

# Actions

## Pilgrims of Hope

Holy Child Sisters, founding  
members of Transborder  
Coalition for Border Ministries,  
“meet the wants to the age”

SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS / AMERICAN PROVINCE

WINTER 2025



# PRAYER TO OBTAIN THE BEATIFICATION OF VENERABLE CORNELIA CONNELLY

In 1992, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints recommended to Pope John Paul II, now Saint John Paul II, that he proclaim the heroic virtue of Cornelia Connelly as a Servant of God. Cornelia was declared Venerable. The next step in the canonization process is beatification.

*Please join us in Prayer for the Beatification of Venerable Cornelia Connelly.*

O God, who chose Cornelia Connelly to found the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, inspiring her to follow the path marked out by your divine son, obedient from the crib to the cross, let us share her faith, her obedience and her unconditional trust in the power of your love.

Grant us the favor we now implore through her intercession... and be pleased to glorify, even on earth, your faithful servant, through the same Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



*If you have found praying through the intercession of Cornelia helpful and believe that your prayer has been answered, please report this to Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Rector of the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, at [info@cathedralphila.org](mailto:info@cathedralphila.org).*

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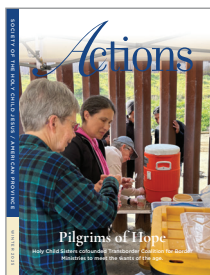
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## ON OUR COVER

*The Society of the Holy Child Jesus – American Province, a founding member of Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries, supports the work of organizations serving immigrants at the Southern California-Mexico border, including the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary (on cover) who visit the border to provide food and clothing and offer prayers.*

*Actions is a biannual publication of the American Province of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Comments and questions can be directed to [holychildsis@shcj.org](mailto:holychildsis@shcj.org).*



## DEAR FRIENDS,

Happy Jubilee Year and 2,025th anniversary of the Incarnation of Our Lord! With the theme “Pilgrims of Hope,” Pope Francis opened the year stating:

“For everyone, may the jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the ‘door’ of our salvation, whom the Church is charged to proclaim always, everywhere, and to all as ‘our hope.’”

The Church’s celebration is significant for the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. The founding of the Society by Venerable Cornelia Connelly, in 1846, is rooted in the Incarnation. In the first line of the Society’s Constitutions, we say, “God has chosen to need men and women in every age to reveal divine love, to make known the reality of the Incarnation.” The Society’s mission, *to help others to believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world, and to rejoice in the divine presence*, guides us to live Incarnationally.



As *Actions* goes to press, we give witness to the many people revealing God’s love and presence as they respond to the California wildfires. Amid significant loss, fear, displacement, and destruction, Holy Child families, some experiencing catastrophic damage themselves, have been on the frontline of “meeting the wants of the age.”

Joe Sciuto, head of school at Mayfield Junior School of the Holy Child Jesus in Pasadena, California, where many community members have suffered great trauma and loss from the wildfires, wrote the following to me, “Being part of a Holy Child community like Mayfield is a blessing, particularly in times like these. The outpouring of prayer, compassion, and support strengthens us, and, with a resilient spirit, we will get through this together.”

God is, indeed, living and acting in them, and I thank our Sisters, school communities, alumni, colleagues, and friends in California for their love, sacrifices, and generous outreach to family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and strangers. Our prayers and support continue for all of you.

In this edition of *Actions*, we feature several new endeavors and changes in the province, starting with the cover story on the recently incorporated Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries. Also featured are the Holy Child Associates’ Spiritual Program, the province’s *Laudato Si’* action steps, and the upcoming retirement of Eileen McDevitt, SHCJ, from her role as the director of the Holy Child Network of Schools.

We invite you to read about the province’s celebration of Saint Phoebe, the first female deaconess and friend of Saint Paul, and the mission advancement office’s events at the province’s archives. Beginning on page 13, you will see delightful photos from several alumni/ae reunions. Our Sisters are heartened by these reunions and find great joy in knowing that the Holy Child friendships remain strong for decades. Finally, we honor the lives and service of six Holy Child Sisters who have “laid down their lives in love,” as we say in our Constitutions—Carlotta Bartone, Marlene Brownnett, Gloria Coleman, Bernadette Longtin, Catherine Quinn, and Katherine Tracy.

As Holy Child Pilgrims of Hope, we do rejoice in God’s presence and believe that God lives and acts in all of us. You have demonstrated that again and again—thank you!

With prayers and gratitude,

*Mary Ann Buckley SHCJ*

Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ  
American Province Leader



# Holy Child 'Pilgrims of Hope'

**T**his year, the Catholic Church celebrates Jubilee 2025, with the theme “Pilgrims of Hope.” Pope Francis officially began the jubilee with the Opening of the Holy Door on December 24, 2024, in Rome, Italy. The jubilee celebration concludes on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 2026. When announcing the jubilee, Pope Francis invited the faithful to:

*“...fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision.”*

The Society’s own “open spirit” and “trusting heart” flow from our Foundress, Venerable Cornelia Connelly, who embraced hope and trust, writing, “... be as diligent and vigilant as if all depended upon you — be full of hope and trust in God.” Almost 180 years after the Society’s founding in 1846, Holy Child Sisters, Holy Child Associates, ministries, schools, friends, and supporters continue to serve with hope and trust in God, despite the many crises our world faces, including war, wildfires, disease, homelessness, loneliness, addiction, poverty, and threats to the environment. Inspired by Cornelia’s response to the challenges of her time and her personal heartbreak, our Holy Child community stands ready to “meet the wants (needs) of the age” and to serve with “a love full of action.”

The American Province is a founding member of the recently incorporated Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries, an organization of Catholic women religious communities providing financial and personnel support to ministries serving the immigrant community along the Southern California-Mexico Border. Holy Child Sister Ann Durst serves as the coalition’s executive secretary.

Sister Ann believes the timing of the Transborder Coalition is providential. “During the 18th and 19th centuries, religious communities of women, including the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, accompanied the waves of immigrants across the Great Plains and into the Far West. Over the course of those 200 years, they educated a nation and provided health care and social services. These congregations now face a new frontier as people on the move from around the globe seek a safe-haven and opportunity at our southern border.”

Sister Ann continues, “The Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries was incorporated in early June and received federal tax-exempt status in November 2024. We are confident of its success. Now, more than ever, we are called to ‘meet the needs of the age’ by responding to the Gospel mandate to welcome the stranger.”



*The Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus – American Province respond to Cornelia’s call to “meet the wants of the age” through the newly established Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries. Ann Durst, SHCJ, serves as the coalition’s executive secretary. (From left) Holy Child Sisters Margaret Doyle, Marie Ursino, Sheila McNiff, Ann Durst, Frances White, and Susan Slater.*



Members of Casa Cornelia Law Center, founded by the Holy Child Sisters in 1993 and a sponsored ministry of the American Province, provide free legal services to victims of human and civil rights violations. The law center is a member of the Transborder Coalition for Border Ministries.



Casa Cornelia Law Center Attorney Zohaile Kakavand embraces a client after winning his asylum case. In 2024, Casa Cornelia served 2,900 children, women, and men.



One of the ministries benefiting from the coalition is the American Province's Casa Cornelia Law Center in San Diego, California. Founded by the Holy Child Sisters in 1993, the law center provides legal services to victims of human and civil rights violations in Southern California's immigrant community. It also educates the

public on the impact of immigration law and policy on the public good.

Casa Cornelia's Executive Director Carmen Chavez, Esq., expressed gratitude for the border coalition and emphasized the importance of the law center's work. "We are very grateful for this new endeavor. Our clients faced and survived unimaginable hardships. The children, women, and men we serve are fleeing violence, abuse, human trafficking, and other terrible abuses. Our clients arrive at our door with the hope that under the United States law, they can find safety and build a future."

In celebration of Jubilee 2025, as Holy Child pilgrims, we seek to open doors for those suffering and to love unconditionally, just as Cornelia did almost two centuries ago and Pope Francis asks us to do today.

# The 2025 Jubilee Prayer



Father in heaven,  
 may the faith you have given us  
 in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,  
 and the flame of charity enkindled  
 in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
 reawaken in us the blessed hope  
 for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us  
 into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.  
 May those seeds transform from within both  
 humanity and the whole cosmos  
 in the sure expectation  
 of a new heaven and a new earth,  
 when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,  
 your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee  
 reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,  
 a yearning for the treasures of heaven.  
 May that same grace spread  
 the joy and peace of our Redeemer  
 throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,  
 be glory and praise for ever.

Amen

*Franciscus*

# Celebrating Women in the Church



*Anna Ryan Bender, Director of Campus Ministry at Chestnut Hill College and Discerning Deacons member, offers a reflection on the importance of women leaders serving in the Catholic Church.*



*Holy Child Sister Margaret (Peg) Doyle, Rosemont College's Vice President of Mission and Ministry, poses with Rosemont College students at the Saint Phoebe Day reception at Holy Child Center in Rosemont, Pennsylvania.*

**T**his past September, the American Province celebrated the feast of Saint Phoebe, a Christian woman from the first century and a trusted friend of Saint Paul. Saint Phoebe answered God's call by ministering to persecuted Christians. She is a patron for women in the Church and the ordination of women to the diaconate.

On Sunday, September 24, Holy Child Sisters, Holy Child Associates, Rosemont College students, neighbors, friends, and staff gathered at Holy Child Chapel in Rosemont, Pennsylvania, for prayer, reflection, and song in celebration of women in the Church. During the celebration, Anna Ryan Bender, director of campus ministry at Chestnut Hill College, offered a reflection.

"If we situate relationships and stories at the heart of what it means to be Church, we can't help but acknowledge the vocations of women," said Anna. "We receive a clear story of women leadership in Paul's letter to the Romans. Phoebe is traveling. She is a courageous connector. She's known and respected in her community and clearly works closely with Paul. He trusts her and values her contributions."

Anna then asked, "What does this mean for us today? Include more women's voices, gifts, ministries, and vocations ... there is a critical and urgent need to rethink women's participation in the Church."

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*I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.*

—Saint Paul, Romans 16:1-2

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# Holy Child Associates Launch New Spiritual Program

**H**oly Child Associates are women and men who have a deep desire to live out the Holy Child mission and embrace the Holy Child values, particularly simplicity, humility, charity, and joy. As Associates, they seek to grow together in community, personal prayer, spiritual development, and ministry.

**Being a Holy Child Associate is never about doing more; it's about being more.**

Holy Child Associates engage with the Society's many spiritual resources, including monthly meditations and feast day celebrations. Associates have used these resources to organize themselves for retreats and prayer, both virtually and in person, with local and international members. However, their desire to grow in community through prayer has increased in recent years, which inspired the Associates Core Team to formally establish a new Spiritual Program in 2024.

To launch the program, Holy Child Associate and Core Team Chair Judy Talvacchia assembled a cohort of seven Associates with experience in teaching, leading meetings, and facilitating discussion groups. She also enlisted the help of Mary Christine O'Connor Thomsen, a pastoral minister with 30 years of adult faith formation experience in parishes. Together, Judy and Mary Christine developed and hosted an online workshop that addressed the unique requirements of a spiritual program, including how to prepare and facilitate one. After attending the multi-session workshop, which included time for practice, the cohort felt that they now had the skills and confidence to lead groups in a spiritual program.

The Spiritual Program officially launched in December 2024 when three Associates facilitated an online Advent retreat on the Incarnation. This upcoming Lent, three Associates will offer another online retreat.

Everyone has been excited to attend, whether as a leader or a participant. Cohort members have shared that learning something new in the company of other Associates has deepened their bonds with each other and the Society. All have been given another way to live the mission of the Society: *to help people believe that God lives and acts in them and in the world and to rejoice in the Divine presence.*

If you're inspired by the Holy Child mission and values, consider becoming a Holy Child Associate. All are welcome. Please contact us at [Associates-USA@shcj.org](mailto:Associates-USA@shcj.org) for more information.



*Holy Child Associates Joanne Ainsworth, Nonie Murphy, Patti Cepparulo, Cynthia Vives, SHCJ, and Associate Core Team Member Tricia Fell pose for a photo at Patti's Holy Child Associate commitment ceremony during the Founders Day Celebration at Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child in Summit, New Jersey. Patti is the Lower School Religion Coordinator/Grade 3 Religion Teacher and After-School Program Director at Oak Knoll.*

# LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLAN

We, the Sisters in the American Province of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Holy Child Associates, educational and ministry collaborators, and employees, commit ourselves to the following *Laudato Si'* goals.



## Ecological Education:

1. We will learn how the SHCJ Network of Schools and Holy Child ministries are implementing *Laudato Si'* and encourage them to share those actions in SHCJ publications.
2. We will develop content to share with Province members that shows how Cornelia's charism connects with *Laudato Si'*.
3. We will offer prayers based on *Laudato Si'* for use by offices, organizers, and others during Province liturgies, meetings, and gatherings.



## Response to Cry of the Earth:

1. We will continue to reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle at home and work.
2. We will educate our community on the importance of calculating one's carbon footprint to help identify ways to reduce greenhouse gas production.
3. We will ask Province members, Associates, and employees to participate in annual clean-up efforts in their communities.



## Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles:

1. We will follow Venerable Cornelia Connelly's call for a "simplicity of spirit" by buying what we need, not what we want.
2. We will continue to reduce our meat consumption by not eating meat at least one day per week.
3. We will encourage our community to eat fresh fruits, vegetables, raw nuts, seeds, and grains instead of processed foods. If possible, we will buy local, organic, and fair-trade food.



# We Remember



**CARLOTTA BARTONE, SHCJ**  
**(Mother Mary Carlotta)**  
**June 24, 1935 - October 18, 2024**

Sister Carlotta, a gifted linguist fluent in French, Italian, and Latin, loved the Society, her family, the opera, and good Italian food. A cherished friend to many, she served as an educator, a communicator, and a lawyer during her 47 years of active ministry.

Early in religious life, Sister Carlotta taught French at numerous East Coast schools. She also served in administration at her high school alma mater, Saint Leonard's Academy in Philadelphia. After decades of serving as an educator, Sister Carlotta shifted her ministerial focus to communication-related service. She was a translator for the Diocese of Brooklyn's Catholic Immigration Office and then was appointed the American Province's communication director.

A significant change occurred in Sister Carlotta's life when she returned to school in 1988 to study Canon Law at The Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Armed with a law degree, she worked for the next 17 years in various legal capacities, including at the Tribunal Offices for the Diocese of Trenton, the Diocese of Erie, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, where she served as the Tribunal Judge for almost 10 years.

In 2007, Sister Carlotta officially retired but continued to dedicate her time and gifts to promote the canonization of the Society's Foundress, Venerable Cornelia Connelly. Sister Carlotta served as the Society's postulator for Cornelia's cause, was a member of the Society's international committee, Cornelia Connelly Promoters, and worked with Holy Child Associate Judith (Judy) Talvacchia on Judy's biography of Cornelia.



**MARLENE ANN BROWNETT, SHCJ**  
**(Mother Mary Magdalen)**  
**August 10, 1934 - September 5, 2024**

Sister Marlene, with her gentle spirit and sweet sense of humor, was a great storyteller and gifted English teacher. She had a deep admiration for the Society's Foundress, Venerable Cornelia Connelly, which she shared wherever she traveled.

Sister Marlene spent nearly four decades working in education, with her first assignment at the Academy of the Holy Child in Suffern, New York. During her nine years at the academy, she was a classroom teacher and an administrator, eventually serving as head of school.

In 1976, she was called to Rome, Italy, where she served for four years as the Generalate Secretary. Upon returning home, Sister Marlene happily resumed teaching at Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child. She remained at the school for the next 26 years, teaching English, theology, and public speaking and serving as a member of the school board. She also served as trustee at Holy Child Academy in Old Westbury, New York, and at the School of the Holy Child in Rye, New York.

A close friend of Bishop Sheen, Sister Marlene dedicated significant time to advancing his cause for beatification and serving on the Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation board of directors. She also volunteered at a nursing home in New York City.

In 2011, Sister Marlene moved into a women religious retirement community in Hartsdale, New York, where she shared her joy, zeal, and good humor with residents and staff. In February 2024, she moved to Holy Child Center in Rosemont, Pennsylvania. To honor Sister Marlene on her 90th birthday, members of Oak Knoll School traveled to Rosemont to present her with a heartfelt video of faculty, staff, former students, and friends expressing their gratitude and love for her.

# We Remember *continued...*



**GLORIA COLEMAN, SHCJ**  
(Mother Edmund Campion)  
September 6, 1926 - December 20, 2024

Sister Gloria's work in ecumenism and interreligious affairs was legendary throughout the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and beyond. In 2003,

Sister Gloria received the Doresh Shalom/Seeker of Peace Award from the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia.

Sister Gloria began her teaching ministry in 1947. She served at Holy Child Academy, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania (1947-58); Saint Ignatius School in Chicago, Illinois (1958-61); Saint James School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1961-63); Cornelia Connelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac, Maryland (1963-64); Saint Elizabeth School in New York City (1964-67); and Saint Edward School in Philadelphia, where she held positions of Superior, Principal and Supervisor of Elementary Schools (1967-73).

Sister Gloria's ministry in ecumenism and interreligious affairs began in 1973. She worked at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and later served as the executive Director of the Interfaith Council on the Holocaust. She collaborated with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Office for Catholic Education to produce Abraham, Our Father in Faith, the first Catholic Holocaust curriculum in the country.

In 1989, Sister Gloria returned to teaching at Saint Theresa of the Child School in Philadelphia, for one year. For the next 10 years, she served as the Director of the Middle School at the Academy of Notre Dame in Villanova.

In 2004, Sister Gloria was a founding board member of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia. As an emeritus chair, Sister Gloria continued to serve on the center's board for many more years.



**BERNADETTE LONGTIN, SHCJ**  
(Sister Mary Lucien)  
October 18, 1939 - December 15, 2024

For 59 years, Sister Bernadette ministered as a Holy Child Sister with a quiet sense of service and gratitude, which deepened as she fulfilled each

of her many roles. At her 50th Jubilee, Sister Bernadette dedicated the celebration to all of the people and experiences God had placed in her life.

As a Holy Child Sister, Sister Bernadette taught at the Rosemont Senior School (1962-67) and Saint Leonard's Academy in Philadelphia (1967-72). She served as head of school at Saint Leonard's (1972-73 and 1974-79) and the School of the Holy Child in Rye, New York (1979-83).

Sister Bernadette was appointed Province Leader of the American Province in 1983. For the next six years, she experienced "the joys and challenges of working with the Sisters in fulfilling the Society's mission of 'helping others to believe that God lives and acts in them.'"

In 1990, Sister Bernadette enrolled in graduate school to study social work. She then worked for nine years at Bridgewater State Hospital in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. In 2000, she was named director of the American Province's novices and moved to Washington, D.C., where she lived for the next 24 years. While working with the Province's novices, Sister Bernadette continued her ministry in clinical social work at a Catholic Charities program that provided transitional housing and supportive services for homeless families in the District.

In her retirement, Sister Bernadette continued to work as a volunteer for Catholic Charities for a program that supports young people and their families experiencing mental health issues.





**CATHERINE QUINN, SHCJ**  
**(Mother Ignatius Mary)**  
**July 19, 1934 – August 24, 2024**

With her deep faith, intelligence, and sense of humor, Sister Catherine was a sought-after spiritual director, teacher, administrator and trusted

companion. Throughout her life, she welcomed and created spaces of peace and harmony for the Sisters, religious communities, her students, and people of all faiths.

For the first 11 years of her professed life, Sister Catherine served as a teacher in Philadelphia at Saint Edward School (1955-59), Holy Child Academy (1959-61), Saint Lucy School (1961-65), and Archbishop Prendergast Catholic High School (1965-66). She returned to the classroom in 1971, when she taught for one year at Saint Leonard's Academy.

In 1966, she was appointed the American Province's postulant director and immersed herself in the study of scripture and the spirituality of the Society's Foundress, Venerable Cornelia Connelly. She also served as superior and area superior during a time of change for the Church and the Society.

In 1977, Sister Catherine founded the Rosemont Spiritual Center, where she led workshops, prayer groups, and retreats. At that time, she became known as the "resident" interior decorator, with her design talents widely utilized throughout the Province.

After resigning as director of Rosemont's Spiritual Center in 1995, Sister Catherine embraced apartment living and a ministry of "hallway, elevator, and laundry room" spiritual companionship. In 2002, she joined with lay women and men and other Sisters to organize the American Province's Holy Child Associates program, serving on their Core Team for many years and beloved by many of the Associates.

Sister Catherine moved to Holy Child Center in Rosemont, Pennsylvania, in 2024. Never one to sit still, she continued to contribute to the Province's planning, discussions, events, and, of course, its interior decorating!



**KATHERINE TRACY, SHCJ**  
**(Mother Mary Ignatius)**  
**March 1, 1925 – August 25, 2024**

Sister Katherine demonstrated remarkable perseverance, grace, and zeal during her nearly eight decades as a Holy Child Sister.

Sisters Margaret Rogers and Clarita Hanson, who served with Sister Katherine in Africa, spoke of her quiet, loving presence in community and ministry. Always eager to meet new people and learn new things, she was a prolific writer and a regular contributor to the Society's publication *Voices*.

Sister Katherine began her teaching ministry at Holy Spirit School in Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania (1944-48 and 1953-55), and Saint Ignatius School in Chicago, Illinois (1948-53). In 1955, she was missioned to the Society's African Province where she taught at four Holy Child schools in Nigeria and served on the faculty at Holy Child College in Ghana. When the Biafran War broke out in 1967 in Nigeria, she came back to the United States and enrolled in graduate school.

In 1971, Sister Katherine returned to Ghana, where she served as principal of the Women's Training College and was a pioneer in the opening of the nearby Zuarungu Secondary School.

After two decades of serving in the African Province, she returned to the United States and began coursework in pastoral care. From 1980-85, she ministered in parishes and hospitals in Illinois, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

By 1985, Sister Katherine was ready to "slow down." For her, that meant serving as a nurse's aide, a librarian, and an assistant in the Holy Child community in Rye, New York. In 1996, her life came full circle when she returned to Saint Ignatius Parish to serve as a member of the ministry of care team before moving to a women religious retirement community in Hartsdale, New York. In 2015, Sister Katherine moved to Holy Child Center in Rosemont, Pennsylvania.



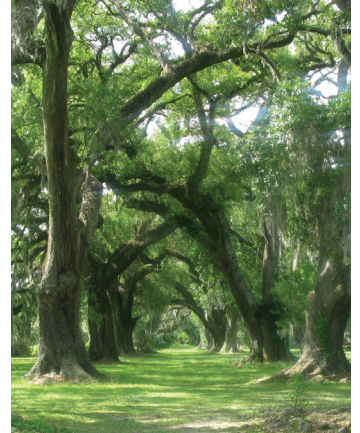
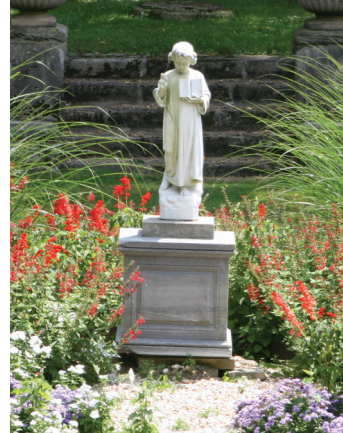
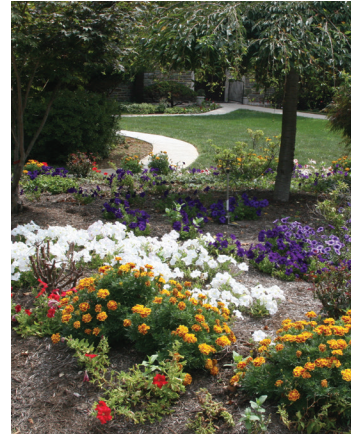
*To make a gift in memory or in honor of a Sister, please visit [www.shcj.org/american/donate](http://www.shcj.org/american/donate).*

# Prayer Cards

## A Meaningful Way to Remember and Honor Family and Friends

To request prayer cards, please contact the Sisters at [holychildsisters@shcj.org](mailto:holychildsisters@shcj.org) or call 610-626-1400 ext. 1307, or visit the Province's website at [www.shcj.org/american](http://www.shcj.org/american). Any donations received through this program benefit the Holy Child ministries.

**Thank you!**



### MEMORIAL TO VENERABLE CORNELIA CONNELLY

AND

### THE SHRINE OF THE HOLY CHILD

Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



### Come, Visit and Pray!

Venerable Cornelia Connelly, born in Philadelphia in 1809, is the foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. She offers inspiration to all who seek the presence of God in their vocations, especially those in difficult marriages and/or have suffered the death of children.

Notification of any favors through the prayerful intercession of Cornelia may be sent to Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Rector of the Cathedral Basilica, at [info@cathedralphila.org](mailto:info@cathedralphila.org).

# Sustaining a Bright and Joyful Spirit

This past fall, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus expressed their gratitude to alumnae, benefactors, and friends who support the Society's mission of sustaining a bright and joyful spirit by hosting three special tours of the American Province Archives in Rosemont, Pennsylvania. All three tours were led by Emily Wells, the Province's archivist.

The first tour took place on September 18, when alumnae of Holy Child Academy, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania, explored old yearbooks, memorabilia, and a display dedicated to their alma mater. The time spent in the archives with Emily sparked gratitude and fond memories from the participants.

The second event, on October 9, focused on the founding and mission of the Society. Participants viewed displays highlighting the life and work of Venerable Cornelia Connelly, Foundress of the Society, and the Society's history and enduring impact in America. Those who attended were inspired and grateful for the time spent in the archives.

The final gathering welcomed alumnae from Saint Leonard's Academy in Philadelphia, and Holy Child Rosemont Senior School in Rosemont, on November 13. The attendees, who have generously shared their time, talents, and financial support, had a delightful time as they viewed yearbooks and memorabilia from their school days.

These special events provided a unique and powerful opportunity to reconnect with the Society's rich history, to build community, and to celebrate the Holy Child's enduring legacy.

We are grateful for all your efforts and contributions to build on the remarkable legacy of Venerable Cornelia Connelly and hope all of you, near and far, will join us in our ongoing celebration of the Society's mission to sustain a bright and joyful spirit.

Please contact Emily Wells, American Province archivist, at [ewells@shcj.org](mailto:ewells@shcj.org) or 610-525-8951, if you would like to help us preserve the Society's rich history for generations to come or have artifacts to donate.



# SUSTAIN A *Bright* AND *Joyful* SPIRIT

SUPPORT OUR HOLY CHILD MINISTRIES  
YOUR GIFT MAKES AN IMPACT

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP

### Donate by Mail or Online

Society of the Holy Child Jesus  
1341 Montgomery Avenue  
Rosemont, PA 19010

[www.shcj.org/american/giving/  
ways-you-can-support-the-society](http://www.shcj.org/american/giving/ways-you-can-support-the-society)

### Contact your financial adviser or fund administrator to arrange for:

IRA Rollovers  
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### Donate Stocks and Securities

View instructions for wiring securities on the Society's website at [www.shcj.org/american/giving/ways-you-can-support-the-society](http://www.shcj.org/american/giving/ways-you-can-support-the-society).

### Create a Legacy Gift

Name the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, American Province as a beneficiary in your Will or Trust, Life Insurance, or Retirement Plan Assets.

### For more information on ways to give,

please visit the Society's website at [www.shcj.org/american/giving/  
ways-you-can-support-the-society](http://www.shcj.org/american/giving/ways-you-can-support-the-society).



Be generous  
and of  
great heart.



Thank you for supporting the  
Society of the Holy Child Jesus!



# Reunions

**CORNELIA CONNELLY HIGH SCHOOL, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA  
50TH REUNION**



Photos: ©Tara Misilagi



**HOLY CHILD ACADEMY, SHARON HILL, PENNSYLVANIA  
ALL-CLASS REUNION**



**HOLY CHILD ROSEMONT SENIOR SCHOOL, ROSEMONT, PENNSYLVANIA  
50TH REUNION**



**ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, D.C.  
ALL-CLASS REUNION**



**Planning a reunion? Need a class list?  
Have reunion photos or memories to share?  
Contact Sandy Lovascio, Mission Advancement Associate,  
at 610.626.1400, ext.1301, or [slovascio@shej.org](mailto:slovascio@shej.org).**



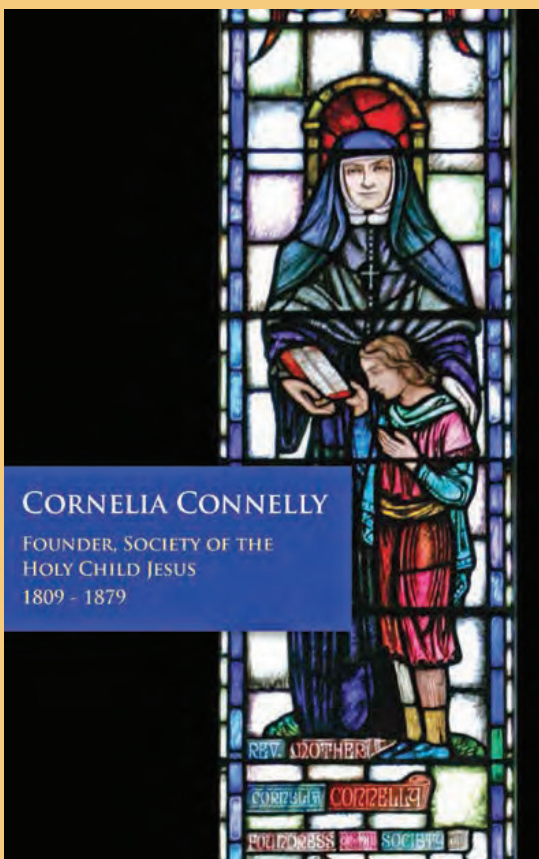
**SAINT MARY OF THE ANNUNCIATION SCHOOL, MELROSE, MASSACHUSETTS  
50TH REUNION**



**HOLY CHILD ACADEMY, PORTLAND, OREGON  
ALL-CLASS REUNION**



**SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD, SUFFERN, NEW YORK  
ALL-CLASS REUNION WEEKEND**



## THE LIFE OF CORNELIA CONNELLY

By Judith "Judy" Talvacchia  
is now available in English and Spanish!

*To receive a copy, please send an email  
to [holychildsisters@shcj.org](mailto:holychildsisters@shcj.org).*

*"Thank you so much for the book on Cornelia Connelly. I first read about Cornelia during my school days at Saint Leonard's. Many times my children heard her quotes, especially 'be yourself but make that self just what our Lord wants it to be.' My husband and I both read the book and then discussed it. Now I will pass it on to others and trust that Cornelia will also inspire them." – Nannette*

*"The book is beyond informative. Every page captivated me. Kudos to Judith A. Talvacchia! I shall keep my copy on the coffee table for the rest of my eighty-four years! The twelve of which have made me ever grateful for the education the Holy Child Sisters imparted to me." – Katharine*



## STATEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN PROVINCE LEADER REGARDING HOLY CHILD NETWORK OF SCHOOLS

October 1, 2024

Dear Sisters, Holy Child Network of Schools community, friends, and supporters,

Greetings, and best wishes to all of you as the new academic year shifts into full gear! As we begin this new year of teaching and learning, I'm writing to let you know that this is Sister Eileen McDevitt's final year as Executive Director of the Holy Child Network of Schools. The Network's Board Chair, Sean Glynn, said it so well when announcing Eileen's plan to retire from that position, pointing out that she, "created, ran, and nurtured the Network for four decades."

In the words of our Foundress, Cornelia Connelly, we could say that she truly "ran with ardor" in the process of transmitting and adapting Cornelia's educational vision and philosophy to the challenges of our time and needs in our changing world.

Eileen's final year in the ministry, advancing the educational mission of the Catholic Church through the philosophy and spirituality of Cornelia, is an opportunity for us to express our thanks and wish her every blessing of wisdom, well-earned satisfaction, and joy.

She will end her service as executive director on June 30, 2025. A search committee has been named and begun its work to seek out a new executive director to carry out the Network's mission in the coming years.

Let's pray for the good work of the committee and come together as one community filled with gratitude and hope.

Gratefully,

Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ  
American Province Leader  
Society of the Holy Child Jesus

*"I have begun the work;  
others will bring it  
to perfection."*

**Venerable Cornelia Connelly**

*For this is our mission: to help others to believe that  
God lives and acts in them and in our world, and to rejoice in God's presence.*



Society of the Holy Child Jesus

1341 Montgomery Avenue  
Rosemont, PA 19010

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# HOLY CHILD MINISTRIES

*The Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus and their colleagues serve in educational, social justice, and spiritual and healing ministries. The Society of the Holy Child Jesus in the Americas sponsors or co-sponsors the ministries below:*

## CALIFORNIA

Casa Cornelia Law Center  
*(San Diego)*

Mayfield Junior School  
of the Holy Child Jesus  
*(Pasadena)*

Mayfield Senior School  
of the Holy Child Jesus  
*(Pasadena)*

South Central Los Angeles  
Ministry Project  
*(Los Angeles)*

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

African Faith and Justice Network  
Washington School for Girls

## ILLINOIS

Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep  
*(Waukegan)*

## MARYLAND

Connelly School of the Holy Child  
*(Potomac)*

## NEW JERSEY

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child  
*(Summit)*

## NEW YORK

Cornelia Connelly Center  
*(New York City)*

Cristo Rey New York High School  
*(New York City)*

Holy Child Academy  
*(Old Westbury)*

School of the Holy Child  
*(Rye)*

UNANIMA International  
*(NGO, United Nations)*

## PENNSYLVANIA

African Sisters Education  
Collaborative  
*(Scranton)*

Holy Child Academy  
*(Drexel Hill)*

Holy Child School at Rosemont  
*(Rosemont)*

Hope Partnership for Education  
*(Philadelphia)*

Providence Center  
*(Philadelphia)*

Rosemont College  
*(Rosemont)*

## CHILE

Centro Cornelia Connelly  
*(Santiago)*

# SAVE THE DATE

**Saint Leonard's Academy, Philadelphia**  
**All-Class Reunion**  
**Saturday, March 22, 2025**

**SHCJ Jubilee Celebration**  
**Rosemont, Pennsylvania**  
**Saturday, June 21, 2025**

**Saint Leonard's Academy, Philadelphia**  
**50th Reunion, Class of 1975**  
**Saturday, August 23, 2025**

**Holy Child High School,**  
**Waukegan, Illinois**  
**50th Reunion, Class of 1975**  
**Saturday, September 13, 2025**

**Have you moved or changed  
your e-mail address?**

**Please send your  
updated information  
to [holychildsisters@shcj.org](mailto:holychildsisters@shcj.org).**