



*The deepest cause of the present devastation is found in a mode of consciousness that has established a radical discontinuity between the human and other modes of being and the bestowal of all rights on the humans.* Thomas Berry

For Father Thomas Berry, CP our alienation from the earth is what has led to our human audacity in exploiting all other communities in the universe to our own ends. But the prophetic voices of people like Berry are finally awakening us to the need for a new approach to Mother Earth. Today, for a growing number of people, the greening of our planet is no longer considered just an “in” trend but rather an absolute must for our survival. Humans are not above all other earth communities. We are one with them, sharing in the life systems that keep us all a’live. The God who created us, created us to live in sustainable harmony with one another.

The young farm girl who founded the Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny at the beginning of the 19th century understood this well. She was born into a love of the earth. Having grown up in the rich farm country of Burgundy, the land

was sacred to her. Respect for the earth taught her respect for the human person and she came to see them as inseparable. She understood that violating the one makes it easy to violate the other. How often we have witnessed the truth of this in our own day!

Blessed Anne-Marie Javouhey responded to the request of the French government to prepare former African slaves and Africans rescued from slave ships on the high seas for a place in society as free persons. Harmony with nature formed an intrinsic element of her vision for a sustainable future for their future. She was also convinced that as the former slaves worked the soil, developing again a relationship with the source of their being and sustenance, healing would come to these wounded and battered human beings. Anne-Marie’s enterprise in Mana, French Guiana was so successful because she understood that participation in the rhythm of preparing the soil,



The mayor of Chamblanc, where Anne Marie grew up welcoming all on the occasion of the celebration. On his left, members of the delegation from Mana: descendants of those Anne Marie led to freedom, and members of the Hmong community who were welcomed by the people of Mana decades ago.

## Living in Tune with All of Creation (Continued)

planting the seed, and reaping the harvest would allow them to rediscover their true place in the universe and the God who created all things. Over time, they were renewed, re-humanized, reborn, becoming the foundation of a healthy society that continues to this day.

Following in the same spirit, on the occasion of the recognition of Blessed Anne Marie as a liberator of slaves and induction into the society of those recognized for advancing the “Route of the Abolition of Slavery”, descendants of those whom she freed planted trees in memory of their ancestors.

Rootedness in the earth is part of the spirituality Blessed Anne-Marie bequeathed to us. Visits to the sources, the initial foundations she made, reveal buildings set on land that can be planted. It was important to her that there be arable land even around the Mother House in the middle of Paris. Here the sisters raised vegetables for the table and beautiful flowers for the sanctuary. These gardens exist to this day.

But the bounty the earth provides was not its only attraction for Anne-Marie. When she was denied the sacraments for a period of two years, her temple became the forest. Here she celebrated a spiritual Eucharist, communing with the God who came to her in the silent forests of Mana. She was always loathe to speak of her experience of God, but she did allude once or twice to the wonders of God revealed to her there.

Were she alive today, she would be proclaiming the oneness of all creation from the rooftops! She would see our drifting away from intimacy with the earth to be the source of modern-day violence. She would urge us to turn again to nature to heal that ruptured relationship created by forces of a consume-society with its belief that all of creation is for human benefit alone. And having led us back to living in respectful harmony with the earth and one another, she would lead us to a renewed relationship with the Creator, the Source of all being, Mother and Father of us all!



**Planting of the memorial forests in 2011**



**A memorial marker for each of the members of the first group of freed Africans was placed next to the tree that was planted in his or her memory.**

**Regarding the involvement of the descendants of those freed by Blessed Anne Marie in the celebrations in her honor in France learn more here: <http://sj-cluny.org/Upcoming-Event-Route-of-the-Abolition-of-Slavery-in-Val-de-Saone?lang=fr>**

**For more information about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cuny click here:**

Province Website: [www.clunyusandcanada.org](http://www.clunyusandcanada.org)

Province Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/clunyusacanada/>

Cluny Congregation Website: <http://sj-cluny.org/?lang=en>

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