



SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH
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Together in Mission

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You are invited to study this image of our world. The countries shaded in blue indicate where our spirit and mission is alive and active through the presence of Sisters of St. Joseph and Associates who live and minister in these countries. ☞

Introduction

~ Kathleen McCluskey, CSJ/Boston

As we all celebrate the 400th birthday of Father Medaille, the subgroup on Shared Mission of the Global Coordinating Group is pleased to offer you the third issue of *Together in Mission*.

This issue tells stories of our sisters in the United Kingdom, Haiti, and Madagascar where the mission and charism we all share is lived with vibrancy and compassion by our sisters in collaboration with other religious and dedicated lay women and men.

Their stories strike a familiar ring in our hearts since they are expressions of the same spirit and spirituality with which each us greets every new day. May the sharing of our stories make us strong in faith and hope, knowing that across the world we are, all of us, striving to live as the Congregation of God's Great Love! And may our lives further the Gospel dream of a new and grace-filled creation that reflects the very life of God. ☞



Graphic designed by Baya Claire, CSJ/Carondelet-St. Paul

MADASCAR

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Aosta and their Mission in Madagascar

~ Odetta Turc, CSJ/Aosta

The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, founded by Father Medaille, was born in Le Puy in France in 1650, and it grew rapidly in many countries in Europe and also overseas. In 1831 the sisters arrived in Aosta, Italy, called by Bishop Agodino who entrusted them the education of the young women of the diocese.

In 1965, five sisters arrived on the large island of Madagascar and began their missionary work. In fidelity to their charism, they tried “to be in the church a sign of God’s love and a leaven of communion in the simplicity and humility of the Gospel”.

Soon young women from Madagascar, attracted by their example, wanted to embrace the religious life. Now there are 155 sisters of which 20 are missionaries in Italy, 12 are in Côte d’Ivoire, 4 in Burkina Faso and 4 in Romania.

In Madagascar, the Congregation spread in several dioceses and the precious presence of the sisters is found in the dioceses of: Tananarive, 8 communities, Ambatondrazaka, 1 community, Antsirabe, 1 community, Fianarantsoa, 2 communities, Farafangana, 2 communities, Mananjary, 3 communities, and Losy, 1 community.

In addition to evangelization, through the direct preaching of the Gospel, preparation for sacraments, retreats and study of the Bible, we teach in schools. We have over 9000 students, from kindergarten to high school.

We work in five clinics and in two hospitals. Others of us work to give a formation to young women and to encourage young people to engage in agricultural and handcraft development.

With great joy, we can see that the sisters are very attentive to the poorest among the poor, as our Constitutions require, and they are willing to make great sacrifices to be able to reach out for the marginalized.

We would like to thank all those who support our missions, not only financially, but also by prayer and sacrifice. ✨



“to be a sign
of God’s love and
leaven”

THE CARRIBEAN

Sisters of St. Joseph Companion the People of Haiti

~ Jean d'Auclair, SSJ/St.Vallier, Cap-Haitien, Haiti

The Sisters of St. Joseph have been in Haiti since September 1958. Presently there are twenty four sisters, five of whom are Canadian. We live in five apostolic areas within the diocese of Cap-Haitien, the Northern Department of the country.

We try to respond to the basic needs of exploited and marginalized people through apostolic works such as:

- ❖ Education - in primary schools and in centers teaching literacy and promoting women
- ❖ Health - in community clinics which serve the neediest and in a nutrition centre for malnourished children
- ❖ Charitable and pastoral works - with youth and the poorest in rural areas, as well as those of the urban working class.

A group, under supervision, ministers to prisoners and it is by presence, welcome and compassionate listening that we share God's love and bring hope and comfort to them. The prisoners, in great distress, live in subhuman conditions due to corruption and exploitation.

The Sisters of St.Vallier from Quebec are in close relationship with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto who also work in Haiti and share the same desire for communion in relationship and mission.

The terrible earthquake of January 12

that demolished the capital and took the lives of many of its residents has given us a share in the suffering of these wounded people. They have such courage and strength, drawn from prayer. We are often heartbroken in the face of so much suffering and injustice.

As Sisters of St. Joseph we try in our small way to be in solidarity with the people of this country considered to be one of the poorest in the world. It is in daily living, in simple and cordial relationships that we Sisters live our mission of communion. According to the direction given in our last General chapter, June 2009, we are trying to become more, a Congregation of Great Love. ✪

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ENGLAND

Sisters Partner with Others to End Trafficking of Persons

~ Sister Ann Teresa, CSJ/Lyon, England

My present ministry is working for The Medaille Trust, an Inter-Congregational Charity which was established in 2006 to help the victims of trafficking in the UK and to raise awareness of this slavery in our world.

It grew out of our ministry with women in street-based prostitution in Southampton. While doing that ministry, we in the Community studied what was going on globally and became aware of sex-trafficking. We understood that Trafficking is a global problem and no single Religious

Congregation could deal with this alone. We therefore invited other Religious in the UK to work with us and to form a new Charity to address the issue. This Charity is the Medaille Trust.

In the past few years the Trust has supported more than 80 women and their babies. One of these 80 women said:

“Being a victim of trafficking for the past four years, I thought things couldn’t get any worse. Then I got into contact with the Medaille Trust, for which I will be forever grateful. I have been a resident at the house for two months, yet already there is evidence of positive changes to my life.

“When I got to the house, my depression was at an all time high, anxiety attacks and lack of sleep did not help either. But the love and care that I got there somehow gave me the strength to carry on... where my life would be

without the Medaille Trust, I cannot say.”

❖ The Medaille Trust is a member of RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation)

❖ RENATE is a member of TALITAKUM – The International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in Persons.

The Trust networks with key organizations involved in counter-trafficking in the UK and throughout the world because we know that it is only in solidarity that we will be able to confront the structural causes that generate trafficking. ↪

No single Religious Congregation could deal with this alone.

