

2025 | VOLUME 22 | ISSUE 1

# heart

A JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART, UNITED STATES - CANADA

# heart

**Heart** is published two times a year to highlight the mission and ministries of the Society of the Sacred Heart United States – Canada Province for a wide circle of friends.

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The Society of the Sacred Heart, an international community of women religious, was founded by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat in post-revolutionary France and expanded to North America by Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne. Our mission is to discover and reveal God's love in the heart of the world through the service of education.

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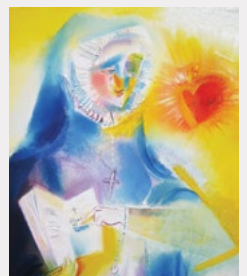
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Cover: *Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat 2020*  
by Stephen B. Whatley

Stephen B. Whatley is a British Catholic expressionist artist. His work is in collections worldwide, and his Catholic tribute paintings are owned by many Catholic establishments, especially in the United States and Canada. He was presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in recognition of his work. See more about his work, including signed prints at: [stephenbwhatley.com](https://stephenbwhatley.com)





# from the Provincial

## Dear Friends and Family of the Sacred Heart,

Each issue of *Heart* shares stories reflective of our mission to discover and reveal God's love in the world. This mission flows from the charism of our founder Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat.

What is *charism*? Father Joseph R. Driscoll in *Harnessing Our Power through Charism* explains that... "unique and particular to each congregation's founding and emerging story, charism, a particular gift, is of the one Spirit, and is the power and source of ministry and mission." Charism is alive. It points to the wonder of the Holy Spirit working in and around all of creation, and we see it in the life of the Church, especially this year.

We accompanied Pope Francis in prayer during his illness and death, marveling at the constancy of his lessons to embrace mercy over judgment and love over division. Pope Francis lived and shared the charism of Saint Ignatius. He promoted justice as being constitutive of the Gospel. He proclaimed compassionate attentiveness to people who are poor and marginalized. He insisted that we address our impact on God's creation. In his actions we recognized the spirit of the Jesuits whose mission is one of justice and reconciliation, forming people for others.

In Pope Leo XIV, we now see another example of charism as he leads with the spirit of St. Augustine. In his first few homilies and audiences, Pope Leo emphasized unity, truth and charity. These are the fruits of Augustine's charism at the core of Augustinian spirituality and mission. The Augustinian spirit proposes the love of God without conditions. Clarity of mission is rooted in being of one mind and heart on the way to God. Pope Leo continues to call us to sensitivity to the Holy Spirit as we heed the calls of the Gospel.

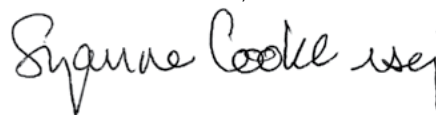
What of Sophie's charism and our spirit? Sophie's quest for meaning and truth was anchored in her

relationship with Christ, in and through whom she experienced the tenderness and warmth of God. Her intimate knowledge of Christ, inspired by her faithful attentiveness to the Holy Spirit, nurtured in her a vision. She believed that a life fully rooted in both contemplation and action allows one to grasp fully the experience of being loved by God — however we imagine or think God to be — and that drawing from this extraordinary experience of being loved, we can become the courageous compassionate people God counts on us to be. Education leading to transformation is the fruit of Sophie's charism.

We purposefully chose Stephen B. Whatley's 2020 portrait of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat for this issue's cover. We invite our readers to take the time to consider this image and what the artist reveals about Sophie's charism and the spirit of the Society. Study the portrait. What do you see? Then read these stories. We hope they illuminate the continuous impact of Sophie's charism on the Society of the Sacred Heart today and the Holy Spirit's continuing animation of our mission of communicating God's love to all.

We thank you as you help extend the Society's mission further into the world. We thank you for your commitment to Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat's vision. May our sure knowledge that all are united in the Heart of Christ continue to inspire us to know the ways we can communicate God's love for the sake of the human family and all of creation.

United in One Heart,



Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ

# Maria Cimperman, RSCJ, on Pope Leo XIV and Augustinian Charism

By Margaret Pesuit, Communications Manager for the Society of the Sacred Heart, Motherhouse, Rome

In an interview with *US Catholic* magazine, Maria Cimperman, RSCJ, a theologian and expert on religious life and synodality, provided key insights into how Pope Leo XIV's Augustinian formation and membership have shaped his approach to leadership. As a member of the Augustinian Order, Pope Leo XIV's formation is rooted in a spirituality that values communal living and shared mission. Sister Cimperman emphasized that the Pope's stress on synodality, dialogue, community, and peace is not simply about structural reform — it is about fostering deep, communal discernment and building community. It reflects a “spirituality of encounter” and a commitment to listening, especially to those on the margins.

This charism, she says, invites the Church to become more relational, more honest, and more rooted in love of God and neighbor. It is about cultivating a Church that does not just speak about community but rather embodies it through mutual care and shared mission. In her view, this approach signals not only a continuity with Pope Francis but a deepening of the Church's call as experienced in lived spirituality.

Ultimately, the article presents Pope Leo XIV's emerging papal vision as one steeped in a theology of unity and participation and a leadership style rooted in relationality, humility, and collective discernment. It is a call for a Church that listens, journeys together, and embraces diversity and unity in a polarized, fractured world.



Photos by Edgar Beltrán, The Pillar



Scan to read this article in Spanish or French on the RSCJ International website and access the full article about Sister Cimperman.

# Our New ANAM Province

By Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ

## The call to revitalize mission in response to the world's urgent needs.

Since the Society of the Sacred Heart's General Chapter 2016, across the Society, Religious of the Sacred Heart and our mission partners have been living the four calls of that Chapter: to reach new frontiers, to live more humanly, to create silence and to be and act as One Body. Together, we have dreamed of a Society capable of meeting the challenges of an ever-changing world. That dream is at the center of the Society's General Chapter 2024 decisions to reorganize ourselves worldwide into eight Provinces, to revitalize our mission through the Apostolic Priorities (Education; Spirituality; Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC); and Formation) and to re-affirm our commitment to young people. We believe that this revitalization of our mission in today's world will strengthen our union and our sense of a common mission that springs from Saint Madeliene Sophie Barat's charism.

## What does this mean for the United States – Canada Province?

For the sake of fostering our mission, we are creating a new province community with our sisters and mission partners in the Provinces of Antilles and Mexico. In our vision statement, we say: "We are sisters who live inclusion and solidarity, open communication and generative dialogue, participation and belonging. Inspired by the love the heart of Jesus, we continue to heal our histories, to disarm our prejudices, to respect our different rhythms, to value our diversity. We celebrate with joy and hope that in the open heart everyone finds a place."

Central to our creating this new Province are processes of getting to know one another across countries through prayer and dialogue groups and in ministry and mission groups. We have established intra-provincial working groups to address the practical details of

life such as finances, technology and governance structures, each supporting participatory decision-making rooted in synodality. We are excited about new shared projects such as the corporate presence of RSCJ serving those in crisis at the U.S. – Mexico border in San Diego, California, and Tijuana, Mexico.

## Why is our new province named ANAM?

We have regarded "ANAM" as both our baptismal name and our confirmation name. For decades when the provincial leadership teams of Antilles, Canada, Mexico, and the United States met, we referred to this group as "ANAM" (an acronym for Antilles, North America, and Mexico). Thus, "ANAM" has been a baptismal name.

Prior to the General Chapter 2024, we consulted our members across the three current provinces and the vast majority hoped we would formalize "ANAM" as the name for the new province. Our final decision to claim this name is rooted in our shared conviction that coming together is a blessing. ANAM in Arabic means "blessing." The name also evokes the old Gaelic term, *anam cara*, which means "soul friend," or "soulmate." Anam is Gaelic for "soul," and cara is Gaelic for "friend." We do believe that the act of creating our new province is both possible and inspired by our union in the Heart of Jesus. We are truly soul friends as we build the ANAM Province together.



# Associates Formation

By Sarah Cassidy and Angela LaGrange Scott, Associates Leadership Co-Chairs

The call to be an Associate in the Society of the Sacred Heart is a vocation rooted in the desire to live more fully in response to the charism of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat and the spirit of the Society. This vocation involves a life-long process of formation grounded in personal growth, prayer, discernment, spiritual depth, and active engagement with the world. The commitment to cultivating and deepening the interior life is an essential element for each Associate, and over the past year, Associates throughout the United States – Canada Province have been able to enjoy many formation opportunities.

This year we spearheaded the centennial celebration of Madeleine Sophie Barat's canonization in the USC Province, inviting 25 RSCJ and partners in mission to choose and reflect on a quote from Sophie. These reflections were shared via social media throughout the month of May and were a delightful tribute to the impact Sophie has had in our community, illuminating how she continues to inspire, encourage, and support us in our lives.

We also welcomed a new Associates group in New York City. Associates Elizabeth Guillory, Natasha Donnelly, and Jane Steinfelds organized two Associates “Come and See” gatherings held at Convent of the Sacred Heart (91st Street) this past February, for current and past faculty/staff and parents as well as alumnae. This sparked great enthusiasm for creating community, rooted in a shared connection to the Sacred Heart.

Associates in the USC Province also spent time together in prayer and formation through a series of Zoom presentations. In the fall, Lauren Brownlee, a Washington, D.C. Associate, and Bridget Bearss, RSCJ, offered a presentation entitled “Justice as Love in Action: The Calls of Our Charism.” Drawing on foundational documents such as the calls of the 2016 General Chapter and Artisans of Hope in Our Blessed and Broken World, they invited Associates

to reflect on justice as an expression of love and consider how our vocation calls us to respond to our blessed and broken world.

In the spring, in preparation for becoming a new Province, Associates from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico came together for several programs. The first was a “Come and See” Zoom meeting that offered all a chance to meet one another, pray together, and build community. In April, Provincial Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, gave an inspiring presentation on *The Philosophy of Sacred Heart Education: Sophie's Gift ... Our Call to the Future*, which invited Associates to reflect on how our vocation opens us to the movement of the Holy Spirit, our commitment, and the profile of a Sacred Heart Associate.

This summer, Maria Cimperman, RSCJ, led a three-hour webinar called: “Reflections on the Synod on Synodality and an Experience in Conversation in the Spirit.” This webinar was an extraordinary opportunity for Associates to learn about the Synod and to engage in a synodal process. Also in June, Sophie's Well offered a Virtual Busy Persons Retreat — five days of communal prayer and reflection open to Associates from across the province.

As we gather this July for Together as One Heart, an in-person Associates meeting, we will embrace synodal approaches throughout four days together. We will reflect on Society of the Sacred Heart General Chapter 2024, deepen our shared understanding of the Society's charism, and discern how we are being called forward.

Participation in these formation experiences has been strong, with each one deepening Associates' commitment to their vocation. These opportunities help Associates strengthen relationships, listen more attentively to the Spirit, and live out “love in action” in meaningful new ways.

**If you are interested in becoming an Associate, please contact [rscjassociatesusc@gmail.com](mailto:rscjassociatesusc@gmail.com)**

# Together in Formation

By Noemí Martínez, RSCJ

*The following article is an English translation and adaptation of an article shared by the Province of Mexico.*

This past spring, a group of Religious of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) gathered in the RSCJ community of León, Guanajuato, to share, pray and reflect on a fundamental theme for religious life: how to care for the interior life in the midst of apostolic life.

The group included RSCJ who are professed of temporary vows (PTVs) — meaning they have professed first vows in the Society — from Mexico, Japan, and the United States, along with their RSCJ directors and one vowed religious from another congregation.

During the meeting, the sisters of the host community generously shared their experiences of how they balance their spiritual life and apostolic commitment in their daily lives. It was a space of sisterhood, listening and mutual learning that nourished hearts and strengthened their vocation.

In addition, bringing together directors of PTVs and young professed sisters from the United States and Mexico, allowed the sisters to continue taking firm and hopeful steps on the road to a new province.

The presence of Chihiro Yamamoto, RSCJ, from Japan, and Sister Carmen Rodríguez, a member of La Compañía de Santa Teresa de Jesús, enriched the group's dialogue and informed them more deeply of the varying realities of consecrated life.

The meeting was also a reminder that community is an essential place for growth and discernment, as clearly expressed in the Society's *Constitutions*:



“Community is the principal place of our formation insofar as we experience support and challenge to grow both as persons and as religious of the Sacred Heart.”  
(*Society of the Sacred Heart Constitutions* §72)

The day included moments of prayer, communal conversation, shared silence, and common vision. In each of them, the desire to remain faithful to the Spirit who calls and sends us was present.

This meeting was part of an ongoing process of spiritual and community formation that seeks to cultivate the interiority, discernment, and missionary commitment of those who have responded generously to the call of the Heart of Jesus.

## FROM RUTH CUNNINGS, RSCJ

The formation gathering of PTVs in León was a genuine experience of the internationality of the Society. I enjoyed the richness of our diversity as we brought our unique personalities, perspectives and cultures into the dialogue. At the same time, I was touched by our similarities, including the struggle we all shared to balance our call to silence and prayer with our call to serve. When we gathered with the professed sisters of the community, they shared their own search for balance and affirmed the value of our vocation and a life that is both contemplative and apostolic. I am very grateful for this opportunity to strengthen relationships with my sisters from other provinces.



By Erin Everson and Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ

On April 10, 2025, Religious of the Sacred Heart representing the United States – Canada Province, the Province of Mexico, and the Province of Antilles joined the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón community in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to celebrate 145 years of RSCJ presence in the country.

In gratitude to the Society of the Sacred Heart, the University community gave the RSCJ the Distinguished Service Medal. This honor commemorates the great legacy of the Society of the Sacred Heart in Puerto Rico. The Society was represented by María del Socorro Rubio, RSCJ, Provincial of the Antilles; Natividad Hernández, RSCJ, member of the Provincial Team of Antilles; Clara Malo Castrillón, RSCJ, Provincial of Mexico; Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, Provincial of the USC Province; and Paula Gruner, RSCJ, USC Provincial Team member.

Gilberto J. Marxuach Torrós, the president of the University, warmly welcomed both the RSCJ and colleagues from the Sacred Heart school in Ponce to both an Awards Dinner and a Liturgy of Thanksgiving. His remarks expressed gratitude and appreciation for all who had served as Sacred Heart educators in Puerto Rico. Their vision, hard work, and vitality have ensured the strength of the values of Sacred Heart education.

The University wrote of the occasion in a social media post: “It was a moment of great joy where we reaffirmed our commitment to our mission of educating people in

intellectual freedom and moral conscience, willing to participate in the construction of a more authentically Christian Puerto Rican society: a community of solidarity in justice and peace.”

“The presence of RSCJ, lay people, school staff, students and friends who are sharing in our journey reflected the meaning of the Sacred Heart Family. The celebration paved the way forward for a future full of hope, not only for the University but also for the new province of ANAM,” observed Sister Gruner. Sister Cooke added, “We are most grateful to have witnessed the deep sense of commitment to Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat’s vision of education. Filled with a renewed sense of purpose and confidence in the future, we look forward to future collaboration with our colleagues at both the University and at Ponce.”

top left: Sacred Heart community members gathered in the chapel at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón.

top right: María del Socorro Rubio, RSCJ, receives the award from Samuel Cespedes Sabater, chair of the University’s board of trustees.

middle: Sister Rubio gives remarks with Clara Malo Castrillón, RSCJ, on her left and Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, on her right.

bottom: RSCJ representing the provinces of Antilles, Mexico, and United States – Canada pose for a photo.

Photos courtesy of Universidad del Sagrado Corazón



## Colegio del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús

With more than a century of history, Colegio Sagrado Corazón is a private Catholic institution founded in 1916 in the southern area of Ponce, Puerto Rico. The school provides an education of excellence, with an authentically Catholic formation, which prepares students for the university world. The school serves students pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, cultivating social and moral values that will stay with them for a lifetime.

## Centro Sofía (Sophia Center)

Centro Sofía is a ministry and formation center at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón in San Juan, inspired by the example of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat. The purpose of the center is to:

- foster dialogue between theology, science, and the humanities disciplines, promoting an ethical and socially just integration of faith, knowledge, and culture that inspires students to pursue humanizing practices in their professional fields.
- integrate the research of historical social context of professional and theological formation, to link learning to real-world transformation.
- to advance Puerto Rican communities, respecting cultural and religious diversity and valuing the participation of women, while favoring solidarity, inclusion, and equity.
- to promote an integral spirituality through formation and psycho-spiritual accompaniment, liturgical celebration and ministries, so that a liberating pastoral practice promoting the formation of lay leaders is reached.





*This reflection is a summary and synthesis of the thoughts, words, and insights of participants.*

Elements of our time together such as prayer, ritual, and reflection booklets capturing important quotes from our sisters and Society documents contributed to an atmosphere of silence, depth, and mindfulness.

“To risk the word... In no way is it a question of small or even pious talk, but of announcing the Gospel in a new language, one that can be heard and understood by our contemporaries. The world today needs good news, needs an alternative way of life.” (Patricia García de Quevedo, 1997)

This “word cloud” expresses many of the thoughts and orientations of our hearts, minds, and spirit during these conversations.



A few essential questions remained at the heart of our prayer, reflection, and dialogue. Here are some insights from participants:

### “What binds us together?”

Not surprisingly, our deep charism connects us with one another “in the truthfulness of our One source,” calling us to love, to heal, and to act with trust and faith. At the “crossroads of grace,” this time invites us to move forward and to “lean in” with confidence. While recognizing uncertainty and fragility, we find common ground in sharing our individual and collective stories, and we are renewed in the conviction and sure knowledge that the Holy Spirit is leading us to “something new.”

Our relationships as “sisters” strengthen us, while calling us to embrace ways of building communities with “permeable boundaries,” in the hopes of reflecting the reality of our global community. In a time that is fraught with anomie, anxiety, and uncertainty, hope continues to find us: We are not alone. We journey together in faith. We journey with hope. This hope is not ephemeral. It is not a passing phenomenon. It is an abiding trust in God’s faithfulness and goodness.

### “What are key insights?”

#### Journey and Discovery

Our journey as a Society is taking us “to be where the piercing of the heart is taking place.” Being present in those places — both physically and metaphorically — allows us to touch the Pierced Heart of Jesus, to know Christ in ever new and deeper ways. As we journey, we are called to hold everything “lightly,” to let God do God’s work, to trust that it is being done, and to communicate the “good news” by our lives — our words, our gestures, our choices, and decisions. Patience is essential; flexibility and pivoting are constantly required. Humor





is also needed when inevitable changes in course and other unexpected things happen on the journey.

### Collective Action, Partnerships and Collaboration

This historic time impels us to remain open both with our minds and our hearts. We are called to the “front lines of our mission” in much the same way that Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat and Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne were. We are called to respond to the calls of the Gospel given the pressing needs of God’s people and God’s creation. We are not alone in wanting to respond to this call; we are united with many religious communities in mission worldwide, thus enhancing our experience of being One body.

### Contemplative Stance and Prayer

***“Remain in silence in poverty of heart before Him”***

(Society of the Sacred Heart Constitutions §20)

Rooted as we are in a contemplative call, we resonate with the dynamism of spiritual energy, the energy of love. Love infuses everything. Grounded in the Risen Christ, the energy of this love is contagious, continuing to ignite a fire today. Love calls us into silence amidst the noise, busyness and turmoil of life. We must embrace our contemplative stance, as a condition of hope and as an essential ingredient of transformation — for ourselves and others and our world. Contemplation is integral to discernment.

We recognize “that this is a time of spiritual renewal for us and our world. It is actually moving us toward new breakthroughs, new growth in Christ.” We are becoming who we are called to be: One Body, united in the Heart of Jesus.

While we are in a “new” moment as a Province, we also see that we have lived through significant shifts: In the

U.S., we moved from five provinces to one; in Canada, we experienced consolidation; together our two countries formed a new province. Now our three provinces hope to become one. This “now” moment is a “re-founding the Society” for the sake of mission. It summons our intentionality and energy to build a better world; one transformed by love.

### “What are our concerns going forward?”

Throughout the gatherings, we remained acutely aware of the impacts of the current geo-social-political climate on those who are most vulnerable: those in poverty, children, and migrants and refugees. We recognized our complex shared history, the size of our province in relation to Antilles and Mexico, our significant cultural differences, the possible constraints to travel, and the lack of a common language as important considerations. As we go forward, we acknowledge the need for deepening our understanding of diversity and the importance of developing cultural competencies. Openness, curiosity, and creativity are essential building blocks for relationship and community as we come together to create something entirely new.

### “To what are we called?”

***...a new experience in the Spirit that we hope will result from a searching together.... It is this that will enable us to enter into a new vision, which will be that of the whole Society seeking in faith to live out the Easter mystery of death-resurrection in today’s world.***

– Concha Camacho, Former Superior General of the Society of the Sacred Heart, 1972

Having hoped to create an open space for listening, we experienced a strengthening of being One Body inspired by Sophie’s call to us to be “One Heart and One Mind in Christ Jesus.”



Photo courtesy of Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

# together as one heart

*"When you become a member of the Cor Unum Legacy Society by naming the Society in your will, we recognize that your act of generosity is rooted in the sacred trust between you and the Religious of the Sacred Heart." — Suzanne Cooke, RSCJ, Provincial, USC Province*



The Cor Unum Legacy Society honors those individuals who have made a planned gift to the Society of the Sacred Heart so that future generations can carry our mission forward. Please consider a gift to the Cor Unum Legacy Society.

To learn more today about how to become a member of the Cor Unum Legacy Society, please visit [rscj.org/bequests](http://rscj.org/bequests) or call the advancement office at 314-880-0551.





# Artist of the Heart:

## The Gift of Kinue Matsuzaki

By Bridget Bearss, RSCJ and Meg Causey, RSCJ

Short in stature and fierce in determination, Kinue (Anna) Matsuzaki, RSCJ, known as “Matsu,” has traversed life with an artist’s perspective and a faith that could move mountains. Hers is a story of fidelity, courage, steadfast love, and infinite trust in a God of love.

Born the youngest child of Domenico Sergii Matsuzaki and Maria Ura Matsuzaki in 1925 on Kuroshima Island, Japan, Matsu was surrounded by natural beauty on her family’s farm. She had one sister and four brothers, who all played an important role in her life. Each of her brothers was called to military service on behalf of his country. It cost two of them their lives.

At age 12, when her sister left to be married, Matsu took over care of her parents and the farm. She continued doing so until she was 21. In her formative years, in addition to her formal education, she was also a student

of nature and learned flower arrangement from her father. At a young age, she was cultivating seeds to be an artist of the heart. As she made beautiful flower arrangements, she discovered that it was not the similarity, but the diversity that brought the vision to life.

Matsu learned of the Society of the Sacred Heart through her parish priest. He listened deeply to Matsu and recognized in her a unique spirit that matched his understanding of the charism of the Society of the Sacred Heart. When he showed Matsu a picture of Saint Madeleine Sophie and told her the story of the Society, she was filled with joy, recognizing that God was calling her to this group.

In 1947, Matsu’s father accepted his daughter’s desire to pursue religious life. Not without tears, he let go of the expectations he had for her life. Later, Matsu shared



that she understood her father's letting go in love would foreshadow moments that would require her to let go to follow the heart of God.

Without having previously met any Religious of the Sacred Heart, she set out with another young woman related to her sister's husband. They embarked on a 24-hour journey to meet the RSCJ in Obayashi near the city of Osaka. In each step, God's abiding love and her own tenacity kept her faithful.

From the moment she met the Society until today, Sister Matsuzaki has often spoken of the journey of "gift": discovering the gift of vocation, the gift of discernment, the gift of obedience, the gift of speaking her truth, and being a gift to others through living.

Perhaps one of the most poignant moments of "gift" in the life of Kinue Matsuzaki took place in 1962, when she was asked to move to the United States, to be a gift from the Society in Japan to the United States in thanksgiving for all United States religious had provided for the Society in Japan. At that time Matsu had already lost one brother in a war in which Japan and the United States were at odds, and still her family blessed her as she set sail for the United States. They reminded her that she would be a blessing of peace.

Matsu arrived in the United States with little English, but a deep love for beauty, nature, flower arrangements, baking and cooking, and, most of all, an endless love



for the Society of the Sacred Heart. She served briefly at the Convent of the Sacred Heart (91st Street) in New York City and then moved to Kenwood in Albany, New York. She filled the kitchen at Kenwood with aromas that comforted the homesick hearts of many novices and taught them how to make beauty, which did not require grammatical perfection.

After some years, she went to Grosse Pointe, Michigan, just as the Society removed the distinction between the two tiers of membership in the Society. More than one astute Provincial noticed Matsu's remarkable skill in painting and in teaching others to paint from their hearts. With a desire to provide her with the tools for a



new part of life, Matsu's superiors invited her to pursue studies in art at the renowned Center for the Creative Studies (CCS) in Detroit. This pursuit required a new level of proficiency in English, and Matsu took on the challenge of learning English and art with great gusto.

There are stories recounted of Matsu's years at CCS in Detroit when she was still in full RSCJ habit. As part of the school's curriculum, she had to learn to draw the human body, including studio time with models. One story recalls one model seeing Matsu in her habit and becoming distraught, and Matsu simply said, "Don't worry about what you wear or don't wear, I am drawing what I see of your heart."

Matsu was identified as an outstanding artist in her years at CCS. Most impressively, she created a technique of using plastic wrap to create lines and space in watercolors, a method she often incorporated into her paintings.

In her years as an artist, she taught large and small group art classes, gave private lessons, taught art to children, provided art for houses and schools of the Society, and took seriously the development of her own artistic skill. Matsu taught her students that to be in union with the blank canvas and the paint was the only way to create. She understood her art as prayer and revered both. Many young artists learned to value their own work as Matsu valued hers, recognizing it as a gift from God.

In her 100 years of life, from Kuroshima Island to the halls of Oakwood in Atherton, California, where she now resides, Matsu, has lived from a place of passion — the same passion she felt when she first heard the story of Madeleine Sophie Barat from her parish priest. She described that moment as feeling as though her heart opened and nothing felt impossible.

To be with one of Matsu's paintings is to peer into her soul, and there, discover the same fire of love she experienced when gazing at a picture of Madeleine Sophie Barat. How fitting that this year of the 100th anniversary of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat's canonization coincides with the 100th anniversary of the birth of Kinue Matsuzaki, RSCJ, both women who embody giving of self and their gifts in love.





## Words on Matsu

From living with Matsu, I learned what it means to cherish nature and capture its beauty and uniqueness through art. Her gift was sharing this passion with others as a teacher who could help others find this passion in themselves. Mostly, she taught me the meaning of friendship, that it reaches beyond culture and age, and endures. Even through Detroit Tigers baseball games in the freezing cold, she never gave up hope until the last out of the game! And she never gave up telling the managers and umpires how to do their jobs! – Meg Causey, RSCJ



Matsu taught me as her art student to be a student of grace and mystery — to see the canvas as a place of strength that invited me to know that it was fine as it was, but the paint would bring to it perfection, excellence, the colors of God's palette of creation.

She taught me to meet the process of painting and to sit with the canvas so that I became one with it. From there, I could convey some particular feeling without overworking it. She taught me to paint with the canvas, the colors, the water and the space — never against it.

One of the great mysteries she invited me into was to anticipate what the painting would be like in the years ahead, not only in the present moment. She explained to me that I should initially paint about 20% darker than I thought it should be because after the paint is dry for about a year, it lightens up, so the artist needs to count on that.

One day, I was perplexed, trying to imagine what this painting would look like in the future when it had lightened up. Matsu put her hand on my shoulder and said, “Release the burden, Matt. What weighs you down now will be lighter then, just like the paint that changes with the light and the living.” It was much more than a teaching about paint pigment. It was a teaching about life. – Matthew Colonius, student of plants, art and life, Bloomfield Hills, MI

## Art around the world

Matsu's watercolors have been shown at exhibits throughout metropolitan Detroit, at Lotus Gallery in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and on the Pacific Coast at galleries in Santa Barbara and Montecito, California. Her works have been exhibited in numerous juried shows and received “Best in Show” in several of them. Her paintings can be found in many private and public collections throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan. Over a dozen of her paintings are now hanging in the Villa Lante in Rome. Several of her paintings also grace the walls of the USC Provincial Office in St. Louis, Missouri.

# RSCJ Q&A

## Getting to Know Margaret Mwarili, RSCJ

By Erin Everson and Margaret Mwarili, RSCJ

Margaret Mwarili, RSCJ, currently serves as the Society of the Sacred Heart United Nations NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) representative. Sister Mwarili, a native of Kenya, started in this role remotely in January 2023, and she moved to New York to begin her work in-person in May 2023.

### **How did you meet the Society and what inspired you to enter?**

I began my journey with the Society of the Sacred Heart as a postulant in Kenya in 1991 and entered the novitiate in Uganda in 1992.

My calling to the Society of the Sacred Heart has deep roots. I was educated by sisters from my home diocese throughout my formative years and later attended a Franciscan college for a two-year program before formally joining the Society. The sisters I encountered were nurturing and deeply compassionate, treating us with the same care as our own mothers. The Franciscan brothers I met instilled in me a profound respect for creation — earth, animals, and plants alike. Even before attending college, I had expressed interest in joining the Society, having interacted with its members during my primary and secondary education. I was drawn to the genuine love shared by the women I met, the international character of the Society, and the powerful name “Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,” as we are known in Kenya.

### **Can you share about your ministry experience before becoming the Society’s UN-NGO representative?**

As a postulant, I served as an untrained teacher in both a girls’ high school and a coeducational high school, teaching Christian religious education, Kiswahili, and agriculture.



After my first vows, I was assigned to Uganda to teach at one of our girls’ schools. Following my final profession, I returned to Nairobi and became the education coordinator for seven small learning centers within Christ the King Parish in the Kibera informal settlement.

After four years, I assumed leadership as the head of both the parish elementary and high school. Later, I worked with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), as education coordinator of JRS students in a refugee camp, overseeing educational programs for elementary and high school refugee students, connecting gifted students and students with special needs to learning institutions that could answer their needs as well as connecting adult students with the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Subsequently after three years, I moved from the refugee camp to pursue a course in educational management while managing a health center in a rural area in Kenya.

I served as the development office coordinator for the Society's Uganda/Kenya province. In that capacity, I worked on strengthening partnerships between our Ugandan schools and our United States based institutions that provide tuition aid support for our students in Uganda.

I also focused on fundraising efforts for the Society's first school in Kenya, a project that has been under construction since November 2022. In 2023, I was requested by our former superior general to serve as the Society's representative at the United Nations.

#### **Can you describe the Society's UN-NGO mission?**

The Society's UN-NGO contributes to the international policy work at the UN based on the lived reality and analysis of our members and those we work with on the ground in different countries. The office aims to strengthen our advocacy by serving to consolidate on-the-ground educative efforts into more global responses.

UN-NGO collaboration at the international level, within the Society and with other congregations and NGOs, adds a stronger voice for transformation towards justice in the world. We collaborate with other NGOs to champion the rights of women, girls, migrants, Indigenous peoples, and the most vulnerable communities. Through our ministries, we amplify the voices of grassroots populations on a global platform. Essentially, the UN-NGO office serves as a bridge between our local missions and the international community.

#### **What are the core priorities of the Society's UN-NGO?**

Our main goal is to bring the experiences and concerns of marginalized groups into global conversations. We serve on various committees including:

- The NGO Committee on Social Development (social justice and basic needs)
- The NGO Committee on Migration (migrant and refugee rights)
- The NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- The Working Group on Girls (advocacy for girls' rights)
- The Committee of Religious NGOs (environmental and planetary rights)





We also work in partnership with the Justice Coalition of Religious (JCOR) and Religious at the United Nations (RUN) networks to enhance and support these efforts.

### **What aspects of this ministry energize you the most?**

This ministry brings so much vitality to my life. Being at the UN, one must be open to learn so much. I am continually inspired by meeting others who are equally committed to advocating for the marginalized. Through collaboration, I've come to appreciate the collective power of coalitions. NGOs working together create more significant impact by co-hosting events, drafting joint statements, and organizing shared advocacy actions.

I also find great joy in welcoming diverse participants to UN forums. It gives me life especially seeing grassroots representatives who are empowered speak for themselves. Witnessing young girls become their own advocates during the International Day of the Girl each October is incredibly life-giving.

### **Can you share your experience working with young adult and student groups?**

A vital part of my ministry involves raising awareness within the Sacred Heart family about the UN and our ongoing advocacy initiatives. I've facilitated educational sessions at our Sacred Heart schools in Greenwich and New York, as well as online with students from Japan and Manhattanville University.

Young Sacred Heart family members are regularly invited to participate in UN-related events. Each October, our schools from around the world — including schools from the U.S., Peru, Mexico, India, Uganda, Kenya, and Japan — are invited to join in activities for the International Day of the Girl organized by the UN Working Group on Girls. The schools that are involved often share how these experiences have left a lasting impact on their lives and perspectives.

In February, we began expanding opportunities for youth participants to share in the Society's advocacy ministry through an internship program. The office welcomed its first intern this year, a student from France. This initiative will open the door for young people to become involved in the Society's global advocacy work.

Additionally, the office is actively collaborating with SacredHeartDNA, a Society young adult and vocation ministry initiative, offering young people meaningful opportunities to engage in our global mission. One

RSCJ from Poland and a young woman from Mexico, both involved with SacredHeartDNA, attended the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN this past March.

You can find more stories about youth, adolescents, RSCJ and collaborators' involvement in the UN-NGO advocacy work on the JPIC Learning Hub (see QR below).

### **How does your work contribute to the vision of One Body?**

By actively engaging with diverse NGOs through various committees, we build powerful coalitions that operate as a unified voice. Whether it's planning events, authoring statements, or organizing peaceful demonstrations, we act as one body of religious and advocacy groups. We also involve members of the Sacred Heart family in UN forums and training sessions, which builds stronger ties and collective understanding among the Society of the Sacred Heart participants and other participants across global regions.

### **Is there a quote from Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat that inspires your work?**

"For the sake of one child, I would have founded the Society." This quote fuels my commitment to speak out for anyone experiencing injustice. Whether it's one person or many, each life holds infinite value — whether young or old, human or part of our planet. Every voice matters and every cause is worth advocating for.

### **What gives you hope?**

At the UN, several experiences give me hope. Hope is rooted in the unity among NGOs advocating for change. Our collective voice is more powerful than any one organization speaking alone. It's incredibly hopeful to witness empowered individuals — girls, women, Indigenous peoples, and youth — speak out at forums and even address the General Assembly. Despite systemic injustices that take time to dismantle, it gives me hope to see real progress in areas like girls' education, women's rights, and Indigenous advocacy. Every little step forward proves advocacy efforts are not in vain.

To learn more about the UN-NGO Office or to stay up to date on the latest news visit the JPIC Learning Hub.



# Preserving History for Tomorrow

By Caroline Richard, Director of Le Petit Musée and Shrine of Saint John Berchmans in Grand Coteau, Louisiana

The chapel at the Academy of the Sacred Heart (ASH) and Berchmans Academy – Schools of the Sacred Heart – in Grand Coteau recently completed an extensive and necessary rehabilitation. For almost two centuries, the Chapel has been the spiritual heart of the campus and the site for Masses, prayer services, professions of vows, graduations, weddings, and first communions. Almost 30 years after the school's founding in 1821, construction of this chapel began. The work was completed by local tradesmen as well as the enslaved people of the convent. Two unnamed enslaved men, described as beginning their first trade, laid the stone for the foundation in 1850.

In recent years, however, it became apparent that the exterior bricks and mortar were deteriorating at an alarming rate and urgent attention was needed. With a rapid response from alumnae, funds were quickly raised to address Phase 1 of the project,

which required repointing of the bricks and exterior stabilization. Phase 2 addressed interior repairs to the walls and ceilings, refinishing of floors, pews, and choir stalls, and various design updates. With the help of state and local grants, alumnae and alumni support, and donation of funds, time, and talent from so many, the work began to complete this \$1.1 million project.

Starting in 2022 and working alongside historic preservation firms, state agencies, and interior designers, Head of School Yvonne Sandoz Adler, Chaplain Monsignor Keith DeRouen, and Director of Facilities Terril Judice, guided the extensive project to completion in March 2025. Some of the interior restorations include removal of recent plywood paneling in the sanctuary, revealing original architectural details; the construction of an altar using pieces and elements of former gothic altar pieces found in the attic, and the careful rehabilitation of the pews to retain their aged character.

On March 25, 2025, a Mass celebrated by Bishop J. Douglas Deshotel was held to rededicate the chapel and consecrate the new altar. The ceremony began with an outdoor gathering of students, faculty, and staff followed by the opening of the chapel doors by Lynne Lieux, RSCJ, and the procession of the school community.

Sharon Karam, RSCJ, Mary Charlotte Chandler, RSCJ, and Nat Wilburn, head of the Conference of Sacred Heart Education, assisted with the deposition of the relics, and a number of Academy and Berchmans students participated as altar servers, readers, and Eucharistic ministers. An extension and updating of the choir loft provided space for ASH upper and lower school choirs to lend their talents as well as individual musical contributions from Berchmans Academy. The school community was extremely eager and thankful to return to the chapel with this beautiful celebration of its sacred space.



# Consecrating a New Altar

By Mary Charlotte Chandler, RSCJ, Assistant Archivist for the Society of the Sacred Heart USC Province

During the Consecration of the new altar at the Schools of the Sacred Heart in Grand Coteau, the Bishop reverently placed relics of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne and Saint John Berchmans in an aperture in the altar. The aperture was then sealed with a clear cover so that the relics would remain visible. The altar and sanctuary were prepared festively for Eucharist with cloth, flowers and candles.

The altar holds great meaning in a Catholic Church. It is not only the Lord's table, the centerpiece of the celebration of the Eucharist, but also a symbol of Christ himself. Because of its significance, when a church has a new altar, it is specially consecrated before being used. The ritual of consecrating an altar dedicates the altar to God and sets it aside solely for the Eucharistic Banquet. This ritual has many steps and is rich in imagery.

## Depositing of the Relics

After the congregation prays the Litany of the Saints, the relics of a few saints are placed beneath or in the altar. These saints have lived a life of faith and are examples to all who have been baptized.

## Prayer of Dedication

This prayer expresses our desire to dedicate the altar to the Lord for all times. It also asks Our Lord's blessing on all who gather around the "Table of the Altar" and for God's grace on all people.

## The Rites of Anointing, Incensing, Covering and Lighting the Altar

These rites express in visible signs several aspects of the invisible work the Lord accomplishes through the Church in its celebrations, especially the Eucharist.

The altar is anointed with chrism, the same chrism used to anoint those receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation or Holy Orders. Anointing the altar with chrism makes the altar a symbol of Christ himself, "The Anointed One," who as High Priest, on this altar of his body, offers the sacrifice of his life for the salvation of all.

The newly anointed altar as well as the people gathered are then incensed. The rising of the incense signifies Christ's sacrifice and the people's prayers ascending to God.

The altar is covered with a cloth and prepared for the Eucharist signifying that it is the Lord's table at which God's people joyously meet to be refreshed with divine food, the Body and Blood of Christ.

The candles on the altar and in the church are then lit from the Paschal Candle, which was blessed at the Easter Vigil, symbolizing the Light of Christ. This action signifies Christ's light shining out to the Church and through the Church to the whole human family.

Once the altar has been consecrated, priests saying Mass will bow and kiss the altar as a sign of reverence and to honor the altar as a symbol of Christ. Those in the congregation passing in front of the altar bow for the same reason. This consecrated altar now stands in the people's midst as a visible sign of Christ in our midst.



Photos courtesy of Schools of the Sacred Heart in Grand Coteau.

# My Aspiring Leader Journey

By Soline Holmes, Network Aspiring Leaders, Cohort 1 member; Preschool/Lower School Librarian and Information Services Department Chair at Academy of the Sacred Heart “The Rosary” in New Orleans; alumna of The Rosary, class of 1998

Just as Rose Philippine Duchesne journeyed to new territories, when I was selected for the first cohort of the Network of Sacred Heart Schools’ Aspiring Leaders program, I began a journey — physically (to other Sacred Heart school campuses) as well as spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally. In the summer of 2022, I received an email notifying me that I had been accepted into the first cohort of the Aspiring Leaders Program. I knew that my division head and our head of school had recommended me for this inaugural program, and while I had taken on leadership roles in my time as an educator at the Academy of the Sacred Heart (and in the local and national library world), I was surprised that as the preschool/lower school librarian, I had been selected as an “Aspiring Leader.”

At the start of my journey, I did what librarians do best — I researched. The Aspiring Leaders program provides participants with the opportunity to meet and network with other Sacred Heart leaders and offers a means to reflect on personal gifts recognized as desired leadership qualities in the Network. The program is a two-year commitment and involves the aspiring leaders, mentors, and facilitators meeting in-person and online. The cohort included a representative from each Network school, and each of us was paired with one of 12 mentors — educators and administrators from Sacred Heart schools. Between in-person cohort meetings, we met with our mentors via Zoom. I felt lucky to be paired with Charlotte LaHaye of neighboring Grand Coteau, so we were able to hold some of these meetings in person!

Guided by the Holy Spirit and, in the spirit of Saint Madeleine Sophie, of course, I said “yes” to this journey. Though I was a little nervous and did not know what to expect, with courage and confidence, I traveled to our first meeting at St. Philomena School of the Sacred Heart in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, in September 2022. This and each meeting, after had a designated theme/topic. At the first meeting we discussed “Identity and Calling as a Sacred Heart Leader and the Mission of Sacred Heart Education.” I learned so much about the

*“You have been chosen to a kind of apostleship: a mission that is great, noble and divine.”*

– Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat

Network and myself. The activity that stuck with me was the cohort gathering to reflect on the skills that make us good leaders and any challenges or vulnerabilities that hold us back as leaders. We were prompted to think of a leader in our own lives and identify one word to describe them. We were also asked to share these words out loud so that we could own them.

Just as Saint Madeleine Sophie said that she would have founded the Society “for the sake of an Ofelia,” we identified one student for whom we carry out the mission of the Sacred Heart. We wrote the student’s name on a post-it note, read it out loud, and then placed it on a large posterboard marked with a heart. This activity helped me think about the inherent dignity of each individual student, and I still feel a special connection with my “Ofelia.”

Our Aspiring Leaders journey continued virtually with sessions every couple of months, during which we heard from Network leaders, including heads of schools and Religious of the Sacred Heart. I was amazed to hear the personal stories and wisdom of these individuals. At every meeting, we were given ample time for reflection, contemplation, and discussion. It was a true gift to learn more about discernment, Sacred Heart identity, courage and vulnerability, and the Society of the Sacred Heart Chapter Calls — and to have time to reflect on and discuss these topics with other Sacred Heart educators.

At our November 2023 meeting, we gathered for a retreat at the Pallotine Renewal Center in Florissant, Missouri. This time was special, allowing us to be together and build on our numerous experiences from Zoom. I had made many amazing connections



throughout the program, but one dinner during the retreat stands out in my mind. During a conversation with a colleague from Grand Coteau, we wondered why our schools did not collaborate more. This conversation, and friendship, led to the start of a partnership between my elementary students and the fourth grade class at Schools of the Sacred Heart in Grand Coteau. Our schools are about a two-and-a-half-hour drive from each other, so since that time at Pallotine, we have hosted an exchange that allows students from each school to visit each other. More recently, through another program connection, I organized a discussion about gardens with second grade students at my school and with high school students at Duchesne Academy in Omaha, Nebraska.

Another aspect of the Aspiring Leaders program that I treasure is our “Coeur Companion.” Each leader is paired with an RSCJ and encouraged to talk regularly via phone, Zoom, or text. I was so touched to learn that one leader and her Coeur Companion texted each other every day. Having this one-on-one time and getting to know a Religious of the Sacred Heart was very important to me as an educator and as a person. I treasure my conversations with Jane McKinlay, RSCJ, with whom I keep in touch today.

In April 2024, I experienced my second graduation from Sacred Heart when I graduated from the Aspiring Leaders program at our in-person meeting in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Lynne Lieux, RSCJ, who had been my high school principal at The Rosary, is the only person in my life to have attended both of my Sacred Heart graduations.

I was sad when my time in the program came to a close, but I was delighted when I was invited to be a member of the Aspiring Leaders Planning Committee. It has been a joy to be a member of the committee along with Sheila Haggas, Jane Steinfels (Chicago), Wallace MacAskill (Halifax), Kate Spelman (Newton), and Paola Consuegra

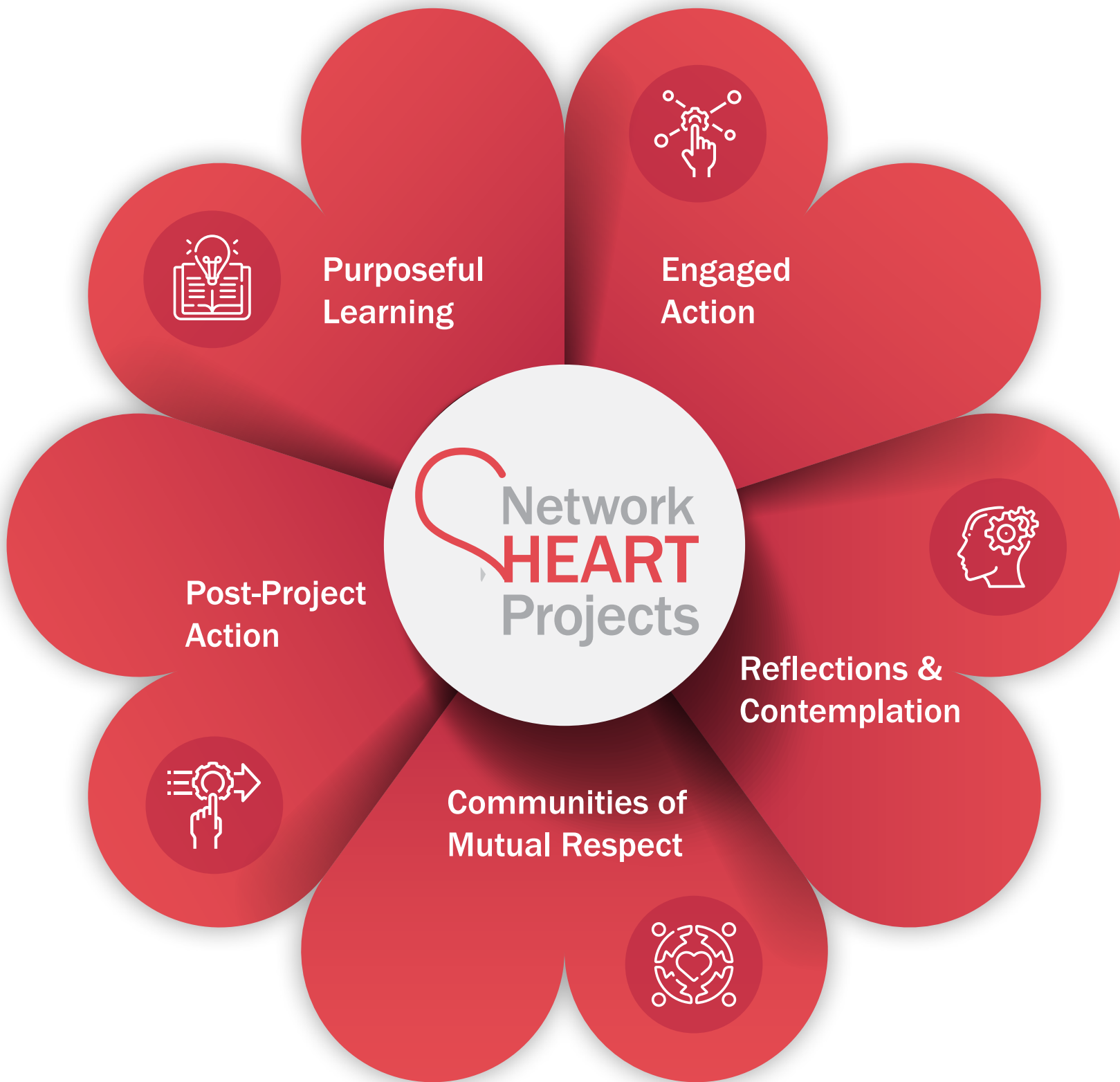


(Miami). I love now being able to share with other members of the Sacred Heart community the activities and reflections that had been meaningful to me.

At the start of the program, we were each given a red journal. In it, I kept all my notes along with an oak leaf that I found on a hiking trail at the Pallotine Renewal Center. I keep this notebook on my desk now and refer to it daily as it holds the many lessons I learned as an Aspiring Leader.

When I started this journey, I did not know how life-changing it would be. Not only did I make lifelong friends and connections and learn more about being a leader, but I also experienced it all through the Sacred Heart charism, following in the footsteps of Saint Madeleine Sophie and Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne.

This program has been integral to my life both personally and as an educator of the Sacred Heart. The Aspiring Leaders program reinforced that the Sacred Heart Network is truly a family. I have deepened my relationships with RSCJ, and I know that I always have someone to reach out to within the Network whenever I have a question or need guidance. It also helped me know that even if I do not know someone closely, a phone call or email to a fellow educator in the Network is always welcome. I am so grateful to the Network for the Aspiring Leaders program, and I look forward to continuing this amazing journey on the committee.



# Reimagining Summer Service: Introducing Network **HEART** Projects

By Amanda Codina, Director of Student Programs and Special Initiatives for the Network of Sacred Heart Schools

Last year, the Network of Sacred Heart Schools announced a purposeful pause of its longstanding Summer Service Projects, initiating a comprehensive re-evaluation rooted in our commitment to educate students to a “social awareness that impels to action.” This strategic reflection affirms the Network’s dedication to immersive, transformative learning experiences that serve the common good and foster lifelong commitments to justice.

To guide this re-envisioning, the Network convened a task force composed of eleven Sacred Heart educators and members of the Network Office (listed below). Their charge was to assess and revitalize these programs to align with the 2020 *Goals and Criteria* — particularly Goal III, which calls us to educate students to analyze systems that perpetuate injustices in our world and to engage in actions rooted in integrity, fostering informed, active citizenship and civic responsibility.

Over eight months, the task force engaged in various conversations with constituents from across the Network, reviewed pivotal Sacred Heart documents, and researched other organizational models. In March 2025, the group gathered at Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart in Omaha, Nebraska, to bring all their work to life.

The result of this process is the launch of Network HEART Projects — Holistic Engagement through the Active Reflection of Truth. More than just a new name, these projects represent a renewed vision. Rooted in the *Goals and Criteria* and guided by Catholic Social Teaching and the Sacred Heart Way, HEART Projects offer immersive experiences that cultivate personal reflection, genuine community engagement, and informed, purposeful action.

At the core of these redesigned projects is a strong educational framework with five key components:

## Network HEART Projects Task Force Members

### **MEG CAUSEY, RSCJ**

Consultant for Social Justice & Catholic Social Teaching, Network of Sacred Heart Schools

### **MICHAEL CHUNG**

Director of Community Outreach, Convent of the Sacred Heart, New York, New York

### **AMANDA CODINA**

Director of Student Programs & Special Initiatives, Network of Sacred Heart Schools

### **SHEILA HAGGAS**

Executive Director, Network of Sacred Heart Schools

### **KRISTIN LAGERQUIST**

Academic Program Support Associate, Sacred Heart Schools, Chicago, Illinois

### **MICHAEL MAIDA**

Upper School Mathematics Teacher, Sacred Heart Greenwich, Greenwich, Connecticut

### **KATRINA PIERCE**

Music Director, Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, Omaha, Nebraska

### **CORINA RAHMIG**

Upper School Academic Dean, Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, Bellevue, Washington

### **JEANNIE STEENBERGE**

Service Learning Coordinator, Villa Duchesne School of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, Missouri

### **KATE TREMARCHE**

Math Teacher & Head of Service Committee, Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart, Newton, Massachusetts

### **KATIE WHITE**

Director of Social Action, Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, Bethesda, Maryland



- **Purposeful Learning:**  
Grounded in careful analysis that fosters awareness and informed decision-making;
- **Engaged Action:**  
Moving beyond theoretical learning into meaningful engagement that prioritizes partnership and reciprocity over charity;
- **Reflection and Contemplation:**  
Daily, integrated time to allow students to examine their experiences and discern their role in addressing social injustices;
- **Communities of Mutual Respect:**  
Spaces where expectations are clear, and learning and joy are embraced;
- **Post-Project Action:**  
Dedicated time during the program for students to reflect on their learning and collaborate on designing an action project that encourages continued participation.

This reimagined structure is meant to inspire action and form individuals of integrity who lead with empathy and conviction. The re-envisioned HEART projects are intended to foster continuity and collaboration across the Network.

To expand access and impact, the Network has established three project models:

#### **1. Legacy Projects:**

Traditional, school-hosted programs open to Network participants;

#### **2. Collective Change Projects:**

Collaborative, multi-school partnerships that use an existing program as the foundation for multiple schools to expand the project together;

#### **3. Established Impact Projects:**

Existing school programs that open selective spots to Network participants.

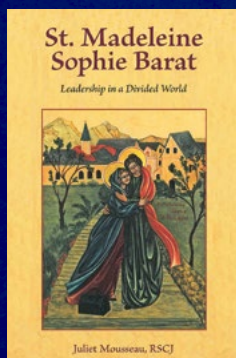
The task force believes that these various models will help promote continuity, as well as encourage deeper collaboration among our school communities and expand offerings.

The Network Office is deeply grateful to the members of the task force and proud of the newly re-envisioned Network HEART Projects, which are not simply a revamped program. These re-envisioned projects reflect Saint Madeleine Sophie's vision of education as a means to transform both individuals and society through the integration of contemplation, learning, truth, and a recognition of the human dignity of all. Rooted in the charism of the Society of the Sacred Heart, these projects affirm our commitment to forming students who engage their communities with courage, compassion, and purposeful action in response to the urgent needs of our world.

The task force will continue its work by bringing this re-envisioning to life and encouraging collaboration, participation, and partnership!

# Suggested Reading

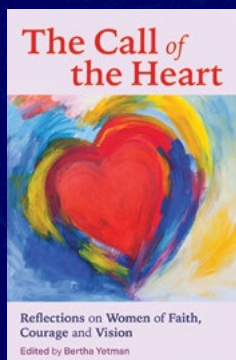
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## ***St. Madeleine Sophie Barat: Leadership in a Divided World***

**By Juliet Mousseau, RSCJ**

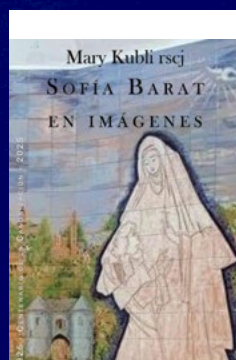
Following the conflict and violence of the French Revolution, Madeleine Sophie Barat founded the Society of the Sacred Heart, now an international religious organization. This biography draws on accounts by Madeleine Sophie Barat's contemporaries and the many letters she wrote, most of which have not been translated before, to tell the story of a woman confronting division with personal integrity and love.



## ***The Call of the Heart: Reflections on Women of Faith, Courage and Vision***

**Edited by Bertha Yetman**

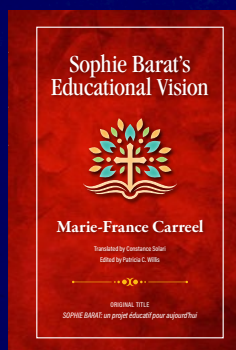
The contributing authors to *The Call of the Heart: Reflections on Women of Faith, Courage and Vision* focus on how religious and lay women — including Margie Conroy, RSCJ — broke down social-political barriers and were at the forefront of causes for education, justice, and charity, or in their prayerful silence, helped shrink distances in a broken world. This book features a chapter on Sister Conroy.



## ***Sofía Barat en imágenes (Spanish)***

**By Mary Kubli, RSCJ**

Sister Kubli of the Society of the Sacred Heart Argentina-Uruguay Province has generously shared a PDF version of her book online. The book features a compilation of Sophie images so that her legacy may be accessible to all. You can view or download the book in Spanish on the RSCJ International website.



## ***Sophie Barat's Educational Vision***

**By Marie-France Carreel, RSCJ**

During research for a doctorate in education, Marie-France Carreel, RSCJ, discovered the first plan of study of the Society of the Sacred Heart, formulated in 1804 in Amiens, France, where the first school was located. The book traces the development of Sacred Heart education, ending by showing that the *Goals and Criteria* are the latest expression of Saint Madeleine Sophie's educational intuition.

# Share Your Hearts

For almost two decades, hearts in nature graced the front cover of *Heart* magazine. To pay homage to this original concept, we share hearts photographed by members of our Sacred Heart family.

Submissions can be sent to [editor@rscj.org](mailto:editor@rscj.org).

## Heart With a Story

**RICK BRIA** | ASTRONOMY TECHNICIAN AT SACRED HEART GREENWICH

When asked about the process used to capture the image, Rick writes:

"I attached a Canon 60Da DSLR camera to a 76mm diameter refractor telescope. (It is the small white and black telescope on top of the main reflecting telescope in the picture) I took 16-four-minute exposures of the Heart Nebula. The telescope tracked the Heart Nebula, counteracting the Earth's rotation, during the 16 exposures. The resulting 16 images were digitally combined and processed in PixInsight software. PixInsight is designed for astronomical images. Typically processing astronomical images in PixInsight takes several hours to several days, depending on the object being imaged.

There are countless YouTube videos on how to process astronomical images. Although it is difficult at times, the beauty of God's universe compels me to make the effort. As an astronomy tech, I am blessed to have access to the Aloysia Hardey Observatory at Sacred Heart Greenwich."



### Credits from left to right:

(left) Photo taken in Newport, Rhode Island, by Tomás Ribera, a participant in the Planting a Seed for Success (PASS) adult employment preparation program co-facilitated by Kathy McGrath, RSCJ.

(middle left) Photo by Monica Williams, alumna of Manhattanville, class of 1968.

(middle right) Photo taken on a hiking retreat in Nova Scotia by Ellyn Stewart, Director of Media Studies, Design & Innovation at Sacred Heart Greenwich in Greenwich, Connecticut.

(right) Photo by Anil Adyanthaya, parent of a student at Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart in Newton, Massachusetts.



## **CELEBRATING SOPHIE: 100 Years of Sainthood**

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the canonization of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart, the United States – Canada Province shared 25 video reflections from members of the Sacred Heart family from across the USC Province.

The USC Province Associates brought this series together for the benefit of the entire Sacred Heart family.



## **Timeline on Sophie's Life**

RSCJ International created an interactive timeline of the different phases of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat's life, the early history of the Society, and Madeleine Sophie's enduring legacy. The timeline was created with the help of Phil Kilroy, RSCJ, and the General Archives in Rome. It is available in English, Spanish and French.



## **FROM THE ARCHIVES: Digital Display on Sophie's Canonization**

The United States – Canada Province archives shares a digital version of its display about the canonization of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat in 1925.





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United States – Canada

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