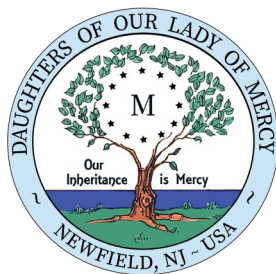


Mercy



Message

HANDS ACROSS THE OCEAN

Spring 2021

From Pope Francis' Easter Message to the World



Like a new flame this Good News springs up in the night: the night of a world already faced with epochal challenges and now oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole human family. In this night, the Church's voice rings out: "Christ, my hope, has arisen!" (Easter Sequence).

This is a different "contagion", a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is the contagion of hope: "Christ, my hope, is risen!". This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not "by-pass" suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.

The Risen Lord is also the Crucified One, not someone else. In His glorious body He bears indelible wounds: wounds that have become windows of hope. Let us turn our gaze to Him that He may heal the wounds of an afflicted humanity...

From Savona, Italy

Greetings from our Mother General, Mother Angela Maria Vieira Santos:

To all Members of our Rossellian Family:

In this time of great trial for all humanity, we are called not to close our hearts in anguish, not to bury our courage in the face of the storm, we are called instead to **"Hope against all hope."**

We can and we must hope, because God is faithful; he did not leave us alone, he visited us, he came into all our situations, in pain, in anguish, in death. But darkness and death do not have the last word.

The Risen Christ invites us not to feel alone, abandoned; He is risen to awaken our Faith, he is alive to accompany the days of our history, he conquered death to renew in the heart of every person, in this period of trial, the courage for true choices, to build through our witness. a future full of Hope and Love.



ON THE HOME FRONT

Through Pope Francis, novenas and other devotions, many Catholics throughout the world are discovering more about the foster father of Jesus in this Year of Saint Joseph and are now inspired to imitate his holy virtues.

For two* religious sisters serving in the Diocese of Camden who bear his name, they are happy that others are now learning what they have known for quite some time: Saint Joseph is one to emulate.

“He takes care of his family well, and quietly,” says Sister Joseph Marie Hatch, DM, a Daughter of Mercy for over 60 years, and a religious education teacher at Holy Cross Parish in Bridgeton.

Raised by her parents, Joseph and Marie, and the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Philadelphia, she learned from a young age about Saint Joseph. “He’s a good carpenter, works slowly, but the work is well done. When you pray to him, you might not get an answer quick, but when it comes it will be well done,” she says. “Saint Joseph always gets it done right, the first time.”

*The other sister in the Camden Diocese named Joseph is Sister Joseph Von Munster, CFR who ministers in Atlantic City.

This article was published in the Camden Diocese Star Herald on March 19, 2021, the Feast of St. Joseph

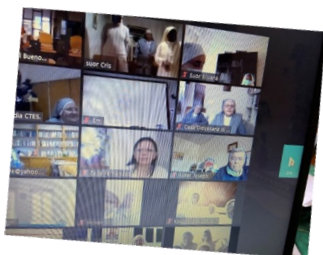


Sister Joseph Marie Hatch, DM

A ‘ZOOMING’ CELEBRATION

On March 20, through zoom, we, the Rossellian Family, participated in an international celebration of our annual Feast of St. Joseph! And what a celebration it was! From wherever we happened to be, we all had the opportunity to get a glimpse of the “World of Mercy,” Rossellian Style – from Europe to South America, to North America, to Asia and to Africa! The presentation featured the life of St. Joseph. as patron of our Institute, through icons, pictures, prayers, and songs. It was a day to remember and to express our gratitude to the Lord for the privilege of belonging to an international community which bears the name MERCY and manifests God’s MERCY to a world in need!

“Would that I had arms long enough to embrace the whole world and do good to all.”
St. Mary Joseph Rossello



A FORGOTTEN WORK OF MERCY

Finding Jesus in the Imprisoned



At Southwoods State Prison in 2019, Bishop Dennis Sullivan, Sister Mary Cronin (center) and a prison ministry volunteer greet each inmate after celebrating Mass together. (Mary McCusker)

Sister Mary Cronin, as coordinator of Prison Ministry in Camden Diocese, is very dedicated to this important and necessary work of Mercy. In the article that accompanied the above photo Sister Mary writes:

Pope Francis has always held prison ministry very dear to his heart and he has visited prisons all over the world. After all, the Catholic Church was founded by a criminal. Jesus was arrested, imprisoned, sentenced and executed. In Matthew 25:36, Jesus speaks of himself as being incarcerated when he says, “I was in prison and you visited me.”

Currently, the United States has the highest rate of imprisonment in the world, surpassing larger countries like India, China and Russia. One in three American adults has a criminal record, and one in two households have been impacted by crime.

In the Camden Diocese, who are these people who are incarcerated in the nine correction facilities — five county jails, three state prisons and one federal prison?

Among them are our parishioners, graduates of our schools, people who once sat in our church pews, relatives and friends of our parishioners and many others. They are from our cities, towns and neighborhoods, and some are from places far from New Jersey.

They are all beloved sons and daughters of our heavenly Father and our brothers and sisters in Christ...

Greetings from our Sisters in Gonaives, Haiti



Postulant Guerline Louis, Sr. Vincenzina, Sr. Margarita, Sr. Elza

Everything is going along well at our mission in Gonaives, Haiti.

However, our prayers are asked for the country of Haiti, and especially for the situation in Port-Au-Prince, the Capitol, where atrocious acts of kidnapping are being carried out by powerful armed gangs, and outrageous ransoms are then asked.

In the most recent kidnapping, a van occupied by 7 Catholic Clergy – 5 priests and two religious Sisters, was hijacked and the passengers kidnapped. The group was on its way to the installation of a new pastor. The gang in question, is demanding \$1 million American dollars as ransom from the Catholic Diocese of Port-Au-Prince. And this - in one of the world's poorest countries!

NEW DM WEBSITE

Everyone is invited to visit the new province website which includes information on St. Mary Joseph Rossello, and on Blessed Mother Ludovica DeAngelis. It describes our origins, charism, spirituality, Rossellian Family, missions and more! Our current newsletters can also be found on the website. The address is: www.daughtersofmercyusa.org. Check it out. We hope you like it!

Pandemically speaking...

By Sister Eileen Marie, DM

As we commemorated the anniversary of the COVID shutdown on March 13, we reflected on what we have learned. All of us became tech wizards, whether we wanted to or not, and were “baptized by fire.” We learned vocabulary that has taken on new meanings. “Zoom” used to mean to go fast. Now it means to connect on the internet face to face for a class or meeting. “Virtual” used to mean “nearly.” Now it means “carried out, accessed, or stored by means of a computer, especially over a network.” And so, now we now have virtual students, which means students are present on the computer screen, and not physically in the classroom. “Tablets” used to mean notebooks or loose-leaf paper. Now they are computer devices. “Hybrid” used to mean a mixed breed of flowers. Now it means going to school partially in person and partially virtually from home. “Live streaming” is a totally new word that means being able to film an activity and send it out through Facebook, YouTube and website.

At St. Joan of Arc, we began in August five days a week, all day long, unlike our local public schools, which went hybrid, half in the morning and half in the afternoon, or every other day.

We all had a number of students who were virtual off and on for many reasons, quarantine, COVID, illness, vacation, etc. It is quite a challenge to teach a class of students in person, while maintaining contact with students on a computer on a desk in the front of the room. It means providing handout for virtual students by making paper copies and having them picked up, or scanning them to the students electronically. It is quite a challenge to email tests, get them back electronically, and then grade and return them.

Some good things have come from COVID. At our parish, live streaming Masses and liturgical celebrations to families and homebound parishioners who are not able to attend in person will probably continue, as homebound parishioners greatly appreciated the opportunity to attend virtually. Funerals, weddings, graduations, First Communions, have all been live streamed and recorded on a regular basis.

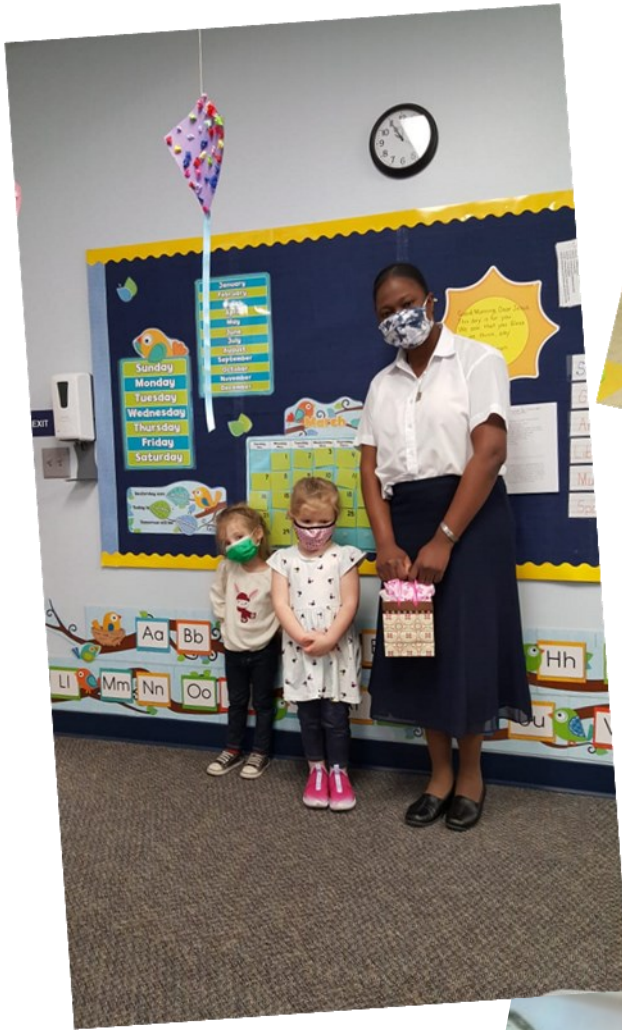
We all eagerly look forward to the day when life goes back to “normal,” whatever that will be!



Dream as if eternity is your
normal.

THE ADVENTURES OF NOVICE JOANA SIMON

Novice Joana enjoyed her experience at St. Joan of Arc School, Hershey where she had the opportunity to help in the classrooms, nurse's office and playground. In between times she learned how to make pizza from an authentic Italian pizza-maker! Joana is certainly gaining a variety of skills to put into action once she returns to our mission in Haiti! Joana's next adventure will unfold when she begins her volunteer work at St. Joseph School in York. Stay tuned! There's more to come!



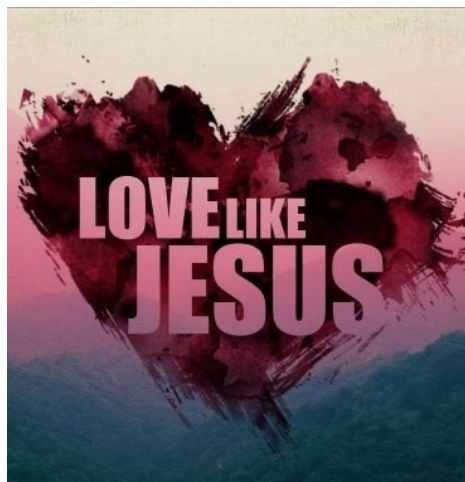
Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be!

by Bob DeSpirito, husband of Rose Ann, RFO



Some of us look at old age as a punishment, but I consider it a reward, a blessing, and another day to make things right before I depart this world. Over the past year, many of us have lost friends and family not only COVID-19. Tomorrow may not come for you or for them. We are all on the same journey. The road may be long and difficult, but that depends on your outlook on life and your faith in Divine Mercy. We have all had sad times and difficult problems to overcome. The difference is how we look at these problems. I believe that if we did not have bad times, we would not recognize the good times.

Roseann and I have had some difficult times in our 38 years together, but we have also had so many good times and the blessing of many friends and new adventures. As we are aging, we are facing many of the problems that beset growing old. We can't do all the things we used to do, our bodies have lost some of that get up and go, and we have to take medication to relieve some problems. But, I keep telling Roseann to keep her eye on the prize. Every night Roseann thanks me for a good day and wants to know what's on tap for tomorrow. The race is not yet over, but we can see the finish line and in the twilight of our years, we can see all our family and friends at the finish line waiting to welcome us to eternity. Value your family and friends. They are a gift from God meant to make life's journey easier. To love another person is to see the face of God. Roseann and I are together to help each other on this journey to eternal happiness. The sun will come up tomorrow. Open your eyes to the splendor of another day and to the Divine Mercy of Jesus.



Being a Servant of Christ

by Eileen Ericsson

In the Easter season when our minds are turned heavenward, and we recount all that Jesus did for us, it is only right to meditate on how we have served Christ. In my job as a church music director, I have been blessed to serve God alongside people whose stewardship of time and talent have been nothing short of inspirational.

I recently asked members of various church ministries what it means to them to be servants of Christ. The following responses give a glimpse of being filled with joy when called to serve.

- ◇ "To serve as a lector in reading God's word is a blessing. I'm grateful for the joy of a relationship with God."
- ◇ "Through service I learn from the least of us, the poor, ill, and challenged."
- ◇ "I receive more than I give. Serving Christ is always fulfilling, nurturing, and renewing."
- ◇ "Since being a servant for Christ I have developed a special closeness to Him. I speak to Him first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. I am happiest when I am serving Him. Whether I am praying during quiet times or helping prepare the altar for Mass or acting as an extraordinary minister it is the greatest honor I could ever hope to have."
- ◇ "Music has been a part of my life since I was a child on a swing, but it was music in church that filled my heart. Singing was and is a form of devotion. I have had many blessings in my life and being part of my church's music ministry for three decades has been a gift I cherish."
- ◇ "I love being a servant when helping at Baptisms. I love caring for my grandchildren and helping my sister. I love to serve Christ by decorating the church and cleaning up the gardens."
- ◇ "Without my wife being alongside me in ministry I probably would not be doing all that we do. She is dragging me toward heaven."

As good stewards of God's manifold grace, put your gifts at the service of one another, in the measure that each of you has received.

1 Pt 4:10



PRAYER REQUESTS

Those who are in special need of prayer:

Sisters Vincenzina, Joanna, Mary Theresa, Mary Paul
Gracemary Roth-Roffy - Sister Mary Grace's cousin

RFO MEMBERS

Benjamin Baquero, Donna Durso, Connie Fetterman, Alice Marshall
Family of Eileen & Kirk Ericsson, RFO
Yvonne Kagan, Rita Veale, Regina Yanick – former DM's
Victoria Harvey - Community Friend from Berwick

Life is changed, not ended for:

Giulio Mauri – March 3 - Sister Claudia's brother
Mary Jaquette – March 30 - Sister Joseph Marie's cousin
Gerald Nicholas - April 13 - Sister Geraldine's nephew

All those taken by Covid

And... a new angel in heaven – Nova Giovanni Carpenter – April 7 – child of Nathaniel and Angelica Carpenter - Eileen & Kirk Ericsson's nephew and niece's baby



A VIEW FROM MY WINDOW

By Sister Mary Grace

*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the **hope** to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people...” Eph 1:18*

Hope...It seems this has become “**the**” word during this time of the pandemic. “We hope no one gets sick...hope those who are ill will get well, ...hope for a vaccine...hope the vaccine works....hope everyone will get vaccinated...”, and those words so frequently expressed from the depths of caring hearts – “...hope we can see our loved ones once again.”

Hope, a Theological virtue, rooted in God, can be brought to light through the Easter mystery – the Lord is risen and brings with Him the promise of hope for those hearts open to receive this gift, especially during this Easter Season. It is a hope that endures, that awakens our hearts, stirring the dying embers, and transforming them into life-giving flames of Love that warm our hearts with the gifts of God’s comforting Peace and interior Joy that knows no bounds!

Right now, we are enjoying the miraculous beauty that these lovely spring days offer. Everywhere we look, there are signs of new life all around...in the beauty of the blossoming trees, the fresh green of the grass, the brightness of the flowers popping up all around, the happy songs of the birds, the sight of busy squirrels searching out those buried treasures which they had stored away for better times! Although it happens every year, the beauty and the newness of spring never fails to astonish us! Just looking at a beautiful tree in blossom, or a bright colored flower, prompts an acknowledgement of the incomparable marvels of God’s creation.

May I propose looking at the word hope in these terms: **H**umility, **O**bedience, **P**ease and **E**nergy or spiritual vitality?!

Without any doubt, we need Humility to receive the Lord’s promise of hope because “those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint” Isaiah 40:31.

Obedience to the Word of God is asked of us as we place all our hope in the one who loves us and desires our love in return. We think here of the obedience of Mary as she said Yes to the Lord, even when she did not fully understand His plan for her. And, during this special year dedicated to St. Joseph, we reflect on this saint’s unquestioning obedience in carrying out his part in God’s eternal plan.

Peace is the gift resulting from our Hope in the Lord – a peace that brings us comfort in the inevitable storms of life – a much sought out gift, one that eludes many, but to those who find it, a spiritual



A VIEW FROM MY WINDOW - Continued

treasure is theirs!

And then there is energy - that spiritual vitality which the Holy Spirit breathes forth in those who place all their trust and confidence in the God who gave His life for the salvation of all.

Let us rejoice in the Lord and place all our Hope in Him!

“May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Rm 15:13



As a post script to the ***Spring 2020 Mercy Message*** we have an update to the Return of the Robins to 405 Quaker Drive, York, PA

It isn't anything like the "Return of the Swallows to Capistrano, " but for us, it's just as exciting! Every year since the spring of 2014 – our first year residing at 405 Quaker Drive - at least one robin has returned to our front porch to occupy the little basket placed there for them by Sister Amelia...and this year is no exception! The old tattered and wind-blown basket has endured the spring rains and storms of the past seven years; yet it continues to be a safe haven for that one robin to place its precious egg – new life! And every day, when we walk out our front door, it is a welcome sight to see the basket peacefully swinging from its lofty perch on our porch! We often get a glimpse of the “mother” peeking out while carefully guarding her hidden treasure! And every year, this happening gives us pause to contemplate the miracle of new life and the wonders of God's creation!

