

Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
Province of USA & Canada

Connections



The Synod: an Invitation to Encounter, Listen, and Discern

In his homily on the Gospel of Mark, Chapter 10 where Jesus encounters a rich young man, Pope Francis explained the synod:

“Celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together. Let us look at Jesus.

First, he encounters the rich man on the road; he then listens to his questions, and finally, he helps him discern what he must do to inherit eternal life.

Encounter, listen, and discern.”

(Opening of the Synod 2021-2023. Holy Father's Homily at Mass, St. Peter Basilica, October 10, 2021.)

Continued on Page 3

In this Issue

The Synod:
an Invitation to Encounter,
Listen, and Discern

From the Editor's Desk

The Cluny Circle of Love
Angel's Flight Graduate:
Cynthia Sanchez

Cluny Around the World
Province of West Indies
Castries, St. Lucia,
Sister Rufina Donat,
Recipient of highest Papal Honor

In Memoriam
Cluny Affiliate
Dr. Andries Helt

Prayer for
the success of the Synod

Our Thanks
to Our Donors



From the Editor's Desk



Cluny Connections
is a publication of the
Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
Province of USA & Canada

Editor: Anne Marie Liston, SJC
ellenliston@yahoo.com

Javouhey House
78 Carroll Avenue
Newport, RI 02840

Phone: (401) 849-5124

Layout: Marie Cooper, SJC
clunymarie@gmail.com

Javouhey House
78 Carroll Avenue
Newport, RI 02840

Phone: (908) 728-0090

Relocating?
Want to subscribe a friend
to
Cluny Connections?

Please use the form below (right)
Just send back your label from this
issue with your new address
attached to:

Cluny Connections
7 Restmere Terrace
Middletown, RI 02842
USA

Reminder: to receive *Cluny*
Connections via Email or to add a
friend to the list, please send name
and address to:
clunydevelopment@hotmail.com
Thank you.

Visit us online

Get to know us better on our
website:
www.cluniusandcanada.org

Connect via FaceBook for
frequent updates:
[www.facebook.com/
cluniusacanada](http://www.facebook.com/cluniusacanada)
and
[www.facebook.com/
cluniglobalconcernscommittee](http://www.facebook.com/cluniglobalconcernscommittee)

Check out our blog for news:
[https://cluniusandcanada.
blogspot.com/](https://cluniusandcanada.blogspot.com/)

A year ago we reflected on a year like no other, searching for a reason to hope. We were encouraged by the anticipation of vaccines coming, babies to be born, weddings being planned, professions and final vows of Cluny Sisters around the world. As the year unfolded, hopes were fulfilled. Yet, it also brought challenges: natural disasters, a resurgence of COVID, and the loss of loved ones, friends, and Sisters in community. Today we find ourselves, as we did last year, grateful but mourning, seeking new hope for a new year.

This issue of Cluny Connections brings reasons for hope. Hope for our Church through the new Synod that gives each person, whether engaged or hesitant at the margins, an opportunity to speak, listen, and be heard. Hope for a broken world through the *Cluny Circle of Love* bringing the good news of Cynthia Sanchez' success. Hope for Cluny around the World, in the papal recognition of Sister Rufina Donat's lifelong dedication. Hope through the inspiration of Dr. Andries Helt's life of dedication to family, the sick, and to his faith.

In his last encyclical, *Brothers and Sisters All*, Pope Francis wrote:

Hope speaks to us of a thirst, an aspiration, a longing for a life of fulfillment, a desire to achieve great things, things that fill our heart and lift our spirit to lofty realities like truth, goodness and beauty, justice and love ... Hope is bold ... Let us continue, then to advance along the paths of hope.

As we advance along the paths of hope, we give each other reason to hope day by day by doing "a little bit of good" to carry out the "Work of Christmas" throughout the New Year.

Address Change

Change__ Correct __Add __Remove __
Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State/Prov./Postal Code _____
Country _____
Email _____

Please email to:
clunydevelopment@hotmail.com
or send to:

Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny PO Box 66 Newport RI 02840-0001

Check/Credit Card Gift

We invite you to donate through
our secure website donation page
at:

[https://cluniusandcanada.org/
share-in-our-mission/#make-a-
donation](https://cluniusandcanada.org/share-in-our-mission/#make-a-donation)

Donation by check:

Please make check payable to:
Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
and send to:

The Synod: an Invitation to Encounter, Listen, and Discern (Con't)

The Synod is about

planting dreams,
drawing forth prophecies and visions,
allowing hope to be nourished,
inspiring trust, binding up wounds,
weaving together relationships,
awakening a dawn of hope,
learning from one another,
and creating a bright resourcefulness
that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give
strength to our hands.

(see: Preparatory Document, quoting Pope Francis)

The Synod is not about

producing documents.

The Synod is

a consultation process:
listening to the entire people of God,
especially those on the peripheries.

The path to the 2023 Synod in Rome

is designed to engage
the baptized of every diocese,
every bishops' conference,
and every continental Church body.

"The consultation

will unleash the biggest popular consultation
in history,
aimed at reaching over a billion people.
The object ...
is to open us to
a permanent conversion of heart,
a change of hearts,
and a change of culture
at all levels of the Church."

– Cardinal Joseph Tobin

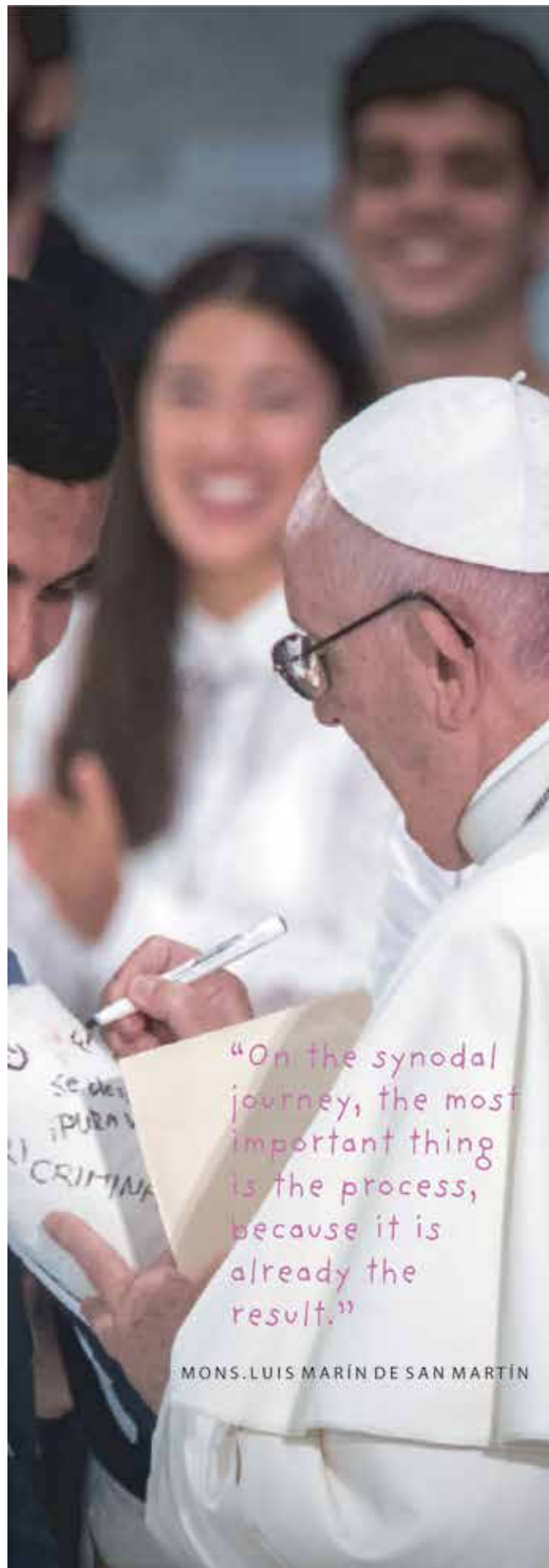
For more information, see:

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/synod-preparatory-document>

and:

<https://www.synod.va/en.html>

Please join in praying for the Synod -
you'll find the prayer on page 7.



Cluny Circle of Love - 2022

The work of Christmas

*The work of Christmas begins
When the song of the angels
is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes
are home,
When the shepherds are back
with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.*
- Howard Thurman



Photo by viktor-kharlashkin-RlOCr8gHcho-unsplash

We are on the doorstep of a new year. Many are the hopes and dreams, many are the sorrows and sufferings among our sisters and brothers everywhere. As Cluny Sisters, it is our desire to carry on the work of Christmas, the work of Christ, every day of every year.

We have been plunged into the power and life of God revealed in Christ and his mission. As we bring hope and compassion to an anguished world, and respond to the needs of the poor and most vulnerable in our midst, we participate in His mission today. After the example of Blessed Anne Marie, we strive to make known God's love for all people everywhere.

In our homes and communities, in our good works and sharing of our time, talent and resources and in our collaboration with others: organizations, religious groups, non-profits, civic and global community projects, we are always engaged in proclaiming the Good News of justice, dignity, love,

reconciliation and peace, establishing the Reign of God here below.

As a Province asked ourselves: How do we, Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in the Province of USA & Canada, continue the mission of Jesus? How can we place our corporate resources, talents and time in service to do "a little bit of good"? In response, we initiated a Province "Circle of Love" to better serve those in need. We are grateful for the support of our donors that makes possible the "little bit of good" we offer through collaboration with others as well as through direct assistance to those in need.

Cynthia Sanchez, a graduate of Ascending Lights, one of the organizations we support, is highlighted on the following page.

We chose Ascending Lights as a beneficiary of the Cluny Circle of Love to further our engagement in the spirit of Blessed Anne Marie who gathered the poor, neglected, and orphaned children into loving centers of learning that offered them a future.

Cynthia Sanchez - Ascending Lights Scholar

“As a student, there have been times when I doubted myself. What are my gifts? Will I reach my goal? With the help of my mentor and sponsor at Ascending Lights, I’ve found guidance, a major, and acknowledgment of my achievements. Ascending Lights has been life-changing in so many ways.” Says Cynthia Sanchez, an Ascending Lights scholar who graduated in the spring of 2020.

Cynthia hopes to become a doctor, perhaps a pediatrician. “I can identify with people in pain,” she says. Growing up, my sister suffered from epilepsy and made frequent trips to the hospital. Ever since, I’ve wanted to become a doctor.” She has made amazing strides toward her goal.

At East LA College, Cynthia was on the dean’s list each semester. She was also active in MESA, a program that enables disadvantaged students to prepare for 4-year degrees in Engineering, Science, and Mathematics. And, on weekends, she attended workshops with MED-PEP—Medicos Para el Pueblo (Medics for the People)—a preparatory medical program at UCLA. After graduation, Cynthia was accepted into the Pre-Med Program at USC (University of Southern California). She is scheduled to graduate with her Pre-Med degree and a minor in Health Care Studies in the spring of 2022.

While with Ascending Lights, Cynthia also volunteered at her parish church, answering calls, scheduling community events, and assisting in the



Teen Conformation program. Balancing service with school was no small task for a Bio-Chemistry major. She is still involved in her church. “I’ve learned how much I need the guidance of Jesus, as well at the guidance of the people God has put into my life. My mentor and sponsor at Ascending Lights have opened doors in my life and I’m so grateful. “Thank you!”

Cynthia, once unsure of her future, is now on a path to realizing her dream.



Ascending Lights Leadership Network began in response to the 1992 civil unrest in Los Angeles. The founders, Gary and Marjorie Krauss, felt called by God to help urban churches in Los Angeles (Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Evangelical, Episcopal). When they met

with the pastors of the churches their response, without exception, was, “Educate our people.”

That has been the mission of Ascending Lights for 30 years: to enhance the crucial efforts of urban Christian Churches to reduce poverty and violence in the poorest areas of Los Angeles County by developing leaders, through a community

college scholarship and one-on-one mentorship. Ascending Lights is proud of its 130 graduates. We are currently guiding 16 students attending 8 different community colleges. The strength of this program is a holistic structure that empowers students to succeed in community college, university, their future careers, and their lives. We also maintain relationships with our graduates.

To learn more about Ascending Lights, please visit: www.ascendinglights.org and as subscribe to our newsletter that celebrates the students. Anne Lobsinger (Executive Director) would be more than happy to reach out and answer any questions you may have.



Province of the West Indies

Cedars

Castries, St. Lucia

Congratulations to Sister Rufina Donat,
Recipient of the
2021 Benemerenti Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Medal from Pope Francis

Sister Rufina Donat is a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, West Indies Province. Born in Laborie, St. Lucia, she grew up in the city right next to the Cathedral of The Immaculate Conception, Castries. It was there that she made her First Communion, Confirmation and Religious Profession.

From an early age, Rufina was involved in Church Ministry at the cathedral. She was a member of the Junior Choir, and served as a catechist, an usher, an animator and a lector. Upon leaving to enter the Cluny Novitiate in Trinidad, she continued to be active in church ministry, assisting with Communion services and choir.

Sister Rufina has worked with both the Sacred Heart Parish and Cathedral choirs. She also conducted Animation workshops for the Archdiocese of Castries. Her involvement with youth ministry started long before religious life and continued upon her return to St. Lucia. Her ministry also included conducting adult education classes in culinary arts, arts and crafts, and literacy.

Sister Rufina now devotes most of her time to Catholic education as Administrator of St. Joseph Convent Secondary School, and to digital evangelization.

On receiving this award, Sister Rufina gives thanks to God, and is deeply grateful to her parents, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, and all those who have accompanied her on her journey.



Sister Rufina Donat

The Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Medal, instituted by Pope Gregory XVI in 1832, is the highest recognition the laity can receive from the Pope. It is awarded to individuals who have shown lasting and exceptional service to the Catholic Church, family, and community.

In Memoriam



Cluny Affiliate Andries Helt, MD

Dr. Andries Helt passed away peacefully at home with his family by his side on June 6, 2021 at the age of 91.

Andries and his wife Dr. Maria Helt were born and raised in Holland. They immigrated to Canada, where they founded their medical career and their family in Hamilton, Ontario.

It was around the same time that Cluny Sisters arrived in St. Joseph Parish, Hamilton. A long relationship began between the Helts and the Cluny community. The Helt's friendship and support of the community and their interest in Cluny missions around the world led to their becoming Cluny Affiliates.

A compassionate and dedicated physician, Andries delivered babies, performed minor surgeries, made house calls, worked in the hospital, caring for his patients throughout their lifetime. Andries exemplified the role of a traditional family doctor.

Forever in love, he will be sadly missed by his wife, Maria, of 65 years. He was the loving father of five children: Robert (Kathi), Frank, deceased in 2014 (Linda), Michael (Lori), Bruno (Julie), and Maureen. He is survived by his beloved sister Gerda "Tan".

His legacy includes 17 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. Andries was predeceased by his sisters Jopie (of Holland) and Annie (of Australia).

Andries will also be missed by many nieces, nephews, friends, colleagues, and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny.

United with Pope Francis
and our
sisters and brothers
of the Universal Church,
we pray for the success
of the Synod.

PRAYER

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH

COMMUNION ● PARTICIPATION ● MISSION



We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together
to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of
the Father and the Son,
forever and ever. Amen.



Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny
Province of USA and Canada, Inc.
7 Restmere Terrace
Middletown, RI 02842

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Newport RI 02840
Permit No. 286



Bringing Hope & Compassion

Our Thanks to Our Donors

To all our who reach out with us
to do a "little bit of good"
so that hope and compassion
may be extended
to sisters and brothers
in need
every day of the year,
we send our prayerful thanks.

If you have not already done so,
please consider making a contribution today,
to help us carry on "The Work of Christmas"
into the New Year, 2022.

No gift is too small.

You may use the enclosed envelope
or donate online at our secure site:

<https://cluniusandcanada.org/share-in-our-mission/#make-a-donation>

