. They were opportunities for children to develop social skills, build lasting friendships, and gain self-confidence. As educators, it was also a time of learning for us about the importance of patience, creativity, and flexibility.

The camp is not over yet. I hope it remains a space to explore, to learn, and to grow. As I reflect on these experiences, I am grateful for having been part of this journey and for the community of Pinos Puente who received me in this place, which reminds me so much of my Haiti: the sun, the music, the sunset, the mountains, the closeness of people, their joy and desire to live.

- Sr. Middia Doute
(Translation edited by Sr. Margaret Perron)



REGINA HIGH SCHOOL REUNION - class of 1984



On Saturday, July 14th, 57 Regina alumnae came together for their 40th class reunion. The entire event was a great success, and I came home relishing some of what these beautiful women told me:

“You have no idea what an influence RHS had on me.”

“Regina was my safe place.”

“I don’t know how to truly put in writing what Regina means to me or did for my life. We appreciate you more than you know.”

Regina High School is the gift that keeps on giving. Towards the end of the day, the class of 1984 presented me with a \$500 donation to the Washington School for Girls. A QR code was placed on the reunion program leading straight to the website for WSG.

Regina “girls” want WSG girls to receive the same foundation that they did! The sentiment of the day was, *we are truly blessed!*



PROVINCE ARCHIVIST CONTRIBUTES TO ACWR PUBLICATION

Dr. Dee Gallo, our Province Archivist, is contributing to a resource being prepared by the organization of Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR): ***Archives in Transition – A Toolkit for Women Religious Archives***. Dee’s work is offered in Part II, *Discerning Your Archival Future*, and is a case study of the process initiated by Sr. Janice Farnham and province leadership in 2007. That process concluded with the 2022 Archive Gift Agreement transferring our historical archives to the French Institute of Assumption University in Worcester, MA.

Dee has also prepared a case study on the process for *Alienation of Ecclesiastical Goods*, one that involves seeking Vatican permission for sale or transfer of a community’s moveable assets.

Both contributions are offered in view of aiding congregations seeking guidance in undertaking their own process of transfer.

RJMs MOURN THE PASSING OF REV. MSGR. HUGH McMANUS



Msgr. Hugh McManus died on July 2nd. He was a “St. John’s boy,” and a cousin of former RJM Maura McManus.

Throughout his long career of priestly service, he maintained warm ties with the RJM community, returning to St. John’s in Kingsbridge as a priest in residence after leaving his parish in Scarsdale. Sr. Pat Dillon remarked, “He was a good friend, wise confessor, excellent homilist and generous supporter of our Haiti Mission. I am sure his friend Jesus welcomed him with outstretched arms and that Hugh and Mr. Patrick Scanlon (who died recently), will have a lot to talk about.” A copy of Msgr. McManus’ obituary is attached to *Bridges*.

UPDATED CONTACT INFORMATION

Sr. Claudette Lapointe has a new address: **Anchor Bay at East Providence, Room 242, 1440 Wampanoag Trail, East Providence, RI 02915.** Her cellphone remains 401-369-8558 and her email claudettelap@gmail.com.

Sr. Priscilla Lemire has a new address: **Marillac Residence, Room 415, 125 Oakland Street, Wellesley Hills, MA 02481.** Her room phone number is **(781) 997-1257.** Her cellphone remains 603-703-8856 and her email priscillarjm@gmail.com.

SIGN-ON: GLOBAL FAITH LEADER LETTER FOR CEASE FIRE

Churches for Middle East Peace, a coalition of U.S. national churches and organizations, invites leaders of Christian organizations around the world to sign on to a new international letter to bring an end to Middle East violence.

The RJM Leadership Team has signed the letter in the name of the USA-Haiti Province, a copy of which is attached to *Bridges*. Individuals can sign the letter too, by clicking here: [Sign](#).

The letter and a complete list of signatories will be posted on the [Churches for Middle East Peace website](#) by Tuesday, July 22, when they plan to send the letter to the White House and U.S. Congress (two days before Netanyahu is scheduled to address the U.S. Congress).

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THOSE WITH AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

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



PROVINCE OFFICE

July 18-21 Mary in New England

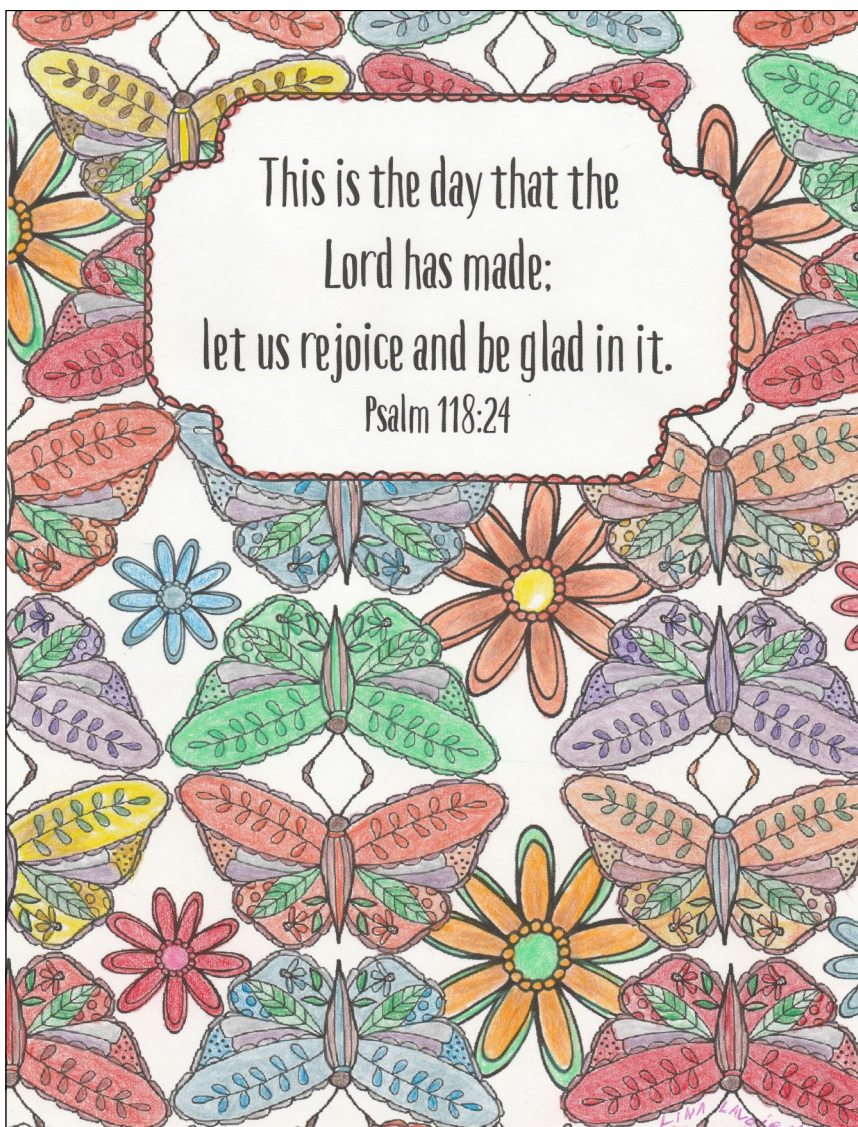
August 2 Next *Bridges* published (articles due by Tuesday 7/3 at noon)

Note: There will be no *Bridges* published on August 16.

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR...

- Continuing Prayers for: Karen Kudelko who is the mother of Toby Harkleroad; and Terri Contreras who is the grand-niece of Sr. Fatima Viramontes;
- The repose of the soul of Rev. Msgr. Hugh McManus, who died July 2, and for the comfort of his loved ones;
- Those RJMs connected to the St. Tim's community: Anchor Bay at East Providence (Sr. Claudette Lapointe), Dina Mission Center (Srs. Jacqueline Crepeau and Mary Crepeau), Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Mission (Sr. Antoinette Jacques), as this week's sisters for special prayer.

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



Praised Forever Be Jesus and Mary