

The Associate Life

in Union with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas

Loving God and the Dear Neighbor without Distinction

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We're starting a newsletter!

The CSJA newsletter will share information among all of the CSJ Associate groups. We will include Associate interviews, highlight CSJ Congregational activities that Associates may attend, and provide a directory of Associate groups. Since this is the inaugural issue, we intend for this newsletter to grow and evolve. Stay tuned for new sections and feel free to send your ideas and suggestions to Jo Foy, CSJA Communications Coordinator, jofoy2009@live.com or 785.764.2129.

What Happens at CSJ Assemblies?

In partnership with the CSJ Congregation, Associates may attend CSJ community events such as Assemblies. On p. 6 of the CSJA handbook, it says "As appropriate, they will be invited to participate at CSJ assemblies, circle meetings, and celebrations, and to participate in the life and ministry of the Congregation." There are two primary Assemblies during the calendar year: one in June and one in October.

In 2024 several Associates attended the June Assembly in person and the October Assembly by Zoom. Manna House provides lodging while the main events occur at the Motherhouse each day of the June Assembly. Contact Vicky Thoman at the CSJ Center to arrange accommodations and for meal planning. In June four Sisters from Brazil attended, as well as the Vietnamese Sisters living at the Motherhouse. The Ukrainian family living at the Mound Street house joined us regularly. We ate at least one Brazilian meal, one Vietnamese meal and Ukrainian desserts. Yum!

This year's June Assembly celebrated a change in leadership which occurs every four years. Although the changing of leadership is a sacred event, the activities of the June Assembly were fun and full of light and laughter. We prayed. We sang. We line danced. We ate.

As important members of the CSJ family, Associates are welcome and invited to Assemblies to experience what's happening in the community, build and nourish relationships, celebrate and share in the charism. Watch for the June Assembly announcement in CONNECTIONS and begin planning now to attend the next Assembly in June, 2025.

What are the origins of the CSJ Assemblies?

When the Concordia Sisters were mostly teachers and/or healthcare professionals, getting everyone together on a regular basis was difficult. Since teachers were off in the summer, teaching Sisters “came home” once a year during the summer break. Another major reason for creating Assemblies after Vatican II was to build community among the many Sisters living and working in mission outside the Motherhouse. The Fall Assembly developed because more time was needed for fellowship and non-business conversation and dialogue. The Congregation places great importance in hearing everyone’s voice in celebrating their work and creating plans for the future. See Sr. Sally Witt’s BEYOND THE FRONTIER history of the CSJs for more information.

What are the benefits of attending an Assembly?

The primary benefit of attending an Assembly is to associate, to mingle, to break bread with, the Sisters. A secondary benefit is to observe how the Congregation makes decisions. Overall, Assemblies provide Associates with important opportunities to create relationships, to listen, to learn, and to share different perspectives. This is also a time to support the Sisters in their ministries and ongoing committees, such as Meaningful Conversations, Ecological Integrity, Immigration, and Justice and Peace.

What kinds of information were shared at the October Assembly?

Sr. Jean Rosemarynoski, Congregation President, welcomed by Zoom those in attendance. Some time was spent explaining and discussing the replacement of the dining room floor, as well as much of the paneling, etc. around the main dining room and the overflow room. Sr. Jean reminded those in attendance that the theme for CONNECTIONS this year is the *Essence of Religious Life*. A presentation by Bryan Massingale provided topics for reflection (https://www.lcwr.org/files/attachments/address_-_bryan_massingale.pdf).

Reviewing how the God of Adventure activates the CSJ Congregation, Sr. Jean spoke of boundaries shifting in this time of change, the Synod in session in Rome, and escalating violence around the world along with the challenges of climate change evidenced by Hurricane Helene. At the same time Sr. Jean exhorts those in attendance to look forward to Sr. Alexsandra’s preparing Brazil for canonical leadership in the future, to sharing the hospitality and charism of the CSJs with the Vietnamese seminarians arriving at Manna to learn English, and the ongoing teaching of Vietnamese sisters by Sisters and Agregees both in the US and in country by Zoom. Sr. Jean encourages everyone to read the End of Term booklet for the many ministries and activities over the past four years.

Also during October Assembly Sisters shared their reflections of being CSJs, their experiences and their hopes for the future. Committee leaders shared end of term reports in abbreviated form as time allowed. Throughout the Assembly there appeared to be a spirit of hope and encouragement for Sisters, Agregees, and Associates knowing our calling, “of being deeply in love with God, and our Beloved. We know that God still calls. God calls every day.”

If you have not received the 2020-2024 End of Term Booklet and you would like to read all 100 pages!, contact Vicky Thoman at the CSJ Center.

Salina CSJA Group Retreat*Gerry Parker*

Sr. Alexandra presented “Embracing the Cross” inspired by Fr. Barry’s sermon. Don’t just carry the cross, embrace it (embrace the cross you are carrying). First is a reminder not to give in to fear. Secondly, every trial is a trial of faith or hope or love.

Discussion and reflection followed during our four hour gathering.

Want more CSJ news?

Associates can access CSJ news through the CONNECTIONS (emailed once a month), The Messenger (snail-mailed), the CSJ website (<https://www.csjkansas.org/>), the CSJ Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/csjdbcordiaaks>), and CSJ Center emails (csjcenter@csjkansas.org). Check with Vicky Thoman at the CSJ Center if you are not receiving CONNECTIONS or The Messenger yet. Please read the news and keep all in our congregation, families, communities, employees and the world in prayer.

Topeka/Manhattan New Member News*Catherine Seitz*

In August, the Topeka/Manhattan Associate group welcomed Anna Mitchell as a Candidate to the Associate program. The Welcoming Rite ceremony was held in Salina where she received a copy of the Maxims, a candle, and our support for her candidacy year of formation. Anna teaches middle school and lives in the Wichita area. Sr. Anna Marie Broxterman, her aunt, sponsored her. The group shared prayers, much laughter and conversation, and ended the celebration with a delicious meal at the Olive Garden.

Maxim of Perfection**Maxim 1****(Maxims of the Little Institute)**

Keep always in mind the aim of your vocation which is sublime; and never do anything which contradicts the commitment to a life full of modesty, gentleness, and holiness.



Directory of CSJA Groups

CSJA GROUP	ANIMATOR	NEXT MEETING	NOTES
Concordia	Sr. Janet Lander, srjanetmary@gmail.com		8 active members 4 praying members
Salina	Gerry Parker, gacparker@cox.net		3 active members
Manhattan/ Topeka	Sr. Anna Marie Broxterman, annacsj@ksjkansas.org	Last Saturday of January by Zoom	3 active members
Kansas City	Stephanie Hudson, stephehud@gmail.com	Saturday Mass at 4pm	2 active members
Western Kansas	Rosalita Flax, rflax@gbta.net	quarterly at Mass	4 active members
Silver City, NM	Sr. Rosemary Farrell, rkfarrell@csjkansas.org	First Sunday in February	5 active members; 8 praying members
Brazil			60 active members

DID YOU KNOW?

Sisters of St. Joseph number 14,000 members in 55 countries (source: <https://cssjfed.org/about-us/international-center/>).

Contact Information for the Associate Team

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SAVE THE DATE

**March 28-30, 2025 -- CSJ
Annual Retreat, Manna House,
Concordia, KS**

June 2025 Assembly

**July 18-20, 2025 -- 375th SSJ
Anniversary Celebration, St.
Louis, MO**

October 2025 Assembly