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# heart

A JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART, UNITED STATES - CANADA



# heart

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The Society of the Sacred Heart, an international community of women religious, was founded by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat in post-revolutionary France and expanded to North America by Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne. Our mission is to discover and reveal God's love in the heart of the world through the service of education.

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# from the Provincial

## Dear Friends and Family of the Sacred Heart,

Our world is at a historic paradoxical moment. Daily we witness extraordinary possibilities that offer promise and life; and yet, we also witness the fractures of suffering and violence. As a community rooted in the love of Christ, our experience points to a deeper truth, that of hope.

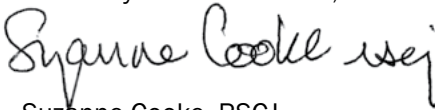
The grace of being loved by God compels us to radiate this love in all that we are and do. The stories in this issue of *Heart* illustrate ways this deeper truth inspires Religious of the Sacred Heart and our mission partners to contribute to global transformation both locally and internationally.

I hope you enjoy reading how we continue to live our call to love in action. From our elder sisters continuing ministries as trustees, mentors, and spiritual directors to our sisters serving internationally to those working with students to those preparing for the Society's General Chapter 2024 this August, there is much to discover in this issue. The common theme is that we draw from our tradition of care for relationships. Together, we embrace the unity inherent in our humanity, and, in our work as educators, we continue to seek and build a world reflective of the attitudes of Christ's Heart.

None of this is possible without the faithful and generous encouragement and support of our friends and family of the Sacred Heart. We thank all of you for your commitment to the vision of our founder, Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat. Your graciousness and your kindness continue to enable us to extend our mission into our world.

Please count on our continued prayer for you and your families.

Gratefully in Christ's Heart,



Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ



we embrace the  
unity inherent in our  
humanity, and, in our  
work as educators, we  
continue to seek and  
build a world reflective  
of the attitudes of  
Christ's Heart."



# Synodality & Internationality

By Maria Cimperman, RSCJ

During the month of October 2023, I had the privilege of participating in the Synod on Synodality in Rome as a theologian facilitator. Officially entitled the Sixteenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, the topic engaged was, “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.” This gathering of Catholic Church leaders from around the world for the first time included among its voting participants “non-bishops,” that is college students, married and single persons, religious women and men, and priests from across the globe.

While the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is present in over 40 countries, the scope of this Synod Assembly was even greater, encompassing almost every country. The diversity was stunning, and in our table conversations it was clear that we were each and all listening intently to one another’s contexts and experiences. The Sacred Heart connections were beautiful, and I met people from Latin America, Asia, Australia, Europe and even the Pacific Islands who knew or were connected to the Society in some way.

This diverse group came together for a month to discern, “What is the Spirit asking of the Catholic Church at this time?” Important to note is that this session was preceded by listening sessions from around the globe, with responses sent to dioceses where the responses were synthesized and shared with the national conferences of bishops. The national conferences then sent their syntheses to the Vatican Synod Office. Perhaps your parish or school had a listening session?

Society Founder Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, at a young age, spoke of her desire to live wholly attuned to the Spirit. I understand this intuition at a deeper level now. Pope Francis, who called this Synod Assembly, reminds us often that the Holy Spirit is the protagonist of synodality (how we are to walk together as the baptized people of God) and the Synod Assembly. We are being called to live more deeply our understanding of the Church as the people of God, an insight of Vatican Council II. Our discipleship calls us to co-responsibility. Discovering more fully what the Spirit calls forth from us is part of the synodal journey, walking together in our local areas and as a global church community.

At the Synod we used a method of communal discernment called Conversation in the Spirit. I highly recommend practicing this in our communities, schools, families and more. It is a method of listening and speaking in which we share deeply in dialogue about what matters to us because the listening is mutually receptive and responsive. I found it a way through the polarization present in our societies and even in our church. We were able to hold tensions in discussions because we could acknowledge one another as our sisters and brothers in Christ. There is a way beyond the divides, and it begins by an openness to hear what the other is saying and to see if there is something to be learned by listening to each perspective.







**LEFT PAGE:** Sister Cimperman (pictured top right with her hand raised) gathered with many of the women who attended the Synod. (Photo © UISG)

**ABOVE:** Sister Cimperman greets Pope Francis during the Synod Assembly. (Photo © Vatican Media)

**RIGHT:** Sister Cimperman with one of the groups she joined for Conversations in the Spirit. (Photo courtesy of Synod participant)

In the first round of a Conversation in the Spirit, each person has the same amount of time to speak on the topic given, and there is significant silence between each person's sharing so that listeners can soak in the wisdom offered. In the second round, each person shares what was stirring within from what was shared by the others. It is a time of hearing resonances and even dissonance. Again, there is silence between each person's comments. It reminded me of our General Chapter 2016 call to create silence. The third round is conversational, though still without interruptions; and the call is to ask what we are hearing from one another that is most important to share with the large group. Listening to one another from so many international contexts was both beautiful and challenging. As I remembered the five different tables at which I sat over the course of the month, I realized I was in profound table conversations with people from over 30 countries! The gift was seeing the unity in the midst of our diversity and the call to hold both.



The fruits of this first Synod Assembly were shared in a Synod synthesis document entitled “A Synodal Church in Mission,” which can be found online. I encourage reading it! There will be a second Synod Assembly October 2-27, 2024, at which we will delve more deeply into significant areas of Church life and discern important directions for the Church. I encourage you to participate in the conversations that are already happening about our call as a people of God anywhere and in any way you are able. Most of all, please pray to the Spirit that we may listen and respond in love to the calls to each and all of us.





# living our mission TOGETHER

By Erin Everson, Communications Project Manager for the Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada Province

After the success of the Living Our Sacred Heart Mission (LOM) program in November 2022, the Network of Sacred Heart Schools in partnership with the Society of the Sacred Heart brought together another cohort of student leaders, educators and Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) for three days of learning, conversation, and growing in our mission to discover and reveal God's love. This second gathering, which took place in Florissant, Missouri, included participants from schools across the United States – Canada Province as well as four schools in the Province of Mexico.

The program included presentations on the history of the Society, founder Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, as well as Society of the Sacred Heart General Chapters and the impact of Vatican II on religious life and Sacred Heart education. RSCJ had the opportunity to share their vocation stories. Students shared reflections. Participants gathered in small groups to learn more about the RSCJ and the various ministries in which they've served. And students had two opportunities to work in groups to present their learnings and also to propose innovative ways to share the Sacred Heart mission.



# in their own words

## MARIA JULIA, 10th grade student

Colegio Sagrado Corazón, | San Luis Potosí, S.L.P.



For me, being able to connect with the RSCJ was an important opportunity that I'm grateful I got to experience. I was able to talk to them and ask them questions about their vocation, their life, and how they got to be where they are right now. I learned a lot from

them while they were telling us their stories — how they connect with God and how important the Sacred Heart values are.

Having the opportunity to meet other students from the Sacred Heart schools in Canada, the United States, and Mexico, was amazing. It was really easy for all of us to connect and bond with each other. We noticed that we shared the same values and mission because we are all from the Sacred Heart family. It was a pleasure meeting the different students and teachers from all the schools who attended and being able to share experiences of our life back home, and learning how similar our education is. I will always have all of them in my heart, and I will never forget the experience of this program.

## MASON, 10th grade student

Berchmans Academy of the Sacred Heart | Grand Coteau, LA



The Living Our Mission program gave us students a unique opportunity to learn and explore the past, present, and visions for the future of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

During the program, we were inspired by the motto, “200 years, 41 countries, 1 heart.” I felt this expressed the feeling of community and connection we experienced as students of the Sacred Heart. Although we all came from vastly different backgrounds and cultures, we all had a strong sense of connection. Some of my favorite memories from the program are from free time between activities; many of these free times were spent building community through playing games, chatting, or going on walks. We were given many opportunities to build strong connections with the other students, which are still active even after the program.

LOM gave us a wonderful opportunity to connect with RSCJ, students, and faculty throughout the Network. This program helped me to realize more fully the international community we are a part of as students of the Sacred Heart and this community as one of the many ways we live out our Sacred Heart mission. LOM also gifted me with great connections to other Network schools and RSCJ; it also sparked an interest in me to participate in other Network programs.





**CHARLOTTE RILEY**, educator and alumna  
Sacred Heart School of Halifax | Halifax, Nova Scotia



I was fortunate to attend LOM with two students from my school. In my role as Network exchange and experiential learning coordinator, I have had the wonderful experience of witnessing firsthand the growing internationality of our Network. LOM showed us that, although many

kilometers may separate our schools, the vision of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat and the love of God shrink those distances and make us family.

In a time of change and social upheaval, this family bond based on our shared *Goals and Criteria* is more important than ever. As an alumna of SHS Halifax (class of 1981) I am aware of how fortunate I was to have the teaching and mentoring of many RSCJ. Their example is what draws me to the mission, and they are the reason I am an educator. The *Goals and Criteria* guide me as a teacher, but how does this mission translate to our students in the 21st century?

The internationality of this year's LOM program highlighted for my two student participants that they are part of an expansive yet somehow intimate group of like-minded youth. Perhaps not previously conscious of the depth of their "Sacred Heart DNA," this group was ready and willing to bond with other RSCJ, educators and students from Mexico, Canada, and the U.S., and to communicate and express with joy our shared mission and goals.



What a privilege it was to have so much time with Network leaders and RSCJ, to hear their stories, and to witness students living joyfully and feeling the love of God through their new friends from many generations and backgrounds. The experience was powerful, and I am extremely grateful that my students and I had the chance to live out our mission with such an international and multigenerational group and to create bonds that will last well beyond LOM 2023.

**NANCY KEHOE, RSCJ**



When I was invited to be a part of the Living Our Mission program for students and educators from the Network of Sacred Heart Schools, I said "yes," even before I understood clearly what was fully involved because I love newness and challenges.

Although I was not able to arrive until the second day of the program, it was not long before I was caught up in the spirit, joy, and energy of the gathering. After a panel presentation, in which each of us RSCJ told her vocation story, we then met with different groups of students for small group discussion. Their curiosity, their interest, their insightful questions, and their openness were quite remarkable and showed the depth of their desire to understand the Sacred Heart mission and the way the mission had shaped each of us.

On the evening of the second day, when each of the groups had to prepare and present a mission-centered project for a "Shark Tank" style contest, I was captivated by the way they creatively used social media. It sparked so much hope in me that this younger generation will be able to use all the media tools at their fingertips to discover and reveal God's love. I left with a deep sense of gratitude, admiration, and affection for all whom I met.

## DIVE DEEPER

Visit [rscj.org/lom23](https://rscj.org/lom23) to watch a video and hear from more participants about their experience at the program.





TOP LEFT: Students work together on a presentation.

TOP RIGHT: Sister Cooke (left) and Mary Charlotte Chandler, RSCJ, listen to students present.

MIDDLE LEFT: Reyna González, RSCJ, alongside Sister Kehoe (left), Sheila Haggas, and Diane Roche, RSCJ (right), responding to a student presentation.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Students present their group project.

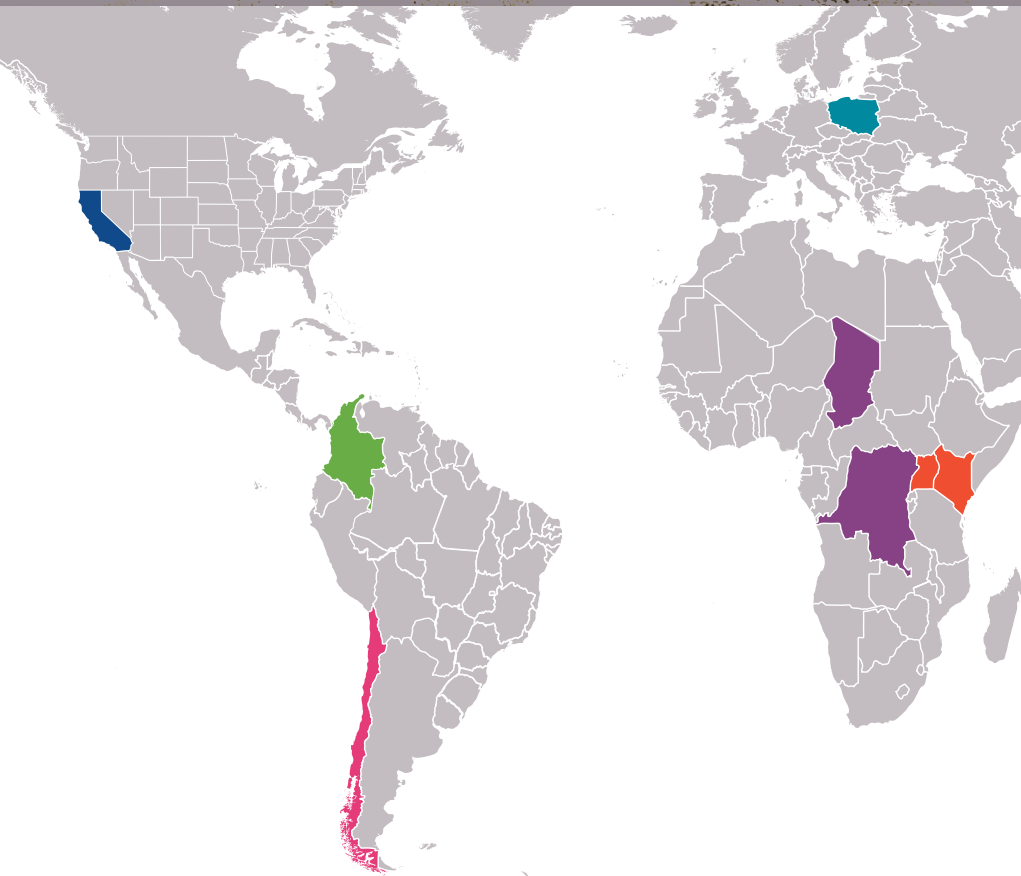
RIGHT: Students react to their peers' presentation.







*newly professed*



**Congratulations to the seven Religious of the Sacred Heart who professed their final vows in the Society of the Sacred Heart in Rome on February 3, 2024!**

**Nataly Fabiola**

▼ Province of Chile

**Gloria Diaz**

▼ Province of Colombia

**Barbara Olejnik**

▼ Province of Poland

**Ruth Lema & Nancy Mabakuka**

▼ Democratic Republic of the Congo – Chad Province

**Mary Atukunda**

▼ Uganda – Kenya Province

**Uchenna Oluoha**

▼ United States – Canada Province



## PHILOSOPHY OF SACRED HEART EDUCATION

# Sophie's Gift... *Our Call to the Future*

By Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, chair of the International Education Commission (IEC)

The Society of the Sacred Heart's General Chapter 2016 called for the writing of a contemporary philosophy of Sacred Heart education with an emphasis on Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) and mission partners living our service of education as a process of humanization, rooted in the Gospel and in the educational intuitions of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat. The Society's General Council entrusted this task to an international education commission, which included seven RSCJ from different provinces. The fruit of the commission's labor is an exciting document entitled, *Philosophy of Sacred Heart Education: Sophie's Gift... Our Call to the Future*.

The commission found inspiration in Sophie's charism, which we came to understand as the fruit of Sophie's response to the Holy Spirit. Her attentiveness to the Spirit enabled Sophie to anchor her quest for meaning and truth in her relationship with Christ in whom she experienced the tenderness and warmth of God. The image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus best conveyed to her the depth and gratuitousness of God's love for all.

We read Society documents including the 1815 *Constitutions*, the *Constitutions* of 1982, and original documents that have so enriched generations of Sacred Heart educators: the Plan of Studies, past Society General Chapter documents, the 1988 IEC document, essays and talks by Mother Janet Erskine Stuart. In pondering these, we recognized Sophie's charism informing these texts as well as the texts of popular education and materials produced by the various Networks of Sacred Heart schools in Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, Latin America and North America.

### Unifying spirit – one that leads to hope

Today, Sophie's charism continues to inform our understanding of the Society's mission *to discover and reveal God's love in the heart of the world*. We see the Risen Christ as the all-embracing, loving manifestation of the Divine, extended without limit, totally inclusive, unconditionally welcoming. Sophie's charism and vision inspire us to demonstrate a contemplative



Artwork by Stephen B. Whatley

sensitivity and regard for the human dignity of each person through the service of education, especially at this moment as we witness extraordinary possibilities that offer promise and life, and simultaneously see inequality, suffering and violence. Responding from the depths of our relationship with Christ and attentive to the urging of the Spirit, we respond to the reality in which we live as educators. Our experience points to a deeper truth, that of solidarity. Religious and educators of the Sacred Heart believe that education is inherent in the process of humanization and, therefore, is at the heart of our mission.

Since the commission released *The Philosophy of Sacred Heart Education* in December 2023, Sacred Heart educators across the Society have been discussing and integrating the concepts articulated in the Philosophy and the accompanying Profile of the Sacred Heart Educator. As a commission, we hope that the spirit of this document continues to unify and inspire us to act as one.

# RSCJ Q&A

By Erin Everson

This summer, Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) from around the world will gather for the Society of the Sacred Heart's General Chapter 2024. In preparation, RSCJ from across the United States – Canada (USC) Province gathered in July 2023 for a Provincial Chapter, at which they elected delegates to represent the province at the General Chapter. They elected Imma De Stefanis, RSCJ; Paula Gruner, RSCJ; and Sheila Smith, RSCJ. Additionally, Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, in her role as provincial will serve as a USC Province delegate.

A General Chapter takes place every eight years. It is the highest governing body in the Society; its purpose is to assess the state of the Society and set directions for the future. It includes the election of a new superior general. The theme of the upcoming Chapter is "Courage, Confidence, Transformation through the Power of the Spirit." The elected Chapter delegates from the USC Province share their insights and hopes.

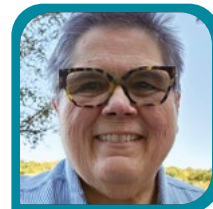
## ■ SUZANNE COOKE, RSCJ

Sister Cooke has been Provincial of the USC Province since 2021. Before assuming this role, she worked over three decades in education in numerous leadership positions. Most notably, she was head of school at Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart in Bellevue, Washington, and later at Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart in Miami. Before her appointment as Provincial, Sister Cooke served as the first head of the Conference of Sacred Heart Education, working closely with the Network of Sacred Heart Schools on behalf of the USC Province. In both 2000 and 2016, Sister Cooke was elected a General Chapter delegate. Most recently, Sister Cooke completed her service on the Society's International Education Committee.



## ■ PAULA GRUNER, RSCJ

In her early years as an RSCJ, Sister Gruner served on staff and later as director at a Sacred Heart boarding school. After professing final vows in the Society, she returned to school and earned her MBA, which informed much of her subsequent ministry. She has worked in the business office at Josephinum Academy of the Sacred Heart in Chicago, served as assistant provincial treasurer for the US Province, assistant to the provincial treasurer for the Uganda – Kenya Province, and business manager for Sprout Creek Farm, a former USC Province ministry. Sister Gruner is currently the canonical treasurer for the Antilles Province (Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico).



## ■ IMMA DE STEFANIS, RSCJ

Sister De Stefanis has served on the USC Provincial Team since 2021. She is a lifelong educator. Early on, she worked in Sacred Heart schools and has since taught and worked in higher education. More recently, she was the executive director of the Stuart Center for Ministry, a Society of the Sacred Heart ministry based in Washington, D.C. She has worked extensively developing and facilitating young adult leadership programs. Sister De Stefanis has also served as a consultant, working with nonprofits and schools on strategic planning, leadership training and board development. Currently, she is a member of the Society's International Planning Commission preparing for the General Chapter.



## ■ SHEILA SMITH, RSCJ

Sister Smith has worked in a wide variety of ministries as an RSCJ, including parish youth ministry, religious education, and Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) coordination for the Canadian Religious Conference. She served on the Provincial Team for the former Canada Province, and, more recently, concluded her time as the United Nations-NGO representative for the international Society of the Sacred Heart. Sister Smith has had a longstanding relationship with Indigenous grandmothers in Canada and has collaborated with them in their efforts for justice. She is currently a theology professor in the areas of the Church and truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.





### For those unfamiliar, can you explain more about what a General Chapter is?

**Sister Cooke:** A General Chapter is an assembly of Religious of the Sacred Heart, both representatives and provincials from every province, who come together to set the future direction of the congregation. It's a very important moment of communion and a time when we make decisions that we hope will enhance the liveliness of our mission.

**Sister Gruner:** It is the main decision-making body of the Society; though comprised of delegates chosen by the provinces, each one is called to serve the whole.

**Sister Smith:** Delegates from across the Society have a mandate and responsibility to make decisions for the whole, based on what is emerging across the international Society in dialogue with the reality of the world.

### What do you think is the significance of this Chapter?

**Sister Cooke:** As is stated in the recent Society document, *Philosophy of Sacred Heart Education: Sophie's Gift...Our Call to the Future*, "Our world is at a historic paradoxical moment. In the midst of extraordinary possibilities that offer promise and life, we simultaneously witness inequality, suffering and violence. Responding from the depths of our relationship with Christ and attentive to the urging of the Spirit, we respond to the reality in which we live as educators. Our experience points to a deeper truth, that of solidarity." This is the moment when we will serve as the authors of the Society's immediate direction and thus its future. The Chapter's significance lies in its being a defining moment for RSCJ, our mission partners and all whom we serve as we respond to the beckoning of the Holy Spirit and the cries of anguish in humanity.

**Sister Smith:** Every Chapter has significance for its time. This Chapter happens at a time when on the one hand, the Society is growing smaller, increasingly open and interdependent. On the other hand, world powers are more controlling, increasingly closed, combative and less cooperative. General Chapter 2024 will be significant in assisting us to continue facing the challenges of our time and to respond by building global community, inspiring hope and impelling all of us to implement Gospel-motivated action in our daily lives.



### What experience will you call on to help inform your participation in this General Chapter?

**Sister Cooke:** It is difficult to name one experience that will inform my participation in the General Chapter. My perspective has been informed by listening to the dreams, anxieties, hopes and questions of sisters and mission partners during our provincial assemblies and chapter last year, visits across the USC Province, as well as participation in the chapters of the Antilles and Mexico Provinces. Serving on the International Education Commission has also deeply informed and changed my perspective and self-understanding as an RSCJ. Working with the six RSCJ who served with me on that commission has had a lasting impact on me.

**Sister De Stefanis:** In both formal and informal settings and conversations, I have had the opportunity to really listen and hear from our sisters. This comes from my experience on the Provincial Team and listening to many of our sisters here in our Province as well as through my service on the International Planning Commission. It is the witness of my sisters' lives, their journeys, their challenges and affirmations — all of it — that will inform my participation. In both of these areas of service, I have had the "opportunity" to stumble and trip over our good intentions, and these experiences have been very generous in the opportunity to be stretched and learn.

**Sister Smith:** Many experiences are informing how I will participate in this General Chapter. Of particular importance is my experience of being loved. Knowing that my sisters trust me and are with me throughout will be a great strength and a source of grounding for me. When I am grounded, I listen best, and this is the most important gift I can draw upon for meaningful participation.



**How does the theme “Courage, Confidence, Transformation through the Power of the Spirit” speak to you?**

**Sister De Stefanis:** This is very much a chapter that relies on listening to the Spirit. Yes, we would say this anytime we hold a chapter, but this is different. I do believe that we are being called to conversion, which can only happen through the Holy Spirit. We can put the full complement of our skills to planning and organizing; but if we do not listen attentively to the Spirit, we might miss the signs of what can bring all of these to life and fruition for the sake of the mission and the good of the whole. As Janet Stuart said, “It is better to begin a great work than to complete a small one.” This Chapter will set about a great work, but I really do believe the Spirit is very much at work throughout the Society.

**Sister Gruner:** This theme speaks to the trust that I have in my sisters, as well as in the Holy Spirit. I have to be courageous to share my thoughts and feelings openly, which can be most difficult. I have to have the confidence and trust in my sisters that my words will be heard and my feelings will be respected, that I will not be judged, as there are no wrong answers. When I am open to the other and to the Spirit, I can be transformed; and likewise, if each one can be open, we can be transformed together as we listen to the needs of the world as presented by our sisters and work together to address these needs.

**What hopes do you bring to this General Chapter?**

**Sister Cooke:** I hope we listen deeply to one another with patience and humility, that we allow the Holy Spirit to breathe in us so that we may be bold in our response to the anguish we witness in the world and that we will commit ourselves to act boldly on behalf of God’s people in our work as educators committed to justice.

**Sister De Stefanis:** My hope lies in the fact that I believe there is a future for religious life and for the mission of the Society, and not only in certain parts of the world where we currently see growth. I believe life is possible in ALL places! We may simply need to be open to the fact that it might look different from what we are accustomed to. I also hope that all the planning of the last two years has prepared us for the discernment and openness this chapter requires, and that we not arrive only with answers.

**Sister Gruner:** So far, my experience has been that when RSCJ are gathered together, a positive, life-giving energy is generated. It is this communal energy that, I believe, will give life to our deliberations. It is the relationships that we build among ourselves that will enable us to listen deeply to one another, that will enable us to move beyond the questions and walk on a path together into the future.

**Sister Smith:** I hope that all delegates come open and ready to listen to the Spirit in one another. I hope for deep respect at the Chapter and that all voices are heard, especially voices that have a harder time expressing themselves in the official languages of the Society (English, Spanish and French). I hope to spend time with, to speak with every delegate, and to learn from her. I hope that this Chapter is another moment in our collective journey that continues to move the Society in the direction we are called.





# Prayer GENERAL CHAPTER 2024

**Holy Spirit**, as we prepare this chapter:

teach us to listen to one another with patience and humility,  
breathe in us so that your breath may become boldness,  
act in us so that your breath may become action,  
rekindle in us the **COURAGE** of St Madeleine Sophie.

**Life-giving Spirit**, guardian of the divine life in us:

enlighten our journey towards the General Chapter of 2024,  
nourish our hope, dispel our doubts,  
dispose our hearts so that we may welcome the innovation you bring us,  
give us the **CONFIDENCE** we need.

**Creator Spirit:**

live in us your new Pentecost.

Give us the capacity to dream and to trace your newness  
in our congregation and in the world,  
in our communities, in ourselves.

**TRANSFORM US!**





# hearts abroad.

By Erin Everson

Today, the Society of the Sacred Heart is present in 41 countries around the world. For Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ), international experiences are typical in the formation process, especially in the time leading up to their profession of final vows. Sometimes RSCJ throughout the international Society have the opportunity to live and work abroad, some for short stints and others over the span of decades. Currently, there are nine RSCJ from the United States and Canada living and working in various ministries abroad.





## Ellen Collesano, RSCJ

Living in Montalban, Philippines, since October 2023

### Current Role:

Novice Director for the RSCJ ASIANZ (Asia-New Zealand) Novitiate

What a great privilege and honor it is to serve as novice director. We currently have 10 novices (women preparing for first vows), six second-year novices and four first-year novices, from India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. The novices have classes on RSCJ history, the Society *Constitutions* and spirituality. We also participate in various intercommunity novitiate programs in the Philippines as there are many houses of formation in Manila. Our novices are able to join with other women and men in formation from across Asia and take courses at various educational institutions in Manila.

### What do you find most meaningful in your work?

It is a joy to work together to build an intercultural community in the novitiate, that the gifts of each culture influence our community life and that we celebrate our diversity.

### What is one aspect of the culture in which you live that you appreciate?

Our novitiate has the extra benefit of the rich cultural heritage of the Philippines, with its strong Catholic environment. The faith and strength of the people is so evident in our active local parish and in our neighborhood.

## Mary Finlayson, RSCJ

Living in Rome, Italy, since August 2023

### Current Role:

Villa Lante Centre for Lay and Religious Formation\* Team Member

I primarily serve all visitors at the Villa Lante, both religious and lay collaborators. I do interpretation for RSCJ groups. I oversee the renewal and care of the Villa Lante park and gardens. I have the wonderful opportunity to continue to re-decorate the recently renovated Villa Lante, blending historic furniture and art into renovated modern spaces. I welcome and serve guests at all hours of the day/week.

### What do you find most meaningful in your work?

I am loving the interaction with all who serve here and all who come to the Villa Lante for programs or meetings, and I am working to create spaces of beauty where people feel welcomed and at home in an ambiance of sharing the love of the Heart of Jesus.

### What do you appreciate about the culture in which you live?

Beauty. Italians celebrate and share beauty in so many ways, from ancient ruins to food and music, lush gardens..., and I never tire of the beauty around me. Even in the face of challenges and suffering, *la vita è bella*, life is beautiful.

\*The Villa Lante, one of the Society's most historically significant buildings, has belonged to the Society since 1837.







## Maureen Glavin, RSCJ

Living in Baleendah, Bandung, Indonesia, and has lived in Indonesia since September 2022

### Current Role:

Indonesian District Leadership Team member

I mainly work with Religious of the Sacred Heart in Indonesia in an administrative role. I partner with and support the district superior, especially with tasks for which speaking and writing English is helpful. The district superior and I actively participate in meeting and planning with the leadership teams of the Philippines, India and Vietnam in the journey to becoming one province. I also support professed young RSCJ (RSCJ who have made final vows but who have been professed for less than 10 years) in their leadership development as well as in the development of the English language with pre-postulants and postulants (also known as candidates or women who are preparing to enter the novitiate, usually a period of 2 years). Among other things, I am currently teaching a weekly algebra class at a diocesan school.

### What do you find most meaningful in your work?

What is most meaningful to me about being here is both the grace of experiencing God in the living of our internationality, and the joy of trusting that I might be helping to reveal God through my participation in our internationality.

### What is one aspect of the culture in which you live that you appreciate?

I most appreciate our community prayer. I leave at 5:30 a.m. to attend morning Mass with the postulants — which I love. After Mass I have my own personal prayer time, which has been made richer while here. I often think of this grace as a function of the place and space and atmosphere. Indonesia is a very faith-oriented culture. The Catholic and Muslim communities I have met are amazingly faith-filled.

## Nancy Koke, RSCJ

Living in Jinja, Uganda, and has lived in the Uganda – Kenya Province since 2008

### Current roles:

Sophie Barat Community Coordinator, teaching postulants, spiritual accompaniment and retreat ministry

I mainly work with the members of my community and those in the first stages of initial formation to enter the Society of the Sacred Heart. I serve my community members by setting the agenda for weekly community meetings, keeping community members informed about RSCJ international and province communications and assuring follow-up of assignments and tasks as secretary for all meetings. I also enjoy teaching the postulants two days a week and helping with workshops for the aspirants (like pre-postulants, women discerning entering the Society).

### What do you find most meaningful in your work?

Reaching out to others in ways that lead us to receive from one another the love, respect, care and compassion of Jesus in simple but concrete ways.

### What is one aspect of the culture in which you live that you appreciate?

The strong sense of hospitality and presence to one another at times of celebration and grieving as well as welcoming visitors and helping them to feel at home. I have been impressed by the fact that when there is a family wedding, a celebration of final vows or a jubilee of profession, communities will try to assure that one or more members attends the celebration.







## Josephine “Jo” Wright, RSCJ

Living in Jinja, Uganda, and has lived in the Uganda – Kenya Province since 1981

### Current roles:

Teaching postulants Society history and spirituality and the catechism, spiritual accompaniment and retreat ministry.

I principally work with those in the first stage of RSCJ formation – aspirants and postulants – to help them come to know, understand, be “set on fire” with the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; that this may animate their lives, their relationships with all whom they encounter.

### What do you find meaningful in your work?

The gift to be able to share our spirituality as Religious of the Sacred Heart and our faith with young women who are in a moment of discernment of call and who are eager, open and receptive to know and understand the greatness of their call.

### What is one aspect of the culture in which you live that you appreciate?

The aspect of the culture I appreciate is hospitality, the joyful welcome a visitor is given, whether the person is expected or not. It is believed that visitors are a blessing. One does not say “goodbye” to a visitor at the door but accompanies the person part way home. I recall times when I was working as a nurse in Kenya, and we would be out on safari with our mobile clinic; with heavy rains and muddy roads, we would get stuck. More than once, people offered us hospitality saying, “Stay the night at ours.” This would mean their vacating their beds. I continue to learn the ways of true hospitality.

## Other RSCJ Living & Serving Abroad



**Lydia Cho, RSCJ**  
Tokyo, Japan



Superior General  
**Barbara Dawson, RSCJ**  
Rome, Italy



**Shell Olson, RSCJ**  
Tokyo, Japan



**Anne Wachter, RSCJ**  
Tokyo, Japan





# hearts rooted in change

## SACRED HEART SUMMIT 2024

# SHS

In April, the Network of Sacred Heart Schools announced that the first-ever *Sacred Heart Summit* will take place this fall, September 29–October 2, 2024, in Chicago at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place. This intergenerational learning conference for the global Sacred Heart Family — educators, students (Grades 8-12), Religious of the Sacred Heart, young alumnae and alumni, and mission partners — is part of the Network’s celebration of 50 years of sharing mission.

The Summit aims to deepen our understanding of being agents of change rooted in the charism of the Society of the Sacred Heart and the mission of Sacred Heart education. Participants will explore global issues of inequality and sustainable futures under the guiding theme of *Hearts Rooted in Change: How Reflection,*

*Analysis, & Transformative Action Are Critical to Our Future.* Deepening our commitment to serve the common good by honoring the dignity of all human beings on a global scale, participants will have the opportunity to explore four main tracks: Call to Family, Community and Participation; Integrity of Creation; Our Common Humanity; and Solidarity.

The Summit will feature various speakers and breakout presentations that align with the theme of the Summit, *Hearts Rooted in Change*, and the mission of Sacred Heart education. In addition to Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, Provincial of the Society of the Sacred Heart, United States – Canada Province, keynote speakers will include:



## Sheila Davis, DNP, ANP-BC, FAAN.

Dr. Davis is the chief executive officer at Partners In Health (PIH), a global health nonprofit organization rooted in social justice that brings the benefits of modern medical science to impoverished communities in eleven countries. Formerly, a clinician in the infectious diseases clinic at MGH Institute of Health Professions and an HIV/AIDS activist for over 15 years, she has held multiple cross-site roles at Partners In Health, including Chief of Ebola Response, Chief of Clinical Operations, and Chief Nursing Officer.



## Betty Ogiel

Betty is the author of *Against All Odds*. She is a transformational leadership and career coach, a passionate speaker, a distinguished graduate of an international Sacred Heart school, having attended Kangole Girls Senior Secondary School and St. Charles Lwanga Girls Training Center, and a member of the Maxwell Leadership Certified Team. Betty's personal story, which includes recovery from a life-altering accident resulting in an extensive brain injury that affected her speech and motor skills, is a testament to the remarkable power of faith, determination, and revival.



## Imma De Stefanis, RSCJ, Ph.D.

Sister De Stefanis has more than 25 years' experience in education, college administration and non-profit management. As a consultant, she works with small to mid-size non-profit organizations and educational institutions in areas of strategic planning, sustainability planning, board development and leadership development. She currently serves on the boards of the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón in Puerto Rico, Sacred Heart Greenwich, and LPGA Amateurs, Westchester Chapter. Additionally, she currently serves on the Provincial Team for the United States – Canada Province, and on the International Planning Commission of the Society with a focus on global restructuring.



## Alexandra (Ali) Codina

Ali is a first-generation LatinX independent documentary filmmaker based in Miami. Her debut film *Monica & David* — the love story of two adults with Down Syndrome — premiered on HBO, was nominated for an Emmy Award, won Tribeca Film Festival's Jury Award for Best Documentary, and was broadcast in 33 countries. Additional projects of hers include: "Paper Children" and "En Manos de Dios." In all her projects, Ali has fought to include the communities reflected in her films as part of her distribution and impact strategies. A graduate of Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart in Miami, she is a passionate advocate deeply involved in her community.



## Rose Farah

Rose is a member of the investment advisory team at CrossBoundary in Dubai. Prior to joining CrossBoundary, Rose was a strategy consultant at The Bridgespan Group in New York and Singapore, where she helped launch the firm's presence in Southeast Asia. Rose serves on the board of directors at Jusoor, an international NGO focused on education and entrepreneurship for Syrian youth. She is a graduate of Convent of the Sacred Heart in New York City.



The Summit is a learning conference during which participants will engage in critical analysis and purposeful contemplation that promote informed, transformative action rooted in the love of Jesus Christ. Community and relationships are at the core of the Sacred Heart mission. By coming together as one community, we hope to set forth on a common path of transformative action in our pursuit of a world characterized by compassion, hope, justice, and solidarity.

**Learn more about and register for the Sacred Heart Summit [here](#).**





When old age makes it impossible for us to continue in a full-time apostolate, we look for new ways of manifesting the love of Jesus. We are called not only to accept the love and service of others, but to give to others the love that we have drawn throughout life from the Heart of Christ. This may be the most contemplative period of our life, keeping its prophetic and apostolic power through the truth and depth of our relationships and the joy with which we bear witness to the fidelity of God's love.

Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart §116





# Continued Engagement Enhances Creativity

By Lynne Lieux, RSCJ

It is frequently said that Religious of the Sacred Heart are “in mission for life.” That is an obvious reality when one visits one of the eldercare residences within the United States – Canada Province. Since August 2023, the Province has expanded the number of residences available to older RSCJ, creating new living arrangements that allow our sisters to remain engaged in various ministries, some of which they were active in before moving to a new residence, and others new for those RSCJ who relocated.

Currently, 75 members of the USC Province are living in one of six eldercare residences — Caritas in Halifax, Nova Scotia; Avila and Teresian House in Albany, New York; Carmel Terrace in Framingham, Massachusetts; The Sarah Community in St. Louis, Missouri, and Oakwood in Atherton, California. All of the residences have space to welcome visitors, including international visitors. The continued engagement of sisters in various ministries and their interaction with others both enhances the life of the province and allows for great creativity among those living in each eldercare residence.

## Caritas

The Society of the Sacred Heart has had a long relationship with Caritas Residence and the Sisters of Charity of Halifax. Caritas has been home for a number of Canadian RSCJ through the years. Currently, one sister, Theresa Chu, RSCJ, resides there.

## Carmel Terrace

Last June, five RSCJ in the Boston area responded affirmatively to an invitation from the Provincial Team to create an independent living community at Carmel Terrace. More recently, another RSCJ joined the community, along with her dog.

Mary Lyman, RSCJ, and Gail O'Donnell, RSCJ provide spiritual direction and serve as retreat directors for individuals, both locally and virtually. Sister O'Donnell has at times offered a day of retreat for the residents. Fran de la Chapelle, RSCJ, continues her work with the Conference of Sacred Heart Education and serves on boards of two Sacred Heart schools. Mary Wolff-

Salin, RSCJ, continues to work with a committee at the C.G. Jung Institute of New England and has a small practice as a therapist. Magee Cappelli, RSCJ, meets once a week with a group of four women for sharing and prayer. Sister Cappelli also participates in a life writing group with six women who write and share on a different topic weekly. El MacLellan, RSCJ, lobbied the residents at Carmel Terrace to begin a recycling program. Weekly, she collects recyclable items and, with the help of her sisters, takes them to a recycling center.



## Avila and Teresian House

Since the closing of the Pax Christi community at Kenwood in 2005, RSCJ in the Albany area have resided at Avila, an independent senior living residence, or at Teresian House, a skilled nursing home. A full-time RN and a part-time LPN provide support to the RSCJ at Avila and Teresian House. Currently, 11 sisters live at Avila and 12 sisters live at Teresian House.

The sisters at Avila consider their outreach to other residents an essential ministry. Sharing meals with lay residents and hosting lectures have allowed the sisters to share their lives and spirituality. One RSCJ serves on the residence council for Avila; another organizes the music and directs the choir for Sunday liturgies. Several visit the RSCJ at Teresian House on a regular basis.

At Teresian House, Joan Gannon, RSCJ, and Natalie Runfola, RSCJ, organize activities; Nance O'Neil, RSCJ, hosts presentations on various topics and Julie Yachtis, RSCJ, engages with residents by offering reflections



through art work. She also mentors graduate students who have field placements at Teresian House. Sister O'Neil has held a virtual seminar on the history of the Society for young RSCJ living in Indonesia. Some consider keeping in touch with former students and colleagues another aspect of their outreach.

### The Sarah Community

A residence with independent and assisted living and skilled nursing options, The Sarah Community is home to six RSCJ in independent living apartments.

The RSCJ at The Sarah Community consider part of their ministry visiting and listening to other residents, both religious and lay. They share their evening meals with a sister of another congregation who lives at The Sarah Community to oversee the care of her sisters living there. In this way, the RSCJ are a support to this sister in her ministry. Some frequently attend liturgies at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in nearby St. Charles; some participate in gatherings with students from the Academy who visit weekly. Margaret Munch, RSCJ, visits the Academy on a regular basis to be an RSCJ presence. In the fall, she teaches sixth grade students about Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne and prepares them to present a program on Philippine to the school. Others participate in Society of the Sacred Heart Associates meetings, virtually and in person. Two RSCJ at The Sarah Community are members of a centering prayer group, and two serve as Eucharistic ministers and lectors at daily liturgy.

### Oakwood

Thirty-nine RSCJ currently live at Oakwood, a residence with several levels of healthcare and a dedicated staff. While the sisters at Oakwood participate in activities, celebrations and outings, many engage in a variety of social and educational ministries.

Nineteen students from the neighboring Sacred Heart Schools (SHS) Atherton visit with RSCJ on a weekly basis. Several RSCJ periodically provide an audience for fifth grade students at SHS who practice public speaking and oral reading.



A few RSCJ offer spiritual direction through Sophie's Well and Busy Persons Retreats offered in person and online through Zoom. Other sisters have served on panels on Sacred Heart education for the local school community. Muriel Cameron, RSCJ, for example, participated in a conversation with Sacred Heart parents about the experience of educating young people in today's world.

Maureen Chicoine, RSCJ, continues to conduct ancestry research of descendants of people enslaved by the Society during the 19th century. Columba Kim, RSCJ, continues her practice as a therapist. Shu Fang Tsai, RSCJ, hosts a book club with former Taiwanese students and faculty who live in the Bay Area. Mary Pat Rives, RSCJ, continues to support the work of RSCJ in Uganda and Kenya.

Others keep up with and attend meetings with the San Francisco Associates and the local Children of Mary Sodality. Some sisters keep up with former students and colleagues from around the world.

Additionally, many of the sisters provide services to the Oakwood community, including Pat Munch, RSCJ, who serves as sacristan, and Lucy Hayes, RSCJ, who oversees the library. Suzanne Lasseigne, RSCJ, is an active gardener and helps to ensure the Oakwood gardens are vibrant for other community members to enjoy.

More recently, some of the sisters at Oakwood have engaged in Zoom conversations with RSCJ at Casa Grande, an eldercare residence in Guadalajara, Mexico, to build community with sisters as we work toward becoming one province.

A quick survey of the RSCJ in all our province eldercare residences illustrates the creativity and deep commitment of these women. Most importantly, in all the residences, RSCJ continue to pray for the world, the province and the larger Sacred Heart family. Thus, they remain engaged "in mission for life."



## DONOR PROFILE

# A Gift for a Lifetime

By Nancy Smith Delaney, parent of a Sacred Heart alumna, member of the Investment Committee of the Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada Province



I have always been grateful for the gift of a Catholic education that my family gave me. It's probably one of the best gifts parents can give to their child, and it's one that lasts a lifetime.

My husband and I were then able to give that same gift to our daughter who attended Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart in Princeton, New Jersey. I remember walking her into school and meeting the headmistress at the time, Sister Fran de la Chapelle, RSCJ, as well as Sister Grace Butler, RSCJ. They welcomed us and shared just how special a Sacred Heart education was for the children at their school. They were spot on! From the beginning, my daughter thrived, and through her years as a "Sacred Heart girl," she developed into the intelligent, confident, kind, and compassionate woman she is today.

I thoroughly enjoyed my days as a Sacred Heart parent and volunteer. I was thrilled to be a part of a Sacred Heart community and participate in many events over the years, including fundraising efforts like Stuart's annual auctions and the school's "Pink Out" fundraiser for cancer research. I was grateful to serve on the steering committee for the self-study during Stuart's renewal of its commitment to the *Goals and Criteria* of

Sacred Heart education, mandated by the Sacred Heart Commission on Goals (SHCOG).

Several years after my daughter graduated from Stuart, I was honored to join the investment committee of the Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada Province, pleased that I could volunteer my time and experience as a banker and consultant in the nonprofit sector. In addition to my Catholic education and my daughter's wonderful experience at Stuart, it was the mission and ministry of the Religious of the Sacred Heart that moved me to give back in this way.

Over the last three years, it's been my absolute pleasure to work on this committee with the RSCJ on the Provincial Team, and I look forward to continuing our work together to ensure that the Sacred Heart mission and legacy continue for many generations to come.

I donate to the Society of the Sacred Heart to support not only its ministries and mission, but also to contribute to the needs of the RSCJ in their retirement years. As we all know, the costs of assisted living and nursing care are considerable today and escalating rapidly. Managing these escalating costs and ensuring that the Province has the funds to invest for the future are primary concerns of the Society and the Provincial Team. Financial giving for the retired sisters' long term care expenses is a way to help diminish that concern. In addition, such a gift is a meaningful way to honor the RSCJ who have dedicated their lives to educating our children in the Sacred Heart tradition.

To quote Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat: "Great hearts, generous hearts, are required in the family of God's Heart, because the difficulties in the way of doing good increase day by day."



**Support the RSCJ —  
donate online today!**

[rscj.org/supportRSCJ](https://rscj.org/supportRSCJ)





# SacredHeartDNA: *building community in*

By the SacredHeartDNA Core Team

SacredHeartDNA (SHDNA) is a young adult ministry initiative of the Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada (USC) Province. Young adult members of the SHDNA core team journeyed to Mexico in February 2024 to connect with young people and promote upcoming SHDNA programs.

With SHDNA in its second year of programming, the SHDNA core team, comprised of both young adults and Religious of the Sacred Heart from the United States and Mexico, has been instrumental in cultivating and growing an international, intergenerational community focused on young adults and rooted in the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

During the team's week-long visit in Mexico, they shared about the initiative and its upcoming programs and events with the Casa Grande community of RSCJ in Guadalajara, as well as with students and educators at the neighboring Colegio Guadalajara del Sagrado Corazón. The team also had the opportunity to present to students, educators and alumnae/i from Colegio Sagrado Corazón in San Luis Potosí.

"Sacred Heart students of various ages expressed interest in participating in our SacredHeartDNA programs and becoming part of a community where they felt included and empowered to make a positive impact on their surroundings," said Karla Reyes, young adult project manager and vocation office assistant for the Society of the Sacred Heart USC Province, who sits on the SHDNA core team.

Karla emphasized the team's diligent work and dedication to continue sharing the Society's mission *to discover and reveal God's love* with young people worldwide through SacredHeartDNA.

While connecting with young people and communicating about SacredHeartDNA were paramount in this trip, another equally important aspect for those SHDNA core team members present was the opportunity to live in community with RSCJ, share meal times, conversation and prayer.

Lilly Risch Bakhit, a recent graduate of Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart in Omaha, Nebraska, and core team member, said of her experience, "I grew in my relationships with the other core team members, while I also formed relationships with other Sacred Heart students and with the RSCJ. I am in awe of the wisdom and grace the sisters possess, and I am so grateful for the time I spent with them."

Moreover, while in San Luis Potosí, the team had the opportunity to spend time at and learn about a popular education project and long-time RSCJ mission partner organization, Iyolosiwa A.C. "Being able to share our mission with students was amazing, and one of the most gratifying parts of our time in San Luis Potosí was the opportunity to volunteer at Iyolosiwa and learn about their work and initiatives throughout Mexico," said core team member Isabella McCartney, an alumna of Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart and current student at the University of San Diego.





# Mexico

The SHDNA core team concluded its time together in prayer with the RSCJ and had the opportunity to reflect and share about their collective as well as individual experiences on the trip.

“For me, this journey and time were grounding and transformative and rooted deeply in gratitude for the warmth and love so clearly shared by every person and community we encountered,” said Erin Everson, communications project manager for the Society of the Sacred Heart USC Province, alumna of Duchesne Academy in Omaha, and core team member. “I was deeply moved to see the clear impact and ripple effect of the Society’s mission in the communities we visited. It goes beyond talking about it. I saw it in others’ actions, in their ways of being, in their passions and in their commitment to living a life of love in their own context.”

SacredHeartDNA continues its efforts to build relationships rooted in the Society’s mission across borders and cultures and to create this type of experience for young adult leaders to connect more deeply to their own spirituality and purpose, while building up a community of belonging for and by young people.

These efforts come at an important time, too, as the USC Province looks ahead to merging with the Provinces of Antilles (Cuba, Haiti, and Puerto Rico) and Mexico in the coming years.

“I believe that connecting with our Sacred Heart family in Mexico has been a significant step toward establishing a closer relationship with our community of sisters, students, alumnae/i and friends in Mexico,” Karla said. “This experience enabled us to not only cross physical frontiers, but spiritual and cultural ones, and I believe, reinforces our SacredHeartDNA commitment to empowering young people and fostering community.”





# *from the Archives* Comings & Goings

By Carolyn Osiek, RSCJ, Provincial Archivist of the Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada Province

Internationality is nothing new in the Society of the Sacred Heart. Readers may be familiar with the story of Rose Philippine Duchesne and her four companions who set off for North America in 1818. For Philippine, this was for life, no going back. She had two offers to return to France: one from her cousin and dear friend Josephine to pay for a visit in 1833, the other from Madeleine Sophie Barat herself in 1837, that when Philippine was no longer superior, she could return to France permanently. She declined both offers.

This was just the beginning of an active exchange of personnel in both directions. Already in 1822, more European Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) arrived in America: Anna Xavier Murphy, who went to Grand Coteau and died there prematurely in 1836; and Lucile Mathevon, who reopened St. Charles in 1828, then was a pioneer on the Potawatomi mission from 1841 for the rest of her life.

For many others the move was not so permanent. Even among the first band with Philippine, Eugénie Audé returned to France in 1834 to report on the American mission and come back as assistant general for America. She never returned to America, but instead remained in Europe and died in 1842 in Rome while superior of the Trinità dei Monti – a former Society convent and school housing Pauline Perdrau's *Mater Admirabilis* fresco. Marguerite Manteau, another of the original band, thought she had an understanding with Sophie's brother Louis that after twelve years she could return home, but that did not happen.

Others came and went. Between 1827 and 1831, seven more came from Europe. Some found that not everyone was cut out for life on the frontier, and three returned home after some years. Julie Bazire, born in 1806, tried it twice, 1829-1843 and 1847-1850, but left the Society and returned to France. Félicité Lavy-Brun, born in France in 1802, was in America 1829-1856 but returned to Europe, served in one of the new foundations in Ireland and died in Armagh in 1866. Yet another, Louise Tintelin, born in France in 1815, was in America 1852-1855 and again 1858-1860, but returned to France and died in Paris in 1890.

Philippine's niece, Amélie Jouve, born in France in 1799, came to America in 1847, the same age as Philippine when she arrived. After a visit to her aunt Philippine in St. Charles, she headed to her assignment at St-Vincent, Canada. She was superior vicar of the western vicariate in North America and superior at Grand Coteau in 1860 in time for the Civil War, then returned to France in 1879 and was vicar of the western vicariate at Orléans, where she died the next year.

Not all the traffic originated in Europe. While Aloysia Hardey was vicar of the Eastern U.S. and Canada, Madeleine Sophie continually suggested that she select some American novices to send to the novitiate at Conflans near Paris – the first international novitiate in the Society of the Sacred Heart. Mother Hardey did so, but Mother Barat was not always impressed with her choices.





Susanna Boudreau



Aloysia Hardey



Amelie Jouve

Sophie referred to one, Agnes Horner, as *un petit rien*, “a little nothing.” Another, Catherine Campion, was reported back to Mother Hardey in 1861 as having a terrible case of scruples (a sense of moral guilt that the person cannot overcome); she would not listen to her superior general or to her confessor, and Mother Barat threatened to send her home without vows. She must have overcome the scruples: she did make her vows the same year, returned to America to live a long life, and died at Sault-au-Récollet in Canada in 1899.

The most interesting novitiate report is about Elizabeth Ten Broeck, born in Catskill, New York in 1815, raised Protestant. She became a Catholic in 1844, and had already entered once and left by 1856 when she re-entered and was sent as a novice to Conflans, now of “a certain age,” in 1861. Mother Barat did not think she was called to the Society, but the Jesuits she consulted did; and they thought Elizabeth should be given special attention, an idea that did not sit well with Sophie. Elizabeth was sent home without vows, but having been in the Society for a total of 16 years, so Sophie grudgingly admitted that they owed her something. She could perhaps be kept in one of the houses without vows. The thinking on this side of the Atlantic was different: she was professed at the Sault-au-Récollet in Canada and went on to be a happy member of the Society who wrote many devotional books and articles for Catholic publishers before dying at Eden Hall (Philadelphia) in 1901.

It was not only novices who went temporarily from America to France. Susannah Boudreau (1823-1880),

born in Louisiana, was brought to Manhattanville by Mother Hardey but was sent from the New York climate with bronchitis in 1852 for some months in France for rest and recovery. Thus, she came to know and be known by Mother Barat. She returned to New York in May 1853, destined from there later to be vicar of the western vicariate in St. Louis and founder in Timaru, New Zealand, where she died suddenly in 1880.

A missionary in reverse was Evelina Lévêque. Born 1811 in Donaldsville, Louisiana, she was one of five sisters in the same family who entered the Society. She entered at St. Michael in 1828 and was finally professed there in 1839. She then went to France and first lived at the Rue de Varenne in Paris. She returned to America to be a founder in New York and at St-Vincent, Canada in 1842. She moved back to France in 1854 and was present at the death of Mother Barat in 1865. In 1879, she came back to the U.S. for a few years, then returned again to France, where she died at Beauvais in 1892.

These are a few examples of the movement back and forth in the century following the arrival of the first RSCJ in North America. See the charts in M. L. Martinez, “*Southward Ho! The Society of the Sacred Heart Enters ‘Lands of the Spanish Sea,’*” pp. 161-188, for a complete record of nineteenth-century comings and goings. Between 1818 and 1865, 96 names are listed; and between 1865 and 1900, 131 names. International exchange was part of life in the Society from the beginning and continues to be today.





## Share Your Hearts

For almost two decades, hearts in nature graced the front cover of *Heart* magazine. To pay homage to this original concept, we share hearts in nature photographed by members of our Sacred Heart family.

Submissions can be sent to [editor@rscj.org](mailto:editor@rscj.org).

### Credits from left to right:

Photo taken in Berkley, Michigan, by Caroline Ciesliga Thompson, alumna of the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Photo taken on the Katy Trail in St. Charles, Missouri, by Pamela Harris-Marcus, Upper School English Department Chair at Villa Duchesne School of the Sacred Heart in St. Louis, Missouri

Photo taken in Honolulu, Hawaii, submitted by Marilyn Orbann (pictured with her husband Carl), alumna of the University of San Diego

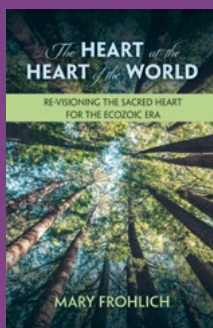
Photo by Tammi Koch, submitted by Mary Sramek Levesque, alumna of Duchesne College in Omaha, Nebraska

## Suggested Reading

### *The Heart at the Heart of the World: Re-visioning the Sacred Heart for the Ecozoic Era*

By Mary Frohlich, RSCJ

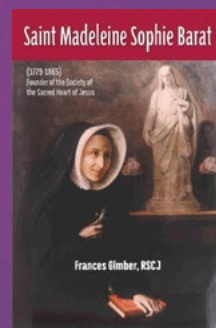
Traditional forms of devotion to the Sacred Heart have waned among Catholics in recent decades. In this book, Sister Frohlich seeks to reinterpret this traditional devotion as central to Christian spirituality in the 21st century. Facing our impending ecological disaster, she sets out to discover the Heart of God as truly the heart of all creation.



### *Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat (1779-1865): Founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

By Frances Gimber, RSCJ

Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, who grew up in revolutionary France, became the founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart, which developed, under her leadership, a tradition of education that continues today worldwide. With over a dozen images, this short biography will acquaint you with Sophie's life story and inspiring legacy.







# our welcoming communities

Our Province Welcoming Communities are intentional communities that offer a variety of programs, gatherings, retreats, volunteer opportunities and accommodation options for young adults committed to social justice and spiritual growth.

## **Sophia House**

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