

Synodality – August 17-23



Sr. Dolores Palencia served as a Presidential Delegate to the 2022-2024 Synod on Synodality.

The International Centre hosted its first synodality program with Sr. Dolores Palencia of Lyon/Mexico as presenter. Sr. Dolores has decades of experience in leadership as a provincial, as a congregational leader, and currently as Coordinator of Albergue Guadalupano, which receives thousands of refugees and asylum seekers.

The group consisted of 14 sisters from Africa (Congo and Burkina Faso), the USA, France, and India. Several congregational leaders also attended. They explored ways to integrate synodality into all we are and do by drawing on the Resurrection narratives, our Primitive Texts, our shared history and spirituality, and our lived experiences.

Below are some comments about the program:

“Walking together, listening deeply, discerning with hope...”

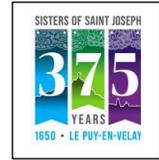
“The five-day session held in Le Puy-en-Velay was a true gift... We explored how Synodality and the Charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph intertwine and give life to our mission today.”

“It was an amazing experience of walking together—discovering communion, listening deeply, and feeling the Spirit call us forward in hope.”

“When we listen with open hearts, we grow closer to one another and glimpse the Spirit at work, guiding us to new paths of communion and mission.”

Our *charism* of Trinitarian, unifying love is needed more than ever! With the church declaring synodality, which is our *charism* in action, as ‘constitutive’ to its life, we followers of the Little Design are called to live synodality ourselves and to model it with others.

Mission Alive! – September 6-13



Diversity was certainly evident during the first week in September as 22 participants gathered at the Centre for the annual Mission Alive! Program. Participants were from Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Denmark, UK-Japan, and the USA.

Formerly called Mission Effectiveness, the program offers a pilgrimage for lay partners in mission and provides an immersion experience into the original spirit and global dimension of the charism and spiritual tradition of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. The week-long experience offered a series of presentations, interactive participation, prayer, and visits to historic sites in Le Puy-en-Velay. A day trip to Lyon was also included.



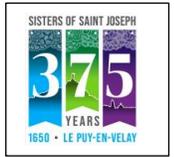
Sr. Dolores Clerico is a Philadelphia Sister of Saint Joseph (USA) with ministry experience in the academic, parish, diocesan, and congregational arenas. She is a frequent speaker, workshop presenter, and retreat facilitator for sisters, associates, and partners in mission throughout the United States and annually at the International Centre.



Sr. Simone Saugues (Institute-France) served as the English-French translator while **Sr. Joana Mendes** (Rochester-Brazil SSJ) served as English-Portuguese translator.

The Centre was bursting at the seams to accommodate all the participants. We especially want to thank **Sr. Marie-Paule Rasclé** at the St. Maurice convent for housing six of the Brazilian participants.

The Lace Is Not Yet Finished - September 16-22



By the power of the Holy Spirit, the hearts of a small group of women in Le Puy-en-Velay in 1650 were enflamed by God's call to reach out to people suffering from devastating poverty, pervasive violence, and stifling oppression. These women found their home in the Gospel and in the teachings of the itinerant Jesuit, Jean Pierre Médaille.

Likewise, a small group of women—from Canada, India, Japan, and USA—came to Le Puy to get in touch with and claim once again the transformative power of this charism by exploring the streets of Le Puy-en-Velay and visiting and praying in the Kitchen, the Cathedral of Notre Dame du Puy, the Chapel of St. Michel d'Aiguilhe, the Eglise du Collège, and the Tree of the Martyrs. They spent a day concentrating on Mother St. John Fontbonne by visiting her birthplace in Bas-en-Basset, the Heritage Room where she set up the post-Revolutionary congregation in Lyon, and at her graveside.

They also attended Mass at the Cathedral and had some fun attending the annual Renaissance Festival despite the rainy day. One day, Sr. Chizuru (Japan) and Associate Diane (St Louis, USA) went to the top of the hill behind the Centre and captured some beautiful photos of a Le Puy sunrise.

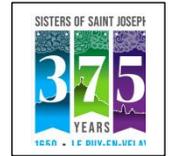


Sr. Jane Delisle, CSJ is a Sister of St. Joseph from Orange, CA (USA). Jane has come to Le Puy-en-Velay many times to present this program. She has also conducted many pilgrimages with sisters and staff from the Orange Health Systems.

The participants included Sr. Pat Carter, Diane Everitt, Sr. Motcham, Sr. Mary Jo Radey, Sr. SahayaMary, and Sr. Chizuru Yamada.



Orange conducts pilgrimage for long-term staff members



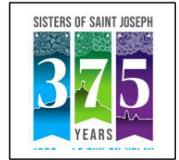
Eighteen pilgrims who have served the Orange Congregation (California, USA) for 30 years or more were treated to a visit to the foundations of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Le Puy September 3-9. They also visited Mother St. John Fontbonne's birthplace in Bas-en-Basset and the Origin & Evolution Centre in Lyon. Sisters Mary Beth Ingham and Jane DeLisle led the group who were excited, inspired, and feeling blessed for the opportunity to participate on this pilgrimage.

Congregation of St. Joseph holds annual pilgrimage



The Congregation of St. Joseph has been coming to Le Puy since 2004. As more and more lay people serve in various congregational ministries, the sisters are providing them with opportunities to understand and incorporate the SSJ spirituality into their work so that they may carry on the charism. During October 8-15, the group came to Le Puy to learn more about the Congregation's foundations with on-site visits to the Kitchen, the Tree of the Martyrs, the church where Father Médaille preached, and the rectory where he stayed during his visits to Le Puy. The group also went to Bas-en-Basset and Lyon to see Mother St. John Fontbonne's birthplace and the motherhouse she founded, respectively. **Sr. Carol Crepeau and Associates Mary Frances Ross and Brenda Leroux Babin** led this pilgrimage this year.

Institute Sisters Celebrate 80 Years



bottom: Srs. Marie-Florence; Josette; Marie-Thérèse;
Top: Srs. Marie-Thérèse; Juliette; Colette



They prayed together. They sang together. They ate together. They told jokes. Seven sisters from the Institute St. Joseph (of Le Puy) spent the last weekend of August at the Centre to celebrate their 80th birthday.

They had a meal of paella on Saturday night and cannelle for a déjeuner celebration on Sunday along with an apéritif and scrumptious appetizers. The crowning touch was a chocolate gnosh cake from one of the best local bakeries of Le Puy, and a sparkling wine digestive.

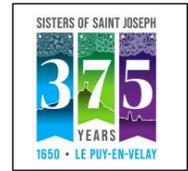
The Centre has long been a place for programs, retreats, and pilgrimages. Lately, it has also become a place for celebration. This one was particularly inspiring to see friends gather together after many years of life, love, ministry, and community.



The altar for prayer (left). After dessert, the sisters drew numbers for designated prizes (below).



Short Visits



Amanda Williams and Olivia Dunn, classmates at St. Catherine University in Minnesota (USA), spent their vacations in Europe. They stopped off in Le Puy for a few days to visit the Kitchen and other SSJ historical sites. They came here to see the foundations of the Sisters of St. Joseph who had impacted their lives as college students.



Sister Helena de Fatima of Chambéry (Brazil) accompanied two Brazilian sisters to Le Puy and Bas-en-Basset to see the foundations of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Sisters Anna Maria (left) et Maria da Grace (Institut Saint Joseph-Italie) (right) are seated at the dinner table in the Bas House, the birthplace of Mother St. John Fontbonne.

[Click here](#) to listen to them sing praise to the charism in Portuguese.



Sisters from Chambéry visited Le Puy July 1-3 to learn more about the foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Sisters Dominga Zolet (right front row) and Jaya Rani (left front row) led the group. Sister Barbara Bozak (in pink), facilitator to the Centre's Board, also accompanied the group and lent her hand at translation.

The group is pictured here on the steps of the Cathedral of Notre Dame of the Assumption.

More Short Visits



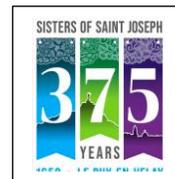
Institute Sisters Vivian and Clare from the Monistrol convent spent an August weekend at the Centre just for a change of scenery. We had a couple meals together and went to Mass. On Sunday afternoon the sisters played a competitive game of Rummikub. They were a delight!



Sr. Maureen Doherty (right) of Boston and Jane Behlke (left), an agrégée candidate, went on a Rhone River cruise. They stopped off in Le Puy, a life-long dream of Sr. Maureen and of vital interest to Jane, who has worked with the sisters for decades. As luck would have it, their visit to the Kitchen was on Sr. Maureen's 67th anniversary of her entrance into the community. "When I entered, I never thought I would be here at the Congregation's foundation."



Jay and Samantha Gilbertson spent the day in Le Puy to visit the Kitchen and other SSJ historical sites. They were traveling in France in September. Samantha currently serves as the Mission and Spiritual Care Director at Providence St. Joseph Health, a non-profit, Catholic health care system in Newberg, Oregon. The organization was founded by the Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of St. Joseph. Samantha has been with the organization for twenty years where she has received extensive spiritual formation and mentoring from many of the sisters. Her connection to the history and to the sisters is significant.



And More Short Visits



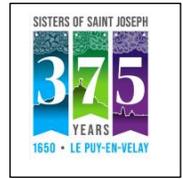
Four Mexicans from the Lyon Congregation spent a couple days in Le Puy (September 28-30) to visit the Kitchen and other historical sites. Sr. Adelina (second from left) accompanied three women from the Family of Joseph including Ana Fabian and Teresa Fabian Hernandez from Vera Cruz and Yolanda Navarrette from Mexico City. The women brought their own food and shared it with us. That doesn't happen very often to be sure. The women were a delight and we had conversation in four languages: Spanish, French, Portuguese and English. Now that doesn't happen very often either!

Sister Mary McGlone (St. Louis) brought four sister leaders of the Carondelet Congregation to Le Puy: Sister Sally Harper (St. Louis-Peru), Sister Rose Casaleno (Albany, NY), Sister Mary Ann Martin (Los Angeles) and Sister Gloria Zapata (Peru). They were in Europe to join consecrated women and men from around the world for the Jubilee of Consecrated Life.



A group of Belgian sisters and associates participated in the 375th anniversary of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Le Puy on Saturday, October 18. On Sunday, they went to Mass at the Cathedral and afterward visited the Kitchen and the Chapel of the Institute Sisters. The anniversary celebration was organized by the French Federation.

Sr. Helen Prejean featured in French Catholic newspaper



Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ (New Orleans, USA) was featured in the March issue of *La Vie*, an independent Catholic weekly newspaper. She was recognized as a fighter against the death penalty in prisons. She got her start in this ministry in the 1980s when she served as a spiritual director for a man condemned to the electric chair for killing two adolescents. Sr. Helen is the author of *Dead Man Walking* (1993 Random House), which inspired the movie of the same name starring Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn, an opera, and most recently, a graphic novel.

Deirdre Griffin becomes new executive director of the U.S. Federation



Sr. Deirdre Griffin (Springfield–Massachusetts) has been selected as the new executive director of the U.S. Federation. She replaces Sr. Maryellen Kane (Brentwood—NY) who became the executive director of the U.S. Federation on January 1, 2020.

Deirdre has been an immigration lawyer in El Paso, Texas, who accompanies asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border. She was featured in the latest issue of the publication of the [National Religious Vocation Conference](#), highlighting her deep commitment to justice and human dignity.

Deirdre will also serve as president of the International Centre Board.

