



Au Puy

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Mount St. Mary's University Students Make Pilgrimage – March 3-6

Twelve students from [Mount St. Mary's University](#) of Los Angeles spent several days in Le Puy. The students were already well-versed in the history and spirituality of the Sisters of St. Joseph, but seeing the places where our founding sisters lived and ministered made a deep impression on them and gave them lasting memories of their time together as a community.

Meredith Lynch, assistant director for the [CSJ Institute](#) coordinated the pilgrimage with Dr. Ashley Joseph, director of Women's Leadership and Community Engagement, and Laura Gomez, Assistant Director of Campus Ministry and Director of Music Ministry, as accompanying staff.



MSMU was founded by the Sisters of Carondelet (USA) in 1925. It is the only women's university in Los Angeles and one of the most diverse in the nation. The University is known nationally for its research on gender equity, its innovative health and science programs, and its commitment to community service.

Mary Louis Academy (New York) – March 30 – April 2



Although the weather was cold and overcast, the group of 14 sisters, alumni, and staff from Mary Louis Academy enjoyed their pilgrimage to Le Puy. They climbed the mounts of St. Michel and the Blessed Mother, walked the city's cobble-stoned streets, and marveled at its centuries-old medieval buildings without a thought of quitting. This bright and hearty group of pilgrims appreciated seeing the historical sites, especially the Kitchen. This was the first time since Covid that pilgrims from the Academy came to Le Puy. For more photos, [click here](#).

The Mary Louis Academy in Jamaica Estates, NY (USA) is a Catholic college preparatory school for young women sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood, NY. It is rooted in the sisters' charism of unity, reconciliation, and inclusive love that embraces all of creation. The Academy seeks to empower young women to realize and value their own unique gifts – intellectual, social, and spiritual – and to use their gifts as leaders in creating a just society.

St. Catherine University – April 5-9



It was a little cold and breezy for the pilgrims from St. Catherine University, but the group's spirit and energy never wavered as they visited the Kitchen and other historical sites. Coordinator of the pilgrimage group was Kelly Povo '09 of Alumni Relations. President ReBecca Koenig Roloff '76 also joined the group.

[St. Catherine University](#) was founded in St. Paul, Minnesota (USA) in 1905 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The University is named for St. Catherine of Alexandria, the fourth-century Egyptian lay philosopher who suffered martyrdom for her faith. The university's mission is to educate women to lead and influence at all degree levels by valuing and integrating the liberal arts and professional education within the Catholic intellectual tradition, emphasizing scholarly inquiry, and by social justice teachings. Its vision is to be respected globally for educating women who transform the world.

Philadelphia Sisters Annual Pilgrimage – April 23-29



The cold spring days did not deter the five sisters and three associates from walking to the old city of Le Puy, nor did it dampen their desire to enrich their spiritual lives with visits to the Kitchen, various historical sites, the Cathedral, and their 300-step climbs to Saint Michel and Our Lady of France. The group's days centered around daily conferences, the sharing of the heart in the evenings, and a full day of reflection over the entire experience.

The annual spring pilgrimage was led by Sr. Jean Laurich and Sr. Trudy Ahern.

Short Visits



Community managers for the **Institute of St. Joseph's** nursing homes and retirement centers met at the Centre on March 12 for a day-long workshop. Brigitte Fontaine was the presenter for the day. She is a psycho-pedagogue from Valance in private practice for individuals and groups. The theme for the conference was managing tension and conflict better by addressing a series of questions including: What is the origin of the conflict? How do I feel? What do the others feel? What do we need to do to respond? Brigitte set-up concrete situations for the participants to discuss in order to practice exploring possible solutions. However, the key to the process, said Brigitte, is to listen to the others.

Sr. Cathy Steffans (Carondelet-St. Paul, MN, USA) is an adventurous spirit who spent 12 days at the Centre in between her pilgrimage with St. Catherine University (April 5-9) and her trip to the south of France with friends afterward. She also visited the sisters' International Community in Lyon.

Cathy became intrigued with the Cathedral of Le Puy as she studied its history and artistic pieces. That meant walking up and down 285 steps—sometimes twice a day—in order to see and learn more about the iconic 13th century building! Cathy was here during the Philadelphia sisters annual pilgrimage (April 23-29) and joined them for meals and visits to SSJ historical sites. Cathy posed in front of a sign bearing her name in Le Puy.



Christine Haug of Denmark spent a week at the Centre in April. She is an elementary teacher at St. Joseph School in Ringsted, Denmark. Her principal, Thøger Ottosen, had participated in the Mission Alive! program last year and was very impressed with the solace and hospitality of the Centre. He recommended her stay here.

Christine sent us a photo of her school that was founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry in 1914. The building is the original and only building left from 1914. At that time there were about 20 students and four sisters. Today there are approximately 310 students at the school.

Australian Sisters Spend a Week in Le Puy

Sr. Therese McGarry and Sr. Margaret Flood, Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart (a.k.a. the Josephites) in Sydney, Australia, took a week of their month-long visit to Europe to see Le Puy. They had previously participated in “The Journey of Paul”, a pilgrimage in Greece and Turkey. After Le Puy, they spent some time in Lyon.

Sr. Therese (left) lives in Sydney, and Sr. Margaret (right) ministers to teachers in the diocese near her home in Dunedoo, population 600.



Sisters Therese and Margaret were at the Centre during the Orange Congregation’s (USA) pilgrimage “Called to the More: An Experience of the CSSJ Spiritual Legacy” (May 15-21), which was designed for their associates and partners in mission. The Australian sisters were invited to join the pilgrimage to visit the Kitchen and various SSJ historical sites. The pilgrimage was led by Sr. Jane DeLisle and Sr. Mary Beth Ingham who indicated that the Orange Congregation had past connections with the Australian congregation through former congregational leaders Sr. Mary Crisp and Sr. Monica Cavanaugh. Sr. Mary, an historian, met with Sisters of St. Joseph all over the USA to learn more about the connections between her congregation and theirs.

Although the roots of the Josephites are uniquely Australian, Fr. Julian Tenison Woods, co-founder, was highly influenced by the sisters of Le Puy in their ministry to the poor and their presence to others outside the monastery. Upon seeing the needs of the poor in Australia, he formed an alliance with co-founder Mary MacKillop, an Australian woman from Melbourne, to start a new congregation in 1866 dedicated to “immersing themselves in the midst of life to empower others and bring hope”. Mother Mary (MacKillop) of the Cross was eventually declared a saint on October 17, 2010, the first Australian to be recognized by the Catholic Church as a saint. Fr. Woods, who was also a geologist and botanist, sought to merge the priesthood with science.



Mother Mary of the Cross (1869)

Today there are over 600 Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart in the congregation living in Australia; Aotearoa New Zealand; Ireland; Peru; Timor-Leste; and Brazil. The sisters are engaged in pastoral work and in professional roles including teaching, administration, social services, law, psychology, nursing, aged care, community development, adult education, and support for new immigrant arrivals in Australia and New Zealand.

[Click here](#) for more information about the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

Devasting Floods in Southern Brazil

Please pray for the people of southern Brazil who have had to overcome the horrible floods of May, and for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry who are ministering to the people there. Several people from the Colleges of Pelotas, Caxias do Sul, and the N.S. Oliveira Hospital that are in southern Brazil have participated in the “Mission Alive” Program at the Center over the years. Please pray for them and their students and patients as well during this difficult time.

Due to the high volume of rain, the many rivers in the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil overflowed and caused damage in a majority of the cities there. The state capital of Porto Alegre has been devastated because it is located on the edge of a large lake called Guaíba near the Atlantic Ocean.

All the states of Brazil are participating in helping the people of Rio Grande do Sul because there is a desperate need for food and water, and now that winter is approaching, people need warm clothes. There are fears of disease as the waters recede and the bodies of missing animals and humans are left behind. Rescue activities have taken place in 464 of the affected cities for an estimated 2.3 million people.



Areas affected by flood in red