

# Mission

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## Ministry with poor transforms ministers

**Paula Misitano, ssj**

When a large number of people gather, there will be a lot of conversation, and a bit of noise. How is it, then, that a recent community gathering rendered over 200 people silent enough to hear the proverbial “pin drop”? The stories from five Sisters for whom the phrases “*poor and marginalized*” and “*that all may be one*” are more than mere words captivated them.

Speakers shared the impact that working with the poor and marginalized has made in their lives. While different in the effect on them personally, there were common threads in their sharing. Each person’s life was changed through these encounters. Each person’s journey led them to appreciate the person to whom they ministered. Each individual’s spirituality was called upon, strengthened, and tested. Each person’s encounter with God’s people left them humbled.

For **Mary Lou Gillon, ssj**, her work at St. Mary Parish in Haydenville proved the defining point for the ministry to follow. Her interaction with the elderly illustrated the needs of this age group, isolation, fear of confinement, and fear of aging, to name a few. “The aging process of itself makes one poor and marginalized.” ... She has come to recognize the wisdom of the elders during the past nine years at Mont Marie, working with the retired and sick as they minister to one another; to appreciate her own health and friendships; to thank God for each day.

**Lorry Villemaire, ssj**, shared three areas: how she came to be in her ministry, who are those to whom she ministers, and what has been the impact on her own life’s spirituality. Matthew’s Gospel words, “I was in prison and you visited me,” brought Lorry to work with incarcerated women and to the labyrinth ministry. The labyrinth surfaced an amazing

spiritual hunger in people. While sharing the labyrinth walk, she has been edified by the women who depend on their spirituality to combat afflictions and humbled by the imprisoned men who slowly and reverently walk the labyrinth. The defining moment of saying “yes” allowed Lorry to address this spiritual hunger while transforming her own.

For **Mary Christopher Power, ssj**, the call of a “preferential option for the poor” brought her in two directions...first to minister in a parish Outreach Program and then as a pastoral minister working with elderly. She sees herself as bridging a gap for the elderly, a gap caused by loss of companions and connection with their Church. A simple visit to sit and talk can make a difference for the elderly. Her life, too, has changed, not so much outwardly, but in her love of those to whom she ministers and in appreciation of her own life’s blessings...

Having been blessed in many ways...family, education, ministry, **Eleanor Spring, ssj**, grew in the belief that having been so blessed, there was an obligation to walk with those who “started life without such blessings.”

After 19 years of walking with incarcerated women, she finds herself in a world far different from that of her childhood. “These women are hardened by life but are also waiting to be free

enough to become the persons they really are,” she stated. She cites ways in which she has been transformed by her women companions yet knows the journey still continues and other transformations will happen. She has learned of the “enormous resilience  
**(Continued on page 2)**



# Ministry with poor -- continued from page 1

of the human spirit” and has seen the deep spiritual longing in these women. And, she has learned that there is a lot more to learn.

At a young age, **Teresa Foley, ssj**, made choices based on an “option for the poor.” However, it would be a long and painful journey for her to *understand* its real meaning. Reflecting on her journey, she recalled encounters with racism, economic disparity, and the transforming power of prayer. And in all of these encounters, those to whom she ministered taught her how to live a grace-filled life. “I have truly been evangelized by the poor and the marginalized,” she said, “in them I have met the community of the great love of God.” Terry spoke of her personal and ministerial journey, of the sharing of spirit and receiving of intangible gifts, of the struggle to minister where those who have blessed her are denied so much. She continues her journey, searching once again for those relationships in direct contact with the poor and marginalized which will allow “the Spirit to be at work in the

world....and Jesus be at work among us.”

The morning was followed by a wonderful celebration of St. Joseph as we gathered at the table to eat, talk, sing and laugh. Following the dinner, the group came to the chapel to join together in prayer. Here, the assembled heard from three women in testimony of different stages of commitment...as a vowed member...as an Associate... and as one wishing to become an Agregee. We prayed as Partners in Mission and for our Partners in Mission.

It is impossible to relate the entire scope of any speaker’s impact either at the morning session or in the context of the closing prayer. The full text of the morning speeches can be read both on the computer and in print, or viewed on the video tape. Whether listening to one speak of the transformation of her life because of living out the “preferential option for the poor” or hearing the joy and hope of those living a dedicated life so that “all may be one,” the day gave all of us reason to be proud.

*(The full text of this article is in Mission-online)*

## Letter -- Letter -- Letter

Dear Sisters and Associates,

My brothers, sisters and I are most grateful for your support at the time of our father’s death. We were blessed to have him at MMHC for the past few years receiving wonderful care. Your prayers, donations, and presence at the wake and funeral helped make a difficult time more bearable. Although we know he is in a better place our hearts still need time to adjust to life without him. Please keep us in your prayers.

Catherine Leary, ssj  
and her brothers and sisters

Mission is published monthly by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield as a source of communication within the Congregation. Readers are encouraged to submit articles which should be typed and sent to Mont Marie, Holyoke, MA 01040. E-mail [acl@ssjspringfield.com](mailto:acl@ssjspringfield.com)

**Ann Lynch, SSJ, editor**

**Communications Committee:** Sisters Angela Deady, Mary E. Harvey, Mary Lou Lacey, Ann Lynch, Elizabeth Matuszek, Paula Misitano, Patricia James Sweeney and Jeanne O’Shea.



*The light from individual candles was brought to a central candle representing the unity in mission and charism of the Community of St. Joseph by Annette McDermott, ssj, Connie Curran, ssj associate, Marion Denise Scanlan, ssj, and Elaine Pudlo Lampron, ssj associate.*

## In Memoriam

*Please remember the following in prayer:*

William McGrath, brother of Sr. Julia McGrath  
Patricia Keefe, mother of Sr. Ann Keefe

## Gospel, poetry, nature speak to us of Easter

**Text And Photos: Mary E. Harvey, ssj**

Easter holds the mystery and the miracle of darkness into light. At this Easter Season darkness and suffering shroud our planet in so many places and manifestations across continents and countries. We yearn, pray, and labor for a surcease and a transformation to worldwide peace, harmony, and justice as our days in New England become longer in light and spring begins to touch the landscape with new and renewed life.

The Gospel of St. Luke records this scene from the first Good Friday. "It was now around midday and darkness came over the whole land until mid-afternoon with an eclipse of the sun" (Ch. 23:44).

Often in her poetry Jessica Powers (Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit, OCD) probed the paradox of darkness and light. In *The Vision* the persona travels a pathless way in a world covered with darkness through thickets, brambles, and a city whose inhabitants "were themselves discord though they knew it not/ or if they knew, cared less." Crossing a field, wandering through a desert, all of a sudden she finds a small burning sagebrush that shines and dances.

"I watched with fear the darkness circling it/ lunging against it, swirling a black cloak to suffocate the light/until the shades broke loose and one by one in terror fled.

The flame burned on, innocent, unperiled/ There was no darkness that could put it out."



This vision parallels the blaze of light emanating from the angel who greeted the two women who visited Jesus' empty tomb that first Easter morning. The angel said, "Do not be frightened...He has been raised exactly as he promised." (Matthew 28:6).

Discord and disharmony resound today from points across the globe. How we long, pray, labor for a world singing in harmony and in reverence for all of creation in a concentric circle of light dispelling the darkness. In her poem *Only One Voice* Jessica Powers describes



the genesis of this hoped for song of unity. "Only one voice/ but it was singing/And the words danced and as they danced held high- / oh, with what grace!- their lustrous bowls of joy./Even in dark we knew they danced, but we- /none of us - touched the hem of what would happen."

Sisters of St. Joseph and their Associates everywhere believe in and foster life. Spiritual energy and illumination impel them. They share in the mission of Jesus, that all may be one. This is the Jesus who conquered darkness and death. "I came that they might have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

As spring buds and blossoms open on wintered trees, we journey with others, especially the poor and the marginalized. "We will join with others in prayer and in action to effect change in those ecclesial and civic systems that hinder the journey toward the day when all will be one. (From Chapter Commitments 2005-2011-Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield)

Jessica Powers depicts our dream and vision in the conclusion of *Only One Voice*. "And water and light and air and the tall trees/and people young and old, began to hum/the catchy, catchy tune/And everyone danced, and everyone, even the last roots of the doddering oak/believed in life."

# SSJ spirit enlivens yesterday, today

**Sr. Patricia James Sweeney**

When Vatican II invited religious communities to explore their roots, we Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield looked back to Le Puy in France and the ministries of our original Sisters, instruction of girls in the arts of weaving, embroidery, and lace making seemed at that time in America less valued than the other social works of tending the sick, the elderly, and the poor.

Even now our recent mission statement includes a commitment "to being an informed, compassionate advocate for people who are poor and marginalized."

In keeping with our past and present, we have Sisters doing exactly that in their ministry. Two Case Managers are employed by Western Massachusetts Elder Care. Here, they are responsible for a certain number of clients, often as many as 90 people, over 60 years of age who suffer from a variety of physical problems. They need to insure that home care for these people is provided with care, compassion and respect.

To do this type of work requires great energy and an ability to face new and different problems every day. They must assess clients to see what care they need and how it can be provided. Obviously, the paperwork required is often endless. Advocating for the clients is often done by hours of telephoning and pleading while assessments of potential clients means hours of driving as well.



Yet another Sister who does not carry the Case Manager title, does similar work as an RN in Adult Family Care. Sisters Sharon Knappe, Judy Rosenthal and Connie Daub find their ministry rewarding, seeing results of their loving assistance to these Seniors whose lives would be lonely and empty without our SSJs. This makes up for the drudgery necessary in learning the state regulations and fighting through the deluge of paper and computer work they need to survive and succeed.

Whether they are dealing with home care or nursing facilities, their obligation is to make the environment a good fit for each person. Their degrees in Social Work are extremely helpful in dealing with so many and varied personalities. They all agree that to attempt this ministry, one needs "to be organized, a willing listener, ready to laugh often, full of energy and a compassionate heart." May God continue to bless them in their following of our corporate mission as Sisters of St. Joseph in this century

## Discovery

March winds sweep chill over empty yard,  
Move maple tree branches,  
Their arms suppliant against gray sky.  
Janus-like, one face of the season in winter,  
The other turns toward spring,  
Sudden sunrays pierce the clouds.

Last autumn's leaves swirl  
Across snow covered grasses edged in ice,  
Come to rest near evergreen foliage,  
Huddle near house's foundation  
As we welcome warmth of a fireplace.  
I follow the leaves there,

I keep my hope close like a child  
Clasps a glad secret untold in the heart  
Or holds a small treasure's glow.  
I look down and discover  
Purple and white crocuses blossoming in  
snow.

**Mary E. Harvey, ssj**

## 'Round and About



*Connie Quinlan, ssj, congratulates Mary Quinn, ssj, on her woman of distinction award from the Girl Scouts.*

**Photo Mary Ferguson, ssj**

Congratulations to Paula Kelleher, ssj, who was named Citizen of the Year by the Knights of Columbus in Worcester. Speaking of the event, which was a complete surprise to her, Paula said, "When one of us is acknowledged all of us are."

## Mission plans changes in form, schedule

**Ann Lynch, ssj**

A little history: For the past 17 years, *Mission* has been a monthly publication either in newspaper or newsmagazine format with each Sister and Associate receiving her own copy.

With the advent of computers in each house and our familiarity of going to First Class for the daily prayerline and news, as *Mission* turned 18, we began publishing on-line on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The content has included information from Federation, press releases and other timely news. Each issue has been only a few pages so they are easier to download for those with dial-up.

The editorial board of Sisters Angela Deady, Mary Lou Lacey, Paula Misitano and Patricia James Sweeney, and I, along with Mary Harvey, and some Sisters in local areas, have worked to present a picture of the community as we shared together in all aspects of our lives.



*As Mont Marie Health Care Center celebrated St. Joseph's Day, Sr. Marie Daniel Taylor shared with the residents her creation of the Sisters at the guillotine which she made in 1952.*

**Photos by Ann Lynch, ssj**

*Fred Sullivan, grand marshal of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade, joined his granddaughter, Abby Cosica, and marched in the Child Care Parade*



As we look to the future we realize that it is time to make another change. Beginning in the fall we will continue to publish on-line as news is available. This will be weekly, or bi-weekly depending on the news. Copies will be printed for Sisters at the Mont who do not have access to computers.

*Mission*, in printed form, will be published either every other month or quarterly. It will be larger, perhaps focused around a theme, with one or two copies sent to a house, depending the number living there. *Mission* also will continue to be posted on-line and on the SSJ website for individuals to download themselves. This may mean that some houses do not want a hard copy of *Mission* to save on postage and printing costs. Please let us know if you do not want a hard copy mailed to you.

As we make this change, we realize that not everyone will be happy with this decision and there are some particulars to work out, however, it seems like the right one at this time.

## Ready for anything, travelers change plans,

**Mary Lou Lacey, ssj**

“The best laid plans o’ mice an’ men gang aft agley,” says the poet Robert Burns. Others philosophically sigh, “God proposes and man disposes . . .”

**T**hough the group representing Samaritan’s Purse visiting Burkino Faso, Africa in early March met unexpected circumstances, with prayer and reflection they were able, not only to accept a major reversal of plans, but also to find rewarding alternatives.

Linda Wilk, ssj, a member of the group, explains that officials demanding \$10,000 as a “tax” held the 102,000 gift boxes from the United States. Linda notes that at one time a group posing as non-profit, brought goods into the country, causing officials to be very suspicious. Since gifts are tax-free, the officials are trying to exact a “tariff.” Joseph Koomson, Burkinabe contact for the group, is appealing to higher authority and is confident that the boxes will be released eventually.

Meanwhile, the visitors carried out as much of their original plan as they could. They returned to schools they had helped last year and were welcomed by joyful children. “They ran to greet us,” Linda said, “and shook hands with us. They wanted to touch us, but asked nothing of us. It didn’t matter to them that we had no boxes.” Last year the children had answered the question, “What do you need?” by suggesting gifts for the teachers, so the returning American missionaries brought materials in their own luggage. The Burkinabe teachers couldn’t believe the visitors had actually come back, and the children were happy that their teachers had gifts.

“Many of the schools have 120 children in one class,” Linda relates. “They come early in the morning and stay until about 6 p.m. so they can have some supper before walking home.”

The Americans also visited orphanages and found most of them upbeat and joyful, despite poor conditions. When orphanage director Ruth Cox was asked what she needed, she requested a new crib. It is usual to have three babies in one crib. Linda had \$100 left from gifts from St. Agnes children, and so was able to give Ruth \$100 to have a crib made. With grati-



tude Ruth said, “The Lord is so good and has poured love on us through your tangible expression of kindness.” The timing was providential, as another three-month-old child was brought to the orphanage just then.

Whenever possible, the orphanages keep children beyond the infant stage to give them as good a start as they can before returning them to relatives or adoptive parents.

Dr. Douglas Karrel left malaria-testing kits at the orphanages, a step toward early detection.

This was only part of the medical aspect of the visit. Dr. Karrel visited clinics and held a conference with six local doctors who had asked for more education. He brought an instructional CD and helped the doctors establish a triage method for a medical mission that sends children to the United States. They are obliged to choose children who will profit most by special

## see that all things work together for good

care.

Animata, a three-year-old girl, returned to the U.S. with the local group. She has had heart surgery once, and will have follow-up treatment in Maine.

As the visiting group prayed and reflected on these experiences, they discerned a pattern in their activities. Ruth Karrel expressed it: "I think we should label this trip 'the Barnabas Adventure.' We did a lot of encouraging, not only to Africans, but to each other." (Barnabas - Son of Encouragement) In effect, the Americans ministered to the ministers there, giving them more attention than might have been possible when distributing boxes.

The group was based in Ouagadougou and drove for three hours to the schools. "We couldn't miss the contrasts," Linda said. "In the city we saw five-star hotels and the President's Palace. But just a mile out of the city we saw people making bricks by hand out of the dirt of the earth, and living in mud huts. The fortunate ones obtained drinking water from bore holes that reached ground water, and this is much safer than using wells."

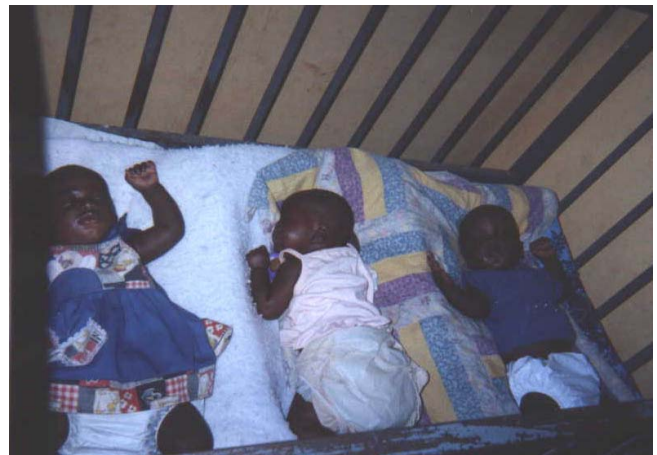
In the city some women crossed the road to meet the group. "They put out their hands to shake our hands, and then walked away. One woman showed Ruth Karrel a coin to pay for a photo, which Ruth declined, though she took a Polaroid snap. The women were enchanted and excited to see the picture develop."

A few miles from the capital, while giving school supplies to teachers, the group had a chance to visit a village, and Linda was invited into a small hut. The woman in the house was excited to see

Linda. They both laughed as they embraced each other. "That was a highlight for me," Linda recalls. "We didn't know each other, we'd never seen each other before, and we'll never see each other again, but she wanted to greet me. With smiles as the universal language we didn't need conversation. The people we met have almost no material goods, but they're so happy."

Going back to school in Dalton, Linda was sorry to tell the children about the boxes. As she explained the situation, one student asked, "What can we do to help?"

This spontaneous response was another example of encouragement for Linda. "This is the Church of today," she said. "At ten years old our students know that they can do something for others. This makes me believe that we have a future with such children." "It was the enthusiasm of these children that produced the gift boxes. It



was, perhaps, their prayers that enabled the visiting missionaries to adapt to unexpected circumstances and become "encouragers" to the weary, living out a plan not of their own choosing.

**News flash:** The boxes have been released to Joseph Koomson. Distribution started on March 29.

## Vermont college enjoys festive celebration

**Mary E. Harvey, ssj**

With the dream and foresight of visionary women, the Sisters of St. Joseph founded the College of St. Joseph (CSJ) in Rutland in 1956 for the education of its members with earlier beginnings in 1950. Over the years it has expanded on a 90-acre campus to a career and service oriented liberal arts college of about 600 undergraduate and graduate students and the distinction of being represented in The Best 201 Colleges for the Real World (2001-2002 Edition).

On March 20 the College celebrated its 49th birthday and Founders' Day. Sister Mary Quinn, Springfield President, Trustees Sister Kathleen Imbruno, Vermont Area Leadership Team representative; and Sister Kathleen Keating; Sister Mary Polworth, third president of the college; as well as Sister Miriam Francis Predom and Sister Judith Levins attended the celebration in Tuttle Hall followed by a Founders' Day Lunch at Roncalli Hall.

Dr. Frank Miglorie, President of the College, extended a welcome and wishes for a Happy Birthday to the sisters present saying they represented all Sisters of St. Joseph. He expressed special gratitude to Sister Matthew Mc Devitt, Sister Imelda Welch, and Sister Mary Polworth, the college's previous presidents.

A power point presentation chronicled the Sisters of St. Joseph and the college's history and heritage. Sister Mary Quinn in a message to the group spoke about the importance of reflecting on our roots, being grateful for all who have gone before us and have taught us about courage, faith, and perseverance. She noted the vision and courage of the sisters in Rutland who responded to a need for a college in the 1950's as SSJ's have responded to unmet needs since 1650 in France. Sister Mary Quinn said St. Patrick's Day and St. Joseph's Day are two occasions on which we celebrate our sacred history. She said, "In the words of the presentation: 'We reflect on our past, celebrate the present, and plan for the future.'" John Cassarino, Rutland City Mayor,

read a proclamation honoring the college.

Dr. Miglorie, Jim Herlihy, Trustee Chair, and Sister Mary Quinn presented the Annual Employee Service Awards, the 2006 Pour Le Merite (For Those Who Deserve) Awards, and the 2006 Mother Teresa Student Service Awards. The employee awards began with five years of service to the college. Dr. Miglorie and his wife Patricia Clark Miglorie, Registrar, have served over 30 years with Dr. Miglorie being a philosophy and art professor for some years. He continues to teach.

Patricia Clark Miglorie and Dr. Gary Lawler, Academic Dean, received the 2006 Pour Le Merite Awards for their leadership and great energies in the college's raising funds for Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina victims.

CSJ students Ethan Therrien who volunteered with the Red Cross on the Gulf Coast, and Jennifer Esposito who has engaged in community service for many years in Vermont and elsewhere, received the 2006 Mother Teresa Student Service Awards. The program concluded with a Candlelight Ceremony for deceased alumni, prayers of Intercession, and a Prayer to St. Joseph.



**After the ceremony members** of the college and surrounding community joined together for a special Founders' Day buffet lunch. Sisters from the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph gathered together for the cake cutting. From left includes Sr. Kathleen Imbruno, Sr. Mary Polworth, Sr. Mary Quinn, College President Frank Miglorie, Sr. Judith Levins, and Sr. Kathleen Keating. **Photo by Jaime Insinga, Communications Director, College of St. Joseph**

# Miss Daisy leaves Sisters enthralled

**Ann Lynch, ssj**

Sisters in St. Joseph Residence have many visitors, perhaps none so unique as Farmer Minor and Daisy “Pig out on Reading” who visited, March 30, from Minor’s Farm & Cider Mill in Bristol, CT.

Daisy likes to be read to and her mission is “to encourage youngsters to develop a love for reading” as she and Farmer Minor present *Pig Out on Reading* programs in schools and libraries across the United States.

Farmer Minor and Daisy’s National Library Tour took place in the spring of 2002 and included programs in many major cities. Daisy, hosted by Connecticut Congresswoman Nancy Johnson is likely the first pig even inside the United States Capitol building. Though Mrs. Laura Bush was in Russia during Daisy’s Washington, DC visit, she did send Daisy a personal note of thanks for encouraging children to read. It is believed that Daisy is the First pig to have received her own Library card(s) and Daisy appeared in the June/July issue of *American Libraries*.

In addition, Daisy has been on TV and in newspapers across the country and has visited libraries, churches, convalescent homes and schools, including St. Mary Elementary School in Lee where Sister Kathy Wallace, principal, arranged the visit to Mont Marie to coordinate with National Pig Day which was celebrated March 1.

Daisy has been kissed by countless numbers of school principals, teachers, librarians, business executives, mayors, and thousands of school children too! People kiss Daisy for a number of reasons, ranging from promises to students for reading thousands of books like Kathy did last year for St. Mary’s students, to fundraising efforts on behalf of non-profit groups.

While most of Daisy’s work deals with reading programs, she has been involved in many farm marketing programs, including a major East Coast Conference where she was a “Keynote Speaker.” Other Daisy notables include being featured in Bristol’s 2002 Community Calendar, serving as the mascot in a “March Against Hunger” and making her music world debut on the CD cover and inside photos of “Big Fun on the Hog Farm” by River City Slim & the Zydeco Hogs (Daisy’s favorite entertainers). She is featured in a coloring book describing *A visit to Minor’s Farm* and she has her own Daisy pencils complete with a little black pig eraser.



*Sr. Helene Michael even gave Daisy a kiss.*

*Sr. Mary Shea takes Dasy for a walk. (right)*

*For more pictures, see [Mission-on-line](#)*



*Sisters in St. Joseph’s Residence enjoyed listening to the story of Daisy .*



*Photos by Wendy Hammerle and Ann Lynch, ssj*

## Is this what Spring Break is about ?

Roberta Mulcahy, ssj

Invited to be part of a two-day conference on Socially Responsible Investing in New York by Fred Alger Management, Inc, I bravely took the train into the city. The first day of spring coincided with the first day of the conference. However, New York is not Florida so the weather was predictably very cold and windy. Perhaps those on a warm spring break in Florida would have loved the equally very cold (air conditioned) conference room where we spent our NY "Spring Break?"

On a serious note participants and speakers at this conference shared their expertise from a variety of perspectives. The number of women who are working in, and concerned with, the SRI area of finance especially impressed me. Heather Williams, a Senior Investment Manager of the Lutheran Church of America facilitated the conference and gave a keynote talk reminding us of the "three legged stool" of SRI: screening proxy voting, community investing and the link with financial performance. Panel experts such as Linda Pei, CEO of Women's Equity Fund, Lauren Compere, Chief Administrative Office from Boston Common Asset and Rona Fried, President of Sustainable Business spoke on

## National, local actions to achieve sustainable environment

Roberta Mulcahy, ssj

Last year in an education series on the Millennium Development Goals, *Mission* published an article on the 7<sup>th</sup> goal: **To Ensure Environmental Sustainability**. The daily news throughout the world keeps the need for environmental sustainability ever before us with countless stories of climate change, global warming, and destruction of humankind and creature kind due to our "foot print on the earth."

A recent letter from Congressman Olver informed his constituents and others of the proposed 2007 federal budget and funding cuts from environmental programs that will not ensure environmental sustainability or protect public health. Oil, timber and mining interests continue to be priorities for this administration while clean water loan funds to improve wastewater treatment facilities, the selling of National Forest Lands and drilling in the National Wildlife Refuge are among issues that have received serious cuts in funding.

*Opportunities in Proactive Investing.*

Mary Barrett, Founder of Edgewood Partners, presented new insights into *Sustainable Investing*, and reminded me of our community's on-going work in sustainability. Mary has over 30 years experience in the world of finance. Globally she invests in companies that are value-driven and have made a commitment to sustainability at a high level. This commitment includes social, economic and environment areas. Edgewood Partners' purpose is to provide SRI to charitable institutions and individual clients through investments in sustainable companies. The success of this type of investing, among other things, would certainly mean a cleaner world for all of us to enjoy!

Our "Spring Break" conference ended with a presentation on Alternative Investments as they relate to SRI principles. How surprised I was by the very last power point slide that showed the new Holyoke Health Center on Maple Street, recipient of alternative funding from Access Capital Strategies of Boston. The connections continue and it is good to remember that we are also part of being present to our neighbors though the many years that we have been involved in Alternative and/or Community Development Investments.

Senator Dianne Wilkerson, a Massachusetts Senator from the Boston area, echoed some similar concerns in a talk she gave on **Sustainability in Communities of Color: Creating Inclusion**. She posed the question: **"Who is my neighbor?"** (A familiar reflection question for every Sister of St. Joseph!). Senator Wilkerson continued her talk with examples of economically poor people in her district who live in areas where there is a lack of land for growing food; clean air for breathing, and housing that is grossly inadequate.

Those who live in Congressman Olver's district can thank him for the work he does on the Interior Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. All of us in Massachusetts can respond to a request that Senator Wilkerson made to ask our representatives on the State level to pass the **Environmental Justice Bill (no.556)**.

We encourage our Associates and Sisters who live and work in other States to see how their Representatives are doing to Ensure Environmental Sustainability.

# Energy conference provides ideas, inspiration

Cathy Coyne, ssj



In March Roberta Mulcahy and I once again attended the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Building Energy Conference in Boston. The theme centered around sustainability ideas that are on the cutting edge of green building design and clean energy solutions. With over 1,700 attendees and 150 exhibitors

this proved to be the biggest turnout yet. I began participating in this conference five years ago and have watched it steadily grow from 500 in attendance in 2001 to the record crowd at the World Trade Center last month.



From beginning to end, the Building Energy Conference was a feast of ideas, workshops, speakers, exhibitors and attendees all examining ways to create restorative designs for our buildings, communities and the planet. The keynote presentation was given by Bob Berkebile, founding principal of BNIM Architects, a firm setting new design standards for resource efficiency at the building and community levels. His statement on the future of designing “Living Buildings” stayed with me:



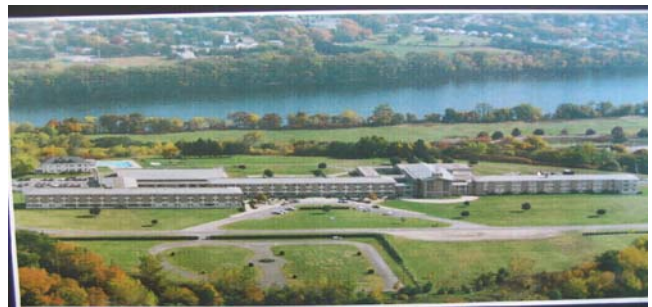
“ Imagine a building as elegant and efficient as a flower that generates all of its own energy with renewable resources, that captures and treats all of its water on site, and that uses resources efficiently, but for maximum beauty.”



It made me wonder:

- What if our future buildings honored our ecological diversity?
  - What if we embraced whole cycle design?
  - What if we reduce operating costs by reducing energy consumption?

These questions and many more were answered in the workshop sessions that followed the keynote speaker. We attended sessions on: Green Affordable Housing, LEED Certification and Green Buildings, Municipalities Using Clean Energy, Solar Designs and Rebates, and Sustainability in Communities of Color, to mention a few.



The last speaker we heard was John Todd who spoke on Water in our Urban Future. A few years ago Roberta worked at his New Alchemy Institute on the Cape. I believe he left us with a message of hope when he said “The only sustainable model of design is nature itself. If we imitate nature she will teach us how to conserve our resources and provide both ecological and economic restoration.”

# Giant Indoor Tag Sale



**Sat. April 22**

**8:00 - 3:00**

**Mont Marie Gym**

Mont Marie Child Care Center  
34 Lower Westfield Rd., Holyoke

**Bargains galore on furniture, household items,  
toys, books, tools, clothes and more.  
Baked goods and refreshments. Free admission and parking.**

**Contact: 413 536-2964**