

## Province Assembly/Chapter 2017



Photo: Sister Marie Cooper

L-R Front Row: Sisters Maria Rocha, Anne Marie Liston, Marie Yannick Saïeh, Ena Maguire, and Rachel Racine.

L-R Back Row: Sisters Marie Cooper, Luke Parker, Josephine St. Leger, Eugenia Brady, Mary Patrice Watson, Mary Josephine Glynn, and Genevieve Marie Vigil.

Sister Anne Marie Liston

I am not really sure why we call it an assembly/chapter as it seems that we packed enough work into it to make it a “book” or at least a “novella.” Nevertheless, we filled our vehicles with all the necessary instruments for our work one sunny, Sunday afternoon at the beginning of October and headed for the Miramar Retreat House of the Society of the Divine Word/ Chicago Province located in Duxbury,

Massachusetts. Like ourselves they are an international order of missionaries and several of us have had the opportunity to make retreats there previously. It is situated on a hilltop amid lovely gardens and walking areas, and not too far from the ocean. Unfortunately we had to take these on faith, for we did not have too much time for scenic viewing. When Clunys work, they work!

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Thank you.

**T**he last issue was written on a balmy day in summer..... Oh! How the weather changes in New England! As I look out the window I see piles of snow two or three feet high, (parked conveniently to block garage doors or bury trash cans) and the temperature this afternoon has moved from 0 degrees to a heartening 9 degrees! It certainly is promising to be a challenging winter for 2018!

We thank so many of you who sent e-mails or notes of condolence on the loss of Sr. Regina last year and the subsequent closing of Cluny School in June. The school property remains much the same, so I guess there are no buyers yet. I resist the temptation to stop and pick flowers when I pass it in the car or peek in the windows....just to satisfy my curiosity.

The year was full with the planning for our Assembly/Chapter in October and the coming General Chapter in Paris. Some of our dearest friends have left us for the mansions above and on the local level we have seen more building of hotels and more restaurants than ever! Newport is the biggest small town! While the media and big city papers debate the ever present confusion of the federal government, we keep on top of the things that really matter...plastic bags? Yes or No. Not enough free space for dog walking? The coyotes are taking over Bellevue Ave, and should cats be licensed? Don't tell me you are using plastic bags for shopping!!!! Horrors!

Truthfully, all these things, little and big are important to someone and to our planet and we muddle through them little by little in pursuit of a better world for all. May the Good Lord look on us with kindness and grant that 2018 might bring us just a bit closer to the kind of world He wants us to have.

Sister Anne Marie

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# Putting an End to Gun Violence: God's Work Must Be Our Own

Sister Anne Marie Liston

**O**n Ash Wednesday, as I walked into our community room, I heard the TV commentators broadcasting from Parkland, Florida. I remember thinking, "Dear Lord, not another school shooting!" Of course, it was, and as I sat and watched I felt not only horror, but shame that my reaction was "another school shooting." We have experienced these unspeakable tragedies so often, that it seems like we are becoming numb to their occurrence.

Our little Cluny School closed, as most of you probably know, last June. As sad as I was to see that day, I find myself grateful that in Cluny School that kind of tragedy couldn't happen now.

As a former teacher I can only imagine the terror that must have filled the hearts of those teachers as they realized what was happening and that they were the "protectors." We know now that some of them gave their lives, and still, too many of those young people didn't make it out.

Indeed we pray and remember all of them and voice our dismay and our need to change things, but as the

young people across the country are telling us, that is not enough.

As a religious I know that prayer is all powerful and that a benevolent God hears us and wants to help us but maybe he wants more. Those young people in Tallahassee, Washington, DC and other cities are showing us that it is time to make our voices heard as they are doing.

Can we write a letter? Can we call a representative or senator and tell them how we feel? We have the greatest advantage of any generation when it comes to information and communication. Send an e-mail, communicate with others, call some friends and share ideas. Watching the news on TV or listening to the talk shows isn't enough, we can, so easily be misled by our own bias and prejudice.

And so, we ask for discernment and guidance from above, remembering that here on earth, "God's work must be our own."

## Other Social Justice Issues

**FACT:** The Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus has gone into history. While, as a child, I loved the excitement of seeing the circus in Madison Square Garden, I now realize the entertainment came at a great price for many of those animals. May we find better ways to teach our children about the glorious creatures God has given to the world. (PETA)

*Note: The Province of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny (USA/Canada), as part of its commitment to social justice, to earth and its creatures, subscribes to and supports several organizations who share their struggles for a better world through their literature. For further information on these topics please contact the editor.*

## Assembly/Chapter (Continued from Page 1)

Our facilitator, Sister Constance Gilder, a Sister of St. Joseph of Chestnut Hill, was adept at keeping us on track and the work progressed smoothly. Interspersed with our discussions and reports we celebrated inspiring prayer services designed especially for our chapter by the sisters who worked on the committee, celebrated the Eucharist each day with Father Joe Bisson, enjoyed the delicious meals provided by the staff, and for the hardier souls found time to practice their skills at Phase TEN (a card game).

Wherever we are, and whatever the task assigned we always find time to get together and laugh, and share, and build the "cor unum" that marks us as Clunys. These are the moments we remember the best and we are grateful for the time we have together. Hopefully our efforts will bear fruit for the General Chapter in May and we pray that all our sisters gathered from the four corners of the globe will experience the same.

# In Memoriam Cluny Affiliates

*Laypersons who are given a spiritual affiliation to the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny have been recognized as long time friends who have shared their time, talent and treasure in support of the Cluny mission in the world. They share in the good works and prayers of the sisters, in life and in death. During the past year, we were saddened by the loss of the following four North American affiliates we honor here.*

## Barbara Marasco Affiliate of India

Born into this life August 31, 1934  
Born into eternity April 1, 2017

In the words of Ron, her loving husband of 63 years, “Her life was a loving witness for our six children and nine adult grandchildren, on the beauty of family, from their beloved wife, mother and grandmother whose caring selfless love radiated through her quiet, loving demeanor. She epitomized the words of St. Paul, that *love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, it is not self-seeking.*”

## Antero Viveiros Affiliate of USA and Canada

Born into eternity: May 12, 2017

Antero and his loving wife Zelia, who pre-deceased him, were long-time friends and supporters of Cluny Sisters in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. He was an active member of St. Mary Parish, Hamilton. He died on the 210th anniversary of the foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny.

## Ernie Mitchell Affiliate of India

Born into this life: October 31, 1922  
Born into eternity: September 23, 2017

Ernie Mitchell was a long-time friend, supporter and Cluny Affiliate of Lavinia House in Calcutta. It has been said of him, “You seldom meet someone like Ernie Mitchell, and when you do, you’re unlikely to forget him.” Outgoing and vivacious, Ernie got to know almost everyone in Ave Maria, Florida. His faith was expressed in the way he lived, always welcoming and ready to help others. He is survived by his loving wife, Mary.

## Jerome Anthony “Jerry” O’Connor Affiliate of USA and Canada

Born into this life: 1917  
Born into eternity: August 22, 2017

Jerry O’Connor, who was pre-deceased by his loving wife and Cluny Affiliate, Pauline, personified the values of perseverance, sacrifice, self-discipline and hard work. His faith sustained him through all of his life and brought him comfort at the end. The O’Connors were both long-time friends and supports of our sisters in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

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## Books

Sister Anne Marie Liston

Did you get any good books in your Christmas stocking? In Iceland, everyone gives and receives books for Christmas and then they spend the holidays reading . . . a great occupation for those long winter evenings!

I received a few books, and although I haven’t read all of them to the end yet, I am looking forward to the opportunity. They are: *You’ll Never Be Younger*, by W. O’Malley, *Faith and Resistance in the Age of Trump*, Edited by M. De LaTorre, and Chris Matthews’ book on Robert Kennedy, *A Raging Spirit*.

If you have read something you would like to share, why not e-mail me and tell me about it? We would like to hear from our readers!

# In Memoriam

## Sister Joseph Edwards

Sister Marie Cooper

**B**orn on April 18, 1916, Norah Edwards would travel the world as a missionary as she traveled in time for over a century. Born in Lawn, Newfoundland, our Sister Joseph grew up in a warm family with her parents, Norah and Andrew, who were strong in the faith they passed on to their children. Norah was attuned to the workings of the Spirit at a young age, and after meeting her cousin, who was a religious, she felt attracted to religious life in distant missions.

When she left school, Norah first went to work near home, earning \$5.00 a month, as it was during the depression years. Seeking a better job, she went to the French Island of St. Pierre, off the Newfoundland coast. There, she not only succeeded in getting a better paying job at the post office, she also met the Cluny Sisters. Through her association with these expansive and welcoming women, Norah discerned her vocation to Cluny, and looked forward to serving in far distant missions.

At 20 years of age Norah bid farewell to her family, and set out for the Cluny Central Novitiate in Paris, France. In her memoirs she wrote, "It was exciting to meet all the different nationalities all animated by the same ideal, all striving to acquire the spirit of our foundress, Anne Marie Javouhey. Whenever missionary sisters arrived in the Mother House from Africa, Madagascar, the South Seas or elsewhere they would come to the Novitiate and we would eagerly listen to their interesting stories. We all longed to go and join in these distant apostolates."

On March 20, 1939, Sister Joseph pronounced her first vows, and later that day, all the newly professed sisters came together with the General Superior and the councilors to receive their first mission. She remembered it well: "When my turn came I was told I was going to Chandernagore. I thought to myself, Dear Lord, that must be in Brittany, and I was just longing to go to the foreign missions! As we shared the sign of peace, one of the counsellors said to me, 'you know, you will be very near to Calcutta,' and then my heart jumped for joy as then I knew I was being sent to India."



Photo: Sr. Marie Cooper

**Sister Joseph of Our Lady Edwards**  
Born into this life April 18, 1916  
Religious Profession March 20, 1939  
Born into eternity November 2, 2017

Sister Joseph served in India for twelve years, where she loved her ministry. When the climate took a toll on her health, she went back to the Mother House to recuperate. After a few months, she was missioned to the United States, serving briefly in Rhode Island and then at St. Joseph's Home for Boys in Philadelphia, PA where she endeared herself to the boys, who lovingly called her "Mama Joe", for 23 years.

When St. Joseph's Home closed in 1976, Sister Joseph came back to Rhode Island serving in Stella Maris, Newport, and then as secretary to the Vicar for Religious of the Diocese of Providence until her retirement. In 2006, after an illness, Sister Joseph moved to St. Clare Home in Newport, which became her home for 11 years.

Over the years, Sister Joseph kept in touch with many of the boys who lived at St. Joseph Home and remembered them always in her prayer intentions. When many of us gathered in 2016 on occasion of her 100th Birthday, some of her "boys" joined in the celebration. Her heart was still full of gratitude for the gift of her missionary vocation and those she was privileged to serve.

Sister Joseph was not only our "matriarch", she was a faithful, prayerful religious and loving community member: she is deeply missed!



# Cluny Sisters in Papua New Guinea Celebrating 25 Years at Bema Catholic High School

Sister Josephine O'Kelly  
Province of Australia/Papua New Guinea

If you look for Kaintiba, Papua New Guinea (PNG) on Google Maps, you will be led to a government outpost in the mountains of the Gulf Province. There are no roads in the area, so access is on foot over mountainous tracks, or by a small plane. A thousand feet higher, along a narrow bush track is Bema Catholic Church, surrounded by a primary school, a high school, and a clinic, along with accommodation buildings for students, staff and missionaries.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny have been responsible for the high school for twenty-five years, and during these years many students have graduated, going on to tertiary studies and various occupations.

But what is remarkable is that these students come from villages where their families live where traditional subsistence agriculture is the only means of livelihood, supplemented at times from the sale of coffee. As there are no roads, the only way to get to school is on foot—maybe a walk of two or three days. Thus, the majority of students are boarders.

For some years, a tractor and trailer brought in by helicopter made the journey from Bema to the airstrip at Kaintiba to pick up building materials and supplies,



Sister Joyeeta and her class

Photos: Sister Gina Delmar

but over the years, landslides and broken bridges, along with the demise of the tractor, have brought this means of transport to an end.

But this does not prevent the school from functioning. At the weekend, some of the students walk over the mountains to a trade store and bring back supplies of canned fish and rice for the kitchen. They are paid, and their income goes towards the paying of their school fees. Such a commitment to their own education indicates their for learning, and their willingness to be involved in it.

*Cluny Connections* congratulates the sisters and students of Bema, and wishes them many more years of growth, academic success, and improved access!



Bema High School nestled in the hillside



Sister Annette

# The Cluny Circle of Love

## Update: The Whitesville Food Pantry

Sister Anne Marie Liston

*Although we are not as numerous in this province as we were in the past, as Clunys we try to leave lasting footprints through the various works and missions in which we were involved. Financially, as a Province, through our Circle of Love, we try our best to support some of the works which have been taken over by lay people, or other religious groups, and do all we can to encourage others to aid them.*



Stan Pauley with clients outside the Food Pantry

One of the works in our Circle of Love is the Food Pantry in Whitesville, West Virginia. Whitesville was once a prosperous mining town back in the '50s but today struggles to survive. In 1986, when Sister Marie Cooper and Sister Pius Moore were part of the mission team for St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church in Whitesville, together with the leadership of the Church of God of Prophecy of Sylvester and the Clear Creek Presbyterian Church, they were able to help local people establish Helping Hands, a small storefront center on the main street which gave residents a place to obtain "gently used" items of clothing, appliances and other necessities, and assist with food and emergency assistance. One of the volunteers at that time, was Sue Pauley, a resident of Whitesville, and a woman of great determination and compassion for her neighbors. When "Helping Hands" closed a few years later, the Cluny Sisters hired Sue to run a food pantry which would distribute food monthly to families in the area. With

Sue, thankfully, came an extra gift, "Stan", her husband, a former mine worker, who despite his medical disability lost no time figuring out ways to make the project work. Aided by United Way, Mountain Food Bank, the Clunys and many generous souls across the country the food pantry began in the basement of St. Joseph's Church. When we left Whitesville, Catholic Community Services took over sponsorship, but we continue to contribute financially each year. A few years ago, the food pantry offices expanded to an unused school in nearby Raleigh County to help more people. It still continues providing food and many other things to help the people of this area.

As you can see by the pictures, Sue and Stan are still hard at work with their neighbors and clients as they live out the words, "I was hungry, you gave me to eat".

Thank you, Sue and Stan, for the pictures, but most of all for the inspiration you give all of us. We are so proud of you!



Sue Pauley and a volunteer with a delivery of fresh fruit - Yum!

Photos: Sue Pauley



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## Sister Josephine St. Leger Honored by St. Augustin Parish

Sister Anne Marie Liston

On October 22, 2017 parishioners of St. Augustin Parish, Newport, RI gathered for an “Irish High Tea” in the spacious hall of Ochre Court, at Salve Regina University to say thank you to Sister Josephine St. Leger for her many years of dedicated service to the Parish. Father Kris von Maluski, the pastor (whom we share with St. Mary’s) realizing how valuable she is to all of us wanted an opportunity for a special gathering. The day was beautiful, and of course, the setting was perfect.

Sr. Josephine was delighted to meet so many old friends, and new ones too, and we were happy to have her niece, Martina, from Syracuse to celebrate with us.

God bless you, Sr. Josephine, for all you have done for us and continue to do so well in our little “Fifth Ward”.



Photo: Sister Marie Cooper

**Parishioner Karen Flanagan and Sister Josephine**

Please remember the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in your will. Thank you.