

Winter 2017

# Heart

A Journal of the Society of the Sacred Heart, United States–Canada



# ...to Heart

## Dear Friends and Family of the Sacred Heart,

Thank you for reading and reflecting on this issue of *Heart* magazine. It is a special issue of the magazine because it explores our General Chapter and its decisions from a variety of perspectives. It delves into the meaning of a general chapter for a religious congregation like the Society of the Sacred Heart. This issue reveals the variety of ways that the decisions of such a chapter could impact all who are related to our mission. We explore here the “calls” or guidelines for living our mission into the future. We invite you to join us RSCJ as we explore how to live fully these calls.

The calls of the Chapter were being discerned this past summer as the world faced so many heartaches: the attacks in France and Belgium, the Syrian crisis, senseless killings, and more. Our sisters pondered these events and the needs of our world as they articulated the Society’s calls in today’s world. They saw that we are called to reach new frontiers, to live more humanly, to create silence, to be and to act as one body. The emerging calls dipped into the richness of our spirituality with world events as the backdrop. They remind us of the way Sophie began the Society with deep spirituality and awareness of the world’s needs.

The emergence of calls coincided with the election of a new superior general for the Society, Sister Barbara Dawson. While we in the United States–Canada Province are sad to see Sister Dawson leave us, we are united in prayer and joy for what her leadership will bring to the Society as a whole. Of course, Sister Dawson’s election meant that a new provincial was needed for the United States–Canada Province. I am humbled and honored to be asked to lead the province during this pivotal time. I ask for your prayers as I step into this role for our Society.

The experience of our General Chapter was profound, and the calls that were discerned are a deep underpinning for all of our work on behalf of the Society. Our intention is to share as much as we can with you, so that you too not only hear the calls, but feel them in a meaningful way. To do this, we are

offering a variety of perspectives for you to consider. You can read about a general chapter overall, what it is, how it is convened. You will learn of the fruits of the chapter and ponder deep reflections from several of the delegates on the images that carried the message of the chapter forward for everyone.

Our first superior general was, of course, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat. Our archivist offers you a rich perspective on superiors general and their significance to our Society. One of our Associates provides insights on how the calls may direct our activities and emergence as one body. It was an interesting juxtaposition that, as the delegates were in Rome for the General Chapter, the Olympics were occurring with outstanding Sacred Heart representation. We begin to connect the dots between the energy of the Olympics and the calls of our chapter.

This issue of *Heart* is not about skimming the topics. It is about digging deep, exploring, learning and, importantly, reflecting on the role each and every one of us can play in living out our spirituality, our calls for our world, today. ✦

One in the Heart of Christ,



Sheila Hammond, RSCJ  
Provincial  
United States–Canada Province





Heart is published two times a year to highlight the mission and ministries of the Society of the Sacred Heart, United States–Canada, for a wide circle of friends. The covers, photographs of hearts in nature, symbolic of Christ’s presence at the heart of the universe, bear witness to the contemplative dimension of the Society’s “wholly contemplative, wholly apostolic” mission: To discover and reveal God’s love through the service of education.

A special issue dedicated to the 2016 General Chapter

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Articles are by Donna Heckler, editor of Heart, except where otherwise noted.

The Society of the Sacred Heart was founded by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat in post-revolutionary France and brought to the United States by Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne in 1818.

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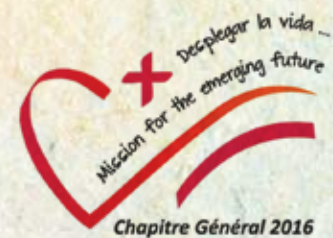
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# What Is a General Chapter?

## The 2016 Seminal Gathering

By Diana Wall, RSCJ



“Mission for the Emerging Future” was the theme of our congregation’s General Chapter held last summer from July 7 to August 11. Seventy-eight RSCJ from throughout the world gathered prayerfully at *Centro Ad Gentes* in Nemi, Italy, a village in the Alban Hills of the Province of Rome. It is about forty-five minutes south of Rome, located on a hill with serene panoramic views of Lake Nemi, a volcanic crater lake. The location allowed for the possibility to walk freely and to contemplate deeply all that one was experiencing throughout these days. Nemi was the setting for the Society’s congregational gathering known as a “general chapter,” an international meeting of delegates representing the twenty-seven provinces, districts or areas of the Society in forty-one countries. The intention of this article is to convey what a general chapter is, why the Society convokes one and some of the personal experience(s) of those who attended this seminal gathering.

The general chapter was convoked under the guidance and inspiration of the same Spirit as that present, here in this place where Church Fathers wrote in 1965 *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, one of the seminal Vatican II documents; a document that changed the course and called for the renewal of the Catholic Church. At the opening of General Chapter

2016, each delegate was called by name and responded in her own language: “Here I am! Present!” This ritual sent a powerful message and reminder to all those present that the Society, since Vatican II, has lived this decree to its fullest: **we have gone to new frontiers and evangelized peoples** via our unique charism in the Church: *To make known and reveal God’s love in the world through the service of education.*

A general chapter is the highest governing body of a religious congregation, its legislature. Its purpose is to contemplate our current reality and mission, to set our future course in light of the needs and cries in today’s world and to elect our new superior general. This general chapter was our congregation’s thirty-fifth since our founding by Saint Madeleine Sophie in 1800.

Our 2016 Chapter was appropriately named: *desplegar la vida...* [Life Unfolding] *Mission for the Emerging Future*. It was conducted in French, English and Spanish, the three Society languages, with simultaneous translation by eight of our sisters.

### Process leading up to the general chapter

The provincial chapter prepares for the general chapter and takes place during the year preceding the general chapter; that of the United States–Canada Province was conducted in July 2015. The functions of a provincial chapter – the highest form of governance within a province – include: studying and reviewing the state and life of the province, making recommendations to

For our part, we RSCJ of the Province of the United States–Canada felt called to:

1. **Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC):** To develop strategies for how the Society will act to heal an increasingly broken earth and broken lives
2. **Education:** To implement ways in which our educational efforts may be made more available and accessible both to a diminishing middle class and to those with the greatest needs; that is, the vulnerable, the poor, and the marginalized
3. **Internationality and Community of Goods.** To consider:
  - New ways of relating internationally
  - Fresh governing structures that respond in timely and flexible ways to emerging social needs
  - Innovative international initiatives and communications for the sake of the common good, thus empowering our mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Specific responsibilities** of a General Chapter include:

- To protect the spiritual heritage of the Society in fidelity to the Constitutions
- To give orientation to the Society with consideration to the appeals and needs of the Church and the world, guided by the Gospel and the Constitutions
- To review the financial state of the congregation
- To deal with issues of major importance to the congregation
- To elect the superior general
- To propose names to the new superior general for members of her council
- To ratify the nomination of the secretary general and treasurer general
- To propose modifications to the Constitutions



A candle with the logo of the General Chapter. The logo reads "Mission for the Emerging Future."

strengthen the life and mission within the province, setting future direction of the province, electing delegates for the general chapter, and modifying the provincial plan of government if needed. This is a forward and outward looking meeting. It is the direct bridge between the provinces' futuring process and that of the international body's direction-setting; each province looks at matters of importance to the Society within its socio-political, economic realities and in light of the calls of the world. The calls discerned in each of the provinces formed the basis of reflection in the chapter as a whole.

The process leading up to the general chapter started in each province, district or area approximately two years prior to the meeting. (Province is identified as the administrative division of the Society.) Our superior general, Kathleen Conan, asked each RSCJ, in each of the twenty-seven provinces, to reflect and discern the three most important calls of God to each member and to the Society today. This reflection took place individually, then collectively at a provincial chapter. It was a means by which each religious assumed her co-responsibility

within the congregation. In preparation for our provincial chapter, the members were asked to reflect on and discuss Pope Francis' encyclical: *Laudato Si*, in which he calls upon humanity to go to the "frontiers and peripheries of the world." This became a beacon guiding the reflection of the members.

Each province elects at the provincial chapter a predetermined number of delegates, based on the number of members within the province, to represent the members of the province at the general chapter. Our province was eligible to send four delegates. Those elected in July 2015 through secret ballot were: Ellen Collesano, Suzanne Cooke, Sheila Smith, and myself (Diana Wall). As well, in conformity with our *Constitutions*, the provincial, Barbara Dawson, and Clare Pratt, former superior general (2000-2008) were *ex officio* delegates.

### Movement from Delegates to Capitulants

We arrived at *Centro Ad Gentes* in Nemi as delegates representing our individual provinces. Once the Chapter opened,

we moved from being chapter delegates to capitulants (seventy-eight in all with a median age of fifty-eight), responsible to think and discern contextually about the Society as a whole – going beyond our provincial borders, keeping in view the good of the whole body.

### In describing the General Chapter the Constitutions state:

*"The General Chapter ensures and promotes both communion and vitality in the Society of the Sacred Heart in view of its mission. It represents all the members of the Society and has supreme normative authority within the congregation, in virtue of the Constitutions" (Const. §157).*

Thus, and this is important, the chapter has the responsibility to set orientations and to make decisions that will promote communion and vitality, aware that these orientations and decisions are binding on each RSCJ throughout the international Society of the Sacred Heart. ❖

# What Is a Superior General?

By Lyn Osiek, RSCJ



The new superior general, Barb Dawson RSCJ, selected those to lead with her on the General Council. They include: Sisters Isabelle Lagneau (France), Marie-Jeanne Elonga (Democratic Republic of Congo), Barbara Dawson (United States–Canada), Daphne Sequeira (India), and Monica Esquivel (Mexico).

When the first Religious of the Sacred Heart opened their first convent in Amiens, France, in 1801, they were only one community with local leadership. By 1804, there was another foundation in Grenoble, brought into the Society by Philippine Duchesne. A year later, there was a third foundation at Belley near Lyon, and now some form of unified government was needed, some way to bring about unity in the three houses. The structure already in place for religious congregations for many centuries was the election of a superior general who would be aided by a council of several other religious.

The delegates of the three communities gathered in Amiens or sent written ballots in January 1806. Madeleine Sophie Barat was elected superior general for life (by one vote!) on January 18. She would carry that responsibility for another fifty-nine years, until her death in 1865. Her next nine successors were also elected for life, though none

carried the burden for as long as Sophie had. The best known was Janet Erskine Stuart, who unfortunately governed for only four years (1911-1914). By 1967, it was thought better to have a limited term, at first six years renewable once, and since 2000, eight years non-renewable. The next six superiors general of the Society therefore served for limited terms and they will continue to do so.

The term “superior general” may sound odd to modern ears. The name “superior” for a leader in no way implies that others are inferior! Some more recent congregations, especially those established in the West, use contemporary terms like “president.” The 1983 Code of Canon Law refers to this person as “supreme moderator” (Canons 622, 625). Since the Society of the Sacred Heart is an international congregation of pontifical right, it has kept the traditional name.

Because the Society arose in France, Saint Madeleine Sophie’s successors were European: French, German, then

British and Spanish: Joséphine Goetz (1865-1874), Adèle Lehon (1874-1894), Augusta von Sartorius (1894-1895), Mabel Digby (1895-1911), Janet Erskine Stuart (1911-1914), Maria von Loë (1915-1928), Manuela Vicente (1928-1946), Marie-Thérèse de Lescure (1946-1958), Sabine de Valon (1958-1967), María Josefa Bultó (1967-1970), Concepción Camacho (1970-1982), and Helen McLaughlin (1982-1994). The first superior general from outside Europe was Patricia García de Quevedo from Mexico (1994-2000). Since then, there have been two from the United States, Clare Pratt (2000-2008) and Kathleen Conan (2008-2016). Barbara Dawson will be the third (2016-2024).

The superior general is elected by the general chapter, an assembly of provincial superiors and elected delegates from all the provinces. Barbara was elected by the most recent general chapter on August 2, 2016, by delegates from twenty-six provinces in forty-one countries.

The *Constitutions* of the Society of the Sacred Heart, both those of 1815 and those of 1982, describe challenging qualities expected of a superior general. “Interior spirit...forgetfulness of self...prudence...wisdom” are among those qualities given in the *Constitutions* of 1815 (par. 247). Again in the *Constitutions* of 1982, the expected qualities are challenging: “deep personal integrity, as well as a real capacity for listening and for relating,” generosity, discernment, wisdom, courage, simplicity, gentleness, and humility....She will find in her

council the help necessary for carrying out this important office” (par. 165).

The general council is chosen by the superior general after consultation with the members of the general chapter. The central council that has served with Kathleen Conan since 2008 are: Kim Sook Hee from Korea, Catherine Lloyd from England-Wales, Hiroko Okui from Japan, and Maria del Socorro Rubio from Mexico. The members of the incoming council to serve with Barbara Dawson are: Marie-Jeanne Elonga from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Monica Esquivel from Mexico, Isabelle Lagneau from France, and Daphne Sequeira from India.

The 1982 *Constitutions* specify that the superior general “has authority over the whole Society and governs according to the *Constitutions*.” She represents the Society before civil and ecclesiastical authorities, but “her principal responsibility is to further unity and vitality in the Congregation and to keep it faithful to the *Constitutions*” (163). Among her specified responsibilities are “to keep the Society alert to the calls of the world and the Church, to foster communion and unity,” to visit the provinces, to maintain communication with the wider Church, and to safeguard the Society’s goods. These responsibilities require a considerable amount of flexibility, courage, and a good sense of humor. The *Constitutions* (par. 165) say that “she can count on the prayer and unwavering support of the Society.”

Yes she can! ❖



The new Superior General joins the past three superiors general – from left to right: Sisters Patricia García de Quevedo (1994-2000), Clare Pratt (2000-2008), Kathleen Conan (2008-2016), and newly elected Barbara Dawson (2016-2024).



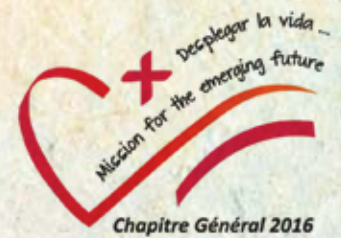
Sister Kathleen Conan, superior general of the Society, center, with her general council. Left to right: Sisters Kim Sook Hee, Maria del Socorro Rubio, Catherine Lloyd and Hiroko Okui.



Kathleen Conan, RSCJ, superior general of the Society of the Sacred Heart from 2008-2016, with newly elected superior general Barbara Dawson, RSCJ, lighting the candle that was at St. Madeleine Sophie’s bedside when she died. The candle has been lit briefly by every superior general since St. Madeleine Sophie.

# Fruit of General Chapter 2016

By Diana Wall, RSCJ



Left: The provinces each had a “booth” during the general chapter to share insights and information about their Province. This is a glimpse at the Brazilian Province booth. Right: Sister Diana Wall of the USC Province shares many insights in this issue of Heart on the general chapter.

**During our time together, we prayed and contemplated** each province’s reality within the global context. This was juxtaposed with the daily realities of our world, from bombings in France and Belgium, migrants being turned away from numerous countries, borders being closed, natural disaster devastating lands and exiling the affected peoples, to Brexit, the Syrian crisis, senseless killings, racism and more. Our facilitators utilized Theory U, a process that requires generative thinking and generative speaking to truly listen and hear one another and their reality. We were called to let go, enter into and go deeper in the silence to appreciate one another’s lived realities. We were very well aware that something new was being called forth from the body of the Society, that this new calling was what we termed our “Rebecca moment,”<sup>1</sup> like the moment when Phillippine set out; our call was to stretch beyond our

horizons both personally and collectively, to respond to the cries of the world, to go to the “frontiers and peripheries of the world, to...”

And then, through the work of the Spirit, the following images and calls emerged from our reflective body. We were able to envision the Society to be like:

1. **a body**, moved from its center by Love
2. **a loaf of bread** that is patiently baked
3. **a family that decides to set sail** in order to look for new life, a new land.

These simple images germinated throughout the chapter, and behind each one there are lived experiences and faces. Through them we have heard resonating the calls that came to birth in each province, district and area. At this historic moment of change and uncertainty the Spirit continues to transform

us as Society so that we may respond to the cries and hopes of our world with the same confidence and daring as Sophie and Philippine.

**Calls.** As a result of our discernment, four calls emerged. These are seen as the core themes that will direct the Society’s work for the next eight years. The four calls that emerged are:

1. To reach new frontiers
2. To live in a more human way
3. To be in silence
4. To be and act as a single body.

The call to new frontiers is purposely wide open as all those part of the Sacred Heart family are invited to discern the cries of the world that touch them and respond to those cries personally and collectively.

While these statements reflect what we are called to do, the challenge is in engaging our entire body to live out these calls in their lives. Our next steps are to reflect upon the directives or calls given by the general chapter and to propose ways of implementing them within the province and sharing them with our constituents. One way is through this article. Another means of sharing this experience includes numerous meetings and discussions on the chapter experience and calls with various groups to deepen our understanding and shed clarity on how to implement these calls



# At the Papal Audience

The calls set the future direction of the international society and then, each Province. Individually, as we deepen our own understanding of them, they offer clarity on how we can implement them in our daily and communal lives as expressions of our mission.

in our daily and communal lives as expression of our mission. And then, as a congregation, we will convoke a provincial assembly next summer (July 7-12, 2017), in conformity with our *Constitutions*, to deepen and share our individual gleanings from our prayer, contemplation, dialogue with others, with the aim of setting our direction as province for the next eight years.

In conclusion, we are further reminded that Christ continues to reveal and communicate the love of God to all individuals and to all peoples through the Church and the Society, that missionary work still remains to be done. Today, we stand on the shoulders of our foremothers looking out at the horizon and envisioning our new frontiers, knowing and trusting that the ballast of our ship is our life of prayer and contemplation, wondering where our new *Rebecca* will take us along with you, who accompany us on this journey... ✝

1. *Rebecca* is the name of the ship in which Philippine set sail in 1818 for the New World with four companions: Eugénie Audé, Octavie Berthold, Catherine Lamarre, and Marguerite Manteau. It is important to note that there were others besides Philippine among our foremothers on this journey.

It was Wednesday, August 10, 2016, a morning that the capitulants would forever remember. They left Nemi where the general chapter was meeting to go to Rome to see the Pope.

The Pope meets with people, as is the custom, on Wednesdays. Mind you, a reservation and a pass are needed to get into the area where one can glimpse the Pope walking by in the audience hall. The Society had the passes for all the capitulants, and they were ready.

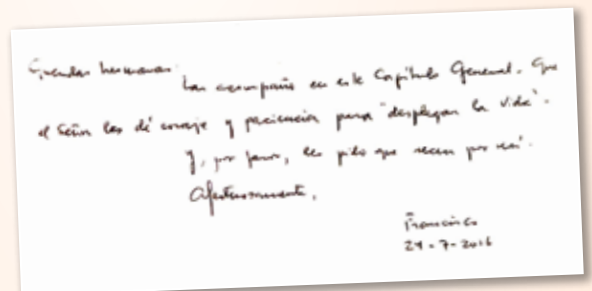
Kathleen Conan, superior general, received an invitation to share a word with the Pope. Pope Francis knew that the Society was having its general chapter near Rome, as just a few weeks earlier he had sent a note to the capitulants, offering his prayers.

So, as Pope Francis passed by Sister Conan, he turned and smiled. She handed him a copy of the recently released book *Seeking the One Whom We Love, How RSCJs Pray*. While she was handing him the book, the Society delegates and chapter staff were joined in song behind her, singing the *Magnificat*. Sister Conan pointed out the RSCJ to the Pope, specifically the superior general just elected, Sister Barbara Dawson.

The wave and grin you see on Pope Francis' face is for the Society and its new superior general, Sister Barbara Dawson. It is a smile for us all. ✝



Kathleen Conan, superior general, attended an audience with the Pope. Pope Francis is pictured here as he waves to the international group of Chapter Delegates which included Barbara Dawson, newly elected superior general.



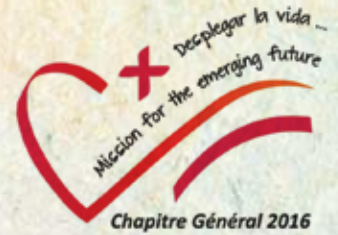
Dear sisters,  
I accompany you all in this General Chapter. May God give you courage and patience to allow "life to unfold."

And please, I ask that you pray for me.

Affectionately,  
Francisco  
24-7-2016

# What the Calls Mean to Me

## Reflections from RSCJ Delegates



## The Society Is Like Bread Patiently Made

By Sheila Smith, RSCJ

Two questions about the emerging future guided the process at General Chapter 2016: **Who are we called to be** and **what are we called to do?**

The chapter's experience of living these questions is expressed, not only through the articulation of the four chapter calls, but also through three images: one body, bread, and a family that decides to set sail. The images are meant to transmit something of the imaginative impact of living the chapter, something that took form in the language of the four calls.

Suzanne Cooke and I were part of a group of ten capitulants who volunteered to take a first “stab” at articulating the calls and images. I was among three who grappled with how to present the images. My task focused primarily on the image of bread. Each image was brought back several times to the whole chapter for critique and suggestions. Through many re-articulations, and as part of the process, each new group of volunteers picked up where the previous ones had left off. Shaping the calls and images was a true experience of mutual collaboration. None of the images or calls was written by just one group or one person. They were all the work of the whole.

It was important to us as a body that our *experience* of living the chapter and receiving the calls be creatively expressed. We did not want to produce



The image of many hands gathered around bread was a critical image for deepening the understanding of the general chapter and its calls.

a document that appeared a *fait accompli*. It was the shared experience of the chapter that shaped the outcome, and we did not want to lose this vitality. Our concern became how to facilitate the sharing of our experience of who God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do with our provinces, districts and areas. We were also keenly aware that folks in the Society represent a variety of personalities and cultures who will respond in unique ways to receiving and living the direction of the chapter. Some will be helped by the language of the four calls; others will enter with more ease through the door of one or other of the images; and most will respond to the combination of both.

One door that opens into the experience of chapter can be the image of bread.

Anyone who has made bread knows the ingredients that must be brought together to form the dough, which is covered while the yeast works its way all through, transforming it by the hidden work of leavening. When the dough is ready, the baker kneads and reshapes it and leaves it to rise again. After the baker's patient waiting, the dough is ready for the fire. It is placed in the oven at a high temperature so that another transformation can take place: the dough becomes bread through fire, ready to be broken and shared for the life of all.

- What kind of bread are we to be?
- How are we to be bread with and for others in a hungry world?

## We Are Called: To Be and to Act as One Body

By Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ

*To revitalize our unity in diversity and to **act as one body**, dynamic, interconnected, linked with other bodies, in the world and as Church, in order to share, collaborate, and be in solidarity among ourselves and with others.*

From the very start Chapter 2016 was a stunning experience of being called to be and act as one. Imagine a gathering of Religious of the Sacred Heart from our twenty-seven provinces, districts and areas, encompassing forty-one countries, speaking twenty-six languages. Given this profound diversity, what united us?

The very simple explanation lies in our individual and collective commitment to attending to the Holy Spirit dwelling deeply within our hearts. We all took to heart Sophie's desire to "live according to the Holy Spirit." How did we do this? We listened, and our listening remained rooted in silence.

What did this listening look like? It was the opposite of being passive. Daily we were confronted by reality: refugees pouring into Europe, terrorist attacks throughout the world, natural disasters such as the devastating flooding in India, political confusion across the globe. As we witnessed this reality, we heard one another tell stories of ministering alongside colleagues and



© Shelley Dieterichs 2016

A vibrant illustration of women interlocking in embrace provided the imagery behind the call to be and act as one body.

co-workers with young people, with those on the edge, with persons suffering, and with those searching for meaning. Daily prayer and *espacio* gave us the space to listen in silence. We considered the "facts" about the Society of the Sacred Heart through reports and presentations. Facts and figures gave way to "seeing" and "sensing" the spirit of the Society, as we experienced the hopes of co-delegates, the gratitude of our leadership teams, the dreams of our co-workers and colleagues in the stories we shared.

Ultimately the chapter was a profound experience of being united with others in the world and as a body united in the heart and mind of Christ. We felt solidarity among ourselves and with others, with creation as the Spirit

beckoned us forward, urging us to embrace the future as one so that we can continue to make God's love known in the realities in which we serve. Intuiting being one was rooted, not only in silence and listening but also in informed hope, hope that is rooted in knowledge, faith and love. We embraced the future with the determination and the collective will that we recognize in Sophie and Philippine, as well as in those upon whose shoulders we stand today. We heard Christ's heartbeat in our world and we responded. This response is articulated in the calls of the chapter. These calls beckon all members of the Family of the Sacred Heart into a future imbued with hope and challenge.

What the Calls Mean  
to Me, *continued*

## To Reach New Frontiers

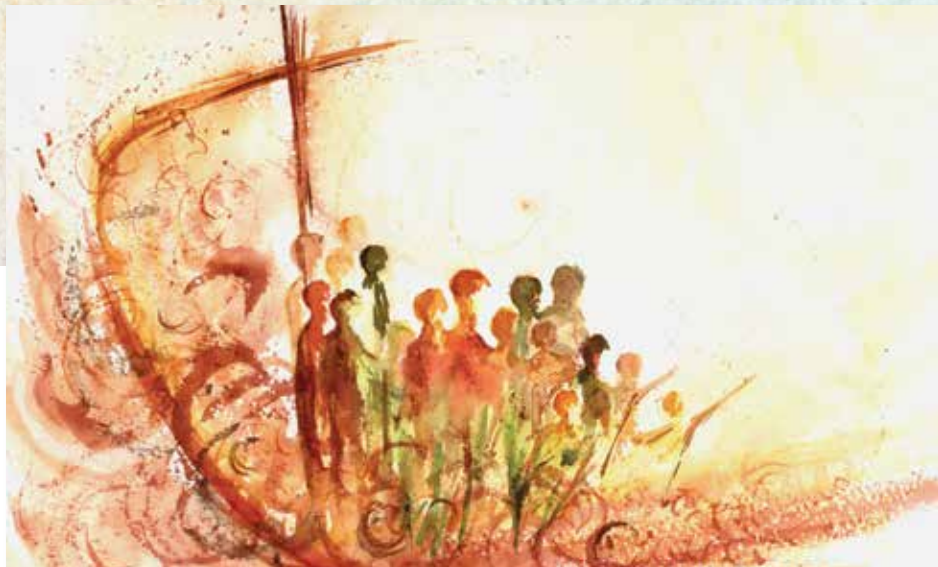
By Ellen Collesano, RSCJ

One of the images that came forth from the general chapter connects us with our history, with all of humanity at this moment in time, and calls us forward into the future. The image is a ship leaving port and setting sail toward a distant shore. It has its roots first of all in our general council's report to the General Chapter, in which they reflected on the life of Society of the Sacred Heart during the past eight years and called us to look toward the emerging future:

*... We thought of Philippine [Duchesne] and her companions leaving their homeland and all that they held dear, for the new and unknown land of America. Sailing from the city of Bordeaux on the Rebecca, Philippine journeyed beyond the world she knew. Trusting in the fidelity of God and the love of her sisters, she took the Society across new frontiers in the service of mission.*



This image was used during general chapter as the representation of the *Rebecca*, the ship which St. Rose Philippine Duchesne took to "sail beyond the world she knew."



This artwork by Sophie Maille, RSCJ, is entitled *A Moment on the Rebecca*. It was commissioned to reflect the calls of the of General Chapter 2016 and to represent the image: "The Society is like a family that decides to set sail in order to look for new life; the family realizes that it needs to be ever more united in order to face the unknown."

During the general chapter we kept the images of Sophie and Philippine uppermost in our minds and hearts. What were they thinking and feeling as they said goodbye to each other as Philippine journeyed to an unknown future 200 years ago? We reminded ourselves that Philippine did not travel alone...

### ***The Departure of Philippine Duchesne from Bordeaux to the "New World" of the Americas:***

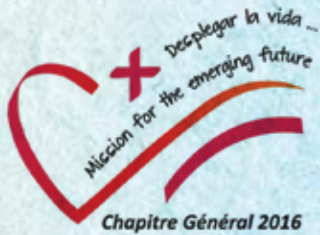
(Taken from *Rose Philippine Duchesne* by Marion Bascom, RSCJ, p.15)

*The departure [on the boat called the Rebecca] took place from Bordeaux in the spring of the following year, March 21, 1818. The little band of five that watched the coast of France recede on that Holy Saturday had been carefully chosen and were to prove worthy of their high destiny. There were... Sisters Catherine Lamarre and Marguerite Manteau. There was 26 year old Mother Eugenie Audé who had made her profession just before leaving the Mother House... There was the young*

*What were they thinking and feeling as they said goodbye to each other as Philippine journeyed to an unknown future 200 years ago?*

*and beautiful Mother Octavie Berthold, a convert... and finally there was Philippine Duchesne... She was forty-nine years old. Father Varin had been right. God had taken His time in making this missionary... Now at last with all the old ardor undimmed, but purified, directed, selfless... she was ready to begin her work....*

This image of Philippine on the *Rebecca*, the journey of each one of us, and the current tragedy of so many individuals and families in movement from one country to another touched us at our depths. We identified with risking all for an unknown future while trusting deeply in the Providence of God. We united ourselves with the many people today, who at great risk



## Living the Calls – a Lay Perspective

travel alone or together in family groups to new shores, and as the body of the general chapter, we felt the great force within each one of us, impelling us to go beyond, go further, go deeper.

Thus, the chapter, with great courage and vision, and centered in both our history and our future, gave voice to a new call that beckons us forth into the emerging future:

**WE ARE CALLED:** To set out, “to set sail,” as a Society, together with others, towards new geographical and existential frontiers in order to accompany the life that is emerging, to defend justice, peace and the integrity of creation in response to those who are searching for meaning in their lives, those who have been hurt, displaced and excluded for reasons of poverty, violence and destruction of the environment.

United with the whole Sacred Heart family and with families and peoples everywhere, we want to venture beyond our current shores, going beyond the security of our own “geographical and existential frontiers,” move out into new lands, new frontiers of service, of education, of prayer and contemplation.

We welcome this call, this invitation and this destiny. We desire to respond, knowing that we trust in the fidelity of God and in the knowledge that we do not go alone. We go together, as one body, as “disciples in mission.” This is yours and ours together...our “Rebecca Moment.” ❖

**OUR SACRED HEART FAMILY HAS MANY MEMBERS** who are in collaboration with the religious. Educators, Children of Mary, AASH, students, alumnae/i, parents, staff, benefactors: all of us are invited to live the calls of General Chapter 2016. So, what do these calls mean for us, diverse as we are, who are not RSCJ? What could living these calls look like today?

To begin to explore these questions, we turned to Associates, whose vocation as Associates is closely aligned with the spirituality and commitment of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Julie Siderfin is an Associate in the St. Louis-St. Charles group, and she shared her views on living the calls that emerged from the chapter.

One of the calls that so speaks to Julie is the concept of being “one body.” “We are called to mutuality, to oneness, to be relational.” The question is how to create and experience this interconnectedness in the midst of our diversity.

“It is Madeleine Sophie’s vision that there would be many components aligned with and in support of the work of the Society. We are connected in our DNA!

How may or can we celebrate this? Here in St. Louis, both the Associates and the Children of Mary welcome new members every year. Beth Van Horn, St. Louis Children of Mary president, and I were brainstorming how we might work together on our basic orientation programs. We have common modules on Sophie and Philippine. What about expanding that to new teacher orientation, perhaps? Or coffees with “Mums of Alums?” Or presentations at AASH conferences? What unites us is our heritage: our holy mothers, our charism, our history. Let’s raise our consciousness about that. Then, what arises, what distinguishes/defines the various groups, it seems to me, is how we respond to living the mission.”

“To begin with, how can we connect these various parts of the Society’s family?” Julie asks.

It starts, Julie believes, by listening to one another in order to understand who all of our Society family members are, how they connect and where the “synchronicity” resides. To start with basic points of contact, our feast day celebrations, our major milestones, our rituals, our orientations; these can be the source of connect- edness that creates one body among the lay people.

*continued*

“We, Associates of the Sacred Heart, are attracted by and live the spirituality of the Society of the Sacred Heart. ... We give witness to the love of God expressed in Jesus, in humanity, and in creation. This love calls us to collaborate in God’s transformation of our lives and the world around us.”\*

\*Source: *History of the Associates of the Sacred Heart in the United States*, by Catherine D. Kinabrew



## In Memoriam

*Blessed are those who have died  
in the Lord; let them rest from  
their labors for their good deeds  
go with them.*

**Shelagh Deegan, RSCJ**  
May 13, 2016

**Margaret Mary (Mike) Hoffman, RSCJ**  
May 14, 2016

**Theresa Downey, RSCJ**  
May 29, 2016

**Georgianna “Georgie” Blaeser, RSCJ**  
June 1, 2016

**Ann Marie Conroy, RSCJ**  
August 5, 2016

**Sarah Ann “Sally” Mahar, RSCJ**  
August 26, 2016

**Mary Burke-Gaffney, RSCJ**  
November 8, 2016

**Anne Sturges, RSCJ**  
December 30, 2016

*Full obituaries may be viewed at  
[RSCJ.org/about/memoriam](http://RSCJ.org/about/memoriam).*

## Living the Calls – a Lay Perspective, *continued*



A few of the many lay leaders embracing the calls of the general chapter include. Front row: Beth Van Horn, St. Louis Children of Mary president; Jane Steinfelds, chair of the Associates; Back row: Mary Forsyth, AASH president; Julie Siderfin, Associates committee.

The Bicentennial will celebrate 200 years since Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne crossed frontiers to bring the Society and its charism to new lands. How meaningful that another call from General Council 2016 is to reach new frontiers. What do these frontiers look like and how can the frontiers of today inspire a more connected family?

Julie believes that crossing frontiers can take many different forms. For instance, “Crossing frontiers shows itself in knowledge and appreciation of our saints. Crossing frontiers requires courage, the courage found in the Goals and Criteria of Sacred Heart Schools, the courage that allows all of those who are part of the Sacred Heart family to live with an ‘Open Mind, Open Heart and Open Will.’” Crossing frontiers may speak to our formation to mission and to our approach to spirituality together. The Spirituality Forum taking place in July is part of the celebration of all things Philippine. It will present an illuminating opportunity to consciously integrate ourselves as one body, as we cross frontiers within our own Sacred Heart family.

It is not lost on the Associates that the image of bread that emerged from the general chapter also so closely touches the Associates. The *History of the Associates*\* states, “This group has a long history of religious/lay relationships through the world and continues to ‘be the precious leaven in the dough of the world, filled with the Spirit of Jesus.’”

Julie helps to put her perspective into context as she concludes: “Fidelity to relationships is a core underpinning of the charism of the Society of the Sacred Heart. There are so many relationships to consider, from our personal relationship with Christ to that overflowing into relationships with one another. The calls heard and communicated by the general chapter offer an ability to bring these many relationships into clearer focus, to crystallize what an emerging one body is.” And for that she is most grateful. ✦

\*Source: *History of the Associates of the Sacred Heart in the United States*, by Catherine D. Kinabrew



***Cor unum et anima una in Corde Jesu***  
*(One heart and one mind in the Heart of Jesus)*  
*the motto of the Society of the Sacred Heart*

*The Cor Unum Legacy Society recognizes all those who have  
made a planned gift to the Society of the Sacred Heart.  
Each bequest we receive blesses our spiritual and educational mission.*

To learn more about the *Cor Unum Legacy Society* or  
other planned giving opportunities that benefit the  
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**Shirley Miller, RSCJ**  
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314-652-1500 • [smiller@rscj.org](mailto:smiller@rscj.org)  
4120 Forest Park Avenue • St. Louis, MO 63108

# Olympic Recap

Sacred Heart Athletes Shine!



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“Watching her (Katie Ledecy) in water is just a great inspiration for me. Celebrating from SH family Taiwan.”

—Yu Fang, Taiwan

“Being a great example of things achieved by the preparation received at your school! Enjoy the games.”

—Teresa, Puerto Rico

“A thousand congratulations! We celebrate in family as part of the Sacred Heart triumph!”

—Marilu, Mexico City

“Lovely, and we were taught to live our lives with love always being out center... I am so grateful for my Sacred Heart education... Merci.”

—Ann, USA

## Sacred Heart ★ 2016 ★ Olympic Athletes!

Every four years the world comes together to celebrate excellence in athletics and cheer on Olympians from across the globe. So, while the international delegates at the general chapter were busy in Italy determining leadership and discerning direction for the Society of the Sacred Heart, the larger, global family was celebrating the Olympics. The juxtaposition of these two historic events did not go unnoticed. As the religious prayed to cross into new frontiers, the Sacred Heart family took to social media to celebrate our outstanding athletes. As the sisters discerned the importance of being one, the global family united to celebrate all Sacred Heart athletes around the world.

The frenzy, the enthusiasm for the Sacred Heart Olympians was palpable. *How did this happen, and what does it portend for our future as a Sacred Heart family?*

Four years ago, two Sacred Heart students and USA swimmers, Katie Ledecy (Stone Ridge '15), and Lia Neal (91st Street '13), won Olympic medals at the London 2012 games. This year at the USA swimming trials in Omaha, there were six Sacred Heart students/alumnae competing for a spot on the team. As we started following along, we were told of other Sacred Heart athletes from around the world competing for places on their countries' Olympic teams.

The energy began to build and it clicked: we could come together as a worldwide Sacred Heart community and celebrate the personal achievement that is the result of the athletes' dedication and hard work. We sent out a call: who else going to the Olympics is a Sacred Heart alumna? Within days, we had heard of nine different women from across the globe participating in the Olympics. We set out to share their achievements, cheer them on and celebrate with them.





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Photo: FIVB

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1. Gaby Lopez (Colegio Sagrado Corazón, Mexico '12) played four competitive rounds of golf, finishing as high in the standings as 11<sup>th</sup> in one round.
2. Mary Jo Fernandez (Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart, '89) helped coach an impressive women's tennis squad; she is also an Olympic gold medalist in doubles tennis ('92 and '96).
3. Anabelle Smith (Sacré Cœur, Australia '12) and teammate Maddison Keeney took bronze in the 3m synchronized diving.
4. Gabi Nance (Stuartholme School, Australia '13) and the Australian Field Hockey Team made it to the women's quarterfinal match.
5. Erin Rafuse (Sacred Heart School of Halifax '06) sailed in 12 competitive races with her teammate Danielle Boyd for Team Canada.
6. Lia Neal (Convent of the Sacred Heart – 91st Street '13) won silver in the 4x100m freestyle relay.
7. KK Clark (Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton '08) and Team USA Water Polo took home a gold medal.
8. Katie Ledecky (Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart '15) took home 4 gold medals (200m, 400m, 800m, 4x200m relay) and the silver in the 4x100m relay.
9. Denise Sheldon (Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton '97) coached Team USA Volleyball to a bronze medal.

We contacted the Network of Sacred Heart Schools to ask: would we all want to cheer and celebrate together? The answer was a resounding yes! Coming together for the Olympics to celebrate Sacred Heart athletes demonstrated one thing clearly: Sacred Heart is one global family. Schools around the world were cheering the athletes on, and with the schools came alumnae/i and associates and friends.

Our Sacred Heart family came together, sharing information, cheering on our athletes. Some of the comments (see sidebar) we saw on social media tell us why this type of connection is so important.

The story of the Sacred Heart at the Olympics reached the media and before long EWTN was interviewing Sister Suzanne Cooke asking how Sacred Heart created so many Olympic athletes. The answer, Sacred Heart develops amazing people; it so happens that some of them are athletes. The Goals and Criteria of Sacred Heart Schools set a

high water mark, not just for schooling, but as Sister Cooke explained, “for developing one’s personhood.”

So while Katie Ledecky was swimming for the United States, members of the Sacred Heart family around the world were cheering her on. When Anabelle Smith of Sacré-Cœur in Australia took home silver in synchronized swimming, Sacred Heart fans around the world were thrilled. When Gaby Lopez of Colegio Sagrado Corazón of Mexico was fighting for the top golfing honors, Sacred Heart fans were so very excited.

What happened with the Olympics was not just a viral social media campaign. It was not just the thrill of a medal (though Sacred Heart Olympians earned nine medals). What happened at the Olympics is just what the sisters in Rome at the general chapter were praying for, for their Society. The global Sacred Heart family was one, it was united, it celebrated heart, it lived *Cor Unum* in a very real way. ✦



EWTN Interviews Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, on Sacred Heart Education and the participation of 9 Sacred Heart alumnae in the Olympics (7 athletes and 2 coaches).

# Celebrating Our Sisters

**The Religious of the Sacred Heart** reveal God's love in the heart of the world in so many different ways. We want to begin to celebrate their work with you, so that you know of all the service they are doing to reveal God's love. So please, look for this new section in upcoming issues of *Heart* and join us in honoring these women and the amazing work they do.



**Marina Hernandez, RSCJ**, completed her service as Canonical Treasurer of the USC Province on August 31, 2016. Having served for many years in leadership in the Society, from July 2008 Marina played a significant role as the treasurer of the province and financial liaison with the General Council in Rome. The provincial team and staff bade her a fond farewell with Mass, a lively dinner and white hankie send off.

“Few women religious have written at depth about the vows in the last 10 years. This represents a desperate hole in the informational and reflection materials available for those of us who are preparing for final or first profession. So, we’re doing something about it.” So starts the article in the Global Sisters Report about the wonderful work that is being done by **Juliet Mousseau, RSCJ**, who is leading the development of a book for those preparing for first or final profession.



**Mary Finlayson, RSCJ**, has agreed to serve on the provincial team for the United States–Canada Province and her selection has been approved by the general council. She brings considerable provincial administrative experience, having served on the team and as provincial in Canada. She also has much international experience, having lived for periods of time in countries of our Philippine Duchesne region (defined as Canada, the United States of America, and South America) and in Europe; and she has facility in all three languages of the Society. She will be the team liaison with the West Region and will continue as the director of the Vocation Ministry team.

*Do you know a RSCJ who is making a significant impact in your community?  
If so, we would love to hear about her at [editor@rscj.org](mailto:editor@rscj.org).*

*How do you know what God wants you to do in your life?*



Explore how to listen to God's personal call to you on our new website, [rscj.org/vocations](http://rscj.org/vocations). Learn about the discernment process and what life is like as a Religious of the Sacred Heart.



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Front row, Sisters Sheila Smith and Suzanne Cooke were USC delegates to General Chapter 2016. Sister Imma DeStefanis, middle, was secretary to General Chapter 2016. Behind her: several chapter delegates.



Four calls emerged through the discerning contemplative work of the sisters.



Sisters Mary Finlayson and Mariola López coordinated moving liturgies during the General Chapter.

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