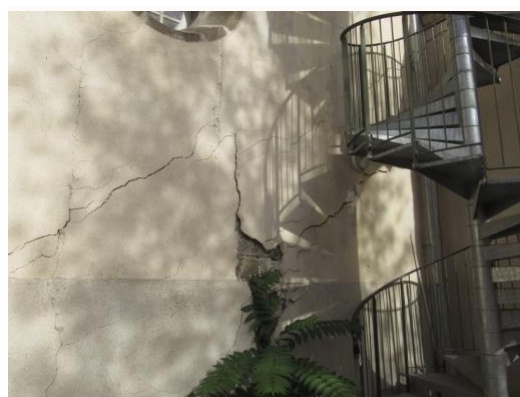


Damaged Building Forces Closure of the Scenography



Cracks on the interior and exterior due to structural damage of the four-story building that housed the [Living History Centre \(Scenography\)](#) since 2016 has led to the need to close it. The building was in the courtyard of the Institute of St. Joseph (the Le Puy sisters) and constructed in 1846. A structural engineer assessed the building and determined that it was too dangerous for the public to enter it. Fortunately, the damaged building will have *no* effect on the Kitchen. Studies are being conducted to find another place for the Scenography.



Although we will no longer have the Scenography as we have known it, the entire timeline has been preserved in a PowerPoint presentation on the [Centre's website](#). This presentation is available to all for study and teaching in 5 languages: [English](#), [French](#), [Italian](#), [Portuguese](#), and [Spanish](#). We encourage you to view it and refer to it regarding the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

The Lace Is Not Yet Finished



“The Lace Is Not Yet Finished” program met for a week in August with Sister Jane DeLisle, (Orange-USA) as presenter. Sisters from Brazil and the USA attended the program. Unfortunately, five Indian sisters scheduled to attend had complications with their visas that prevented them from coming. Many thanks to our translator, Sister Marlena Roeger (Rochester-USA) who has lived in Brazil for the past 43 years. [Click here](#) to see more photos on the Centre blog.

Mission Effectiveness



This year's Mission Effectiveness program was a hybrid zoom and in-person experience Sept 21-Oct 1. Sister Dolores Clerico (Philadelphia-USA) zoomed in from the USA with the 18 participants from Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Wales, and the USA. Sister Phyllis DiFuccia (Erie-USA) coordinated the program on-site in Le Puy while Sister Marlena Roeger (Rochester-USA) served as Portuguese-English translator. It was the first year that people from Denmark and Wales participated. The program provided a meaningful and profound experience for everyone as the participants committed themselves to adopt and live-out the charism.

[Click here](#) to see more photos

Visitors to the Centre

Five French provincial leaders of the Lyon Congregation spent four days in August at the Centre preparing for next year's chapter where they were revising their constitutions. We provided hospitality for them and a comfortable workspace so that they could accomplish their goals. It was a joy to have them with us to share meals and to speak totally in French.



Sisters Preeti Hulas and Siluvai Santhi of the Chambéry Congregation spent a day with us at the Centre last September. They saw all the historical sites in Le Puy and had lunch with us. Sister Preeti is a Portuguese-English translator for the Congregation. She studied the language in Brazil and is now working in Rome with the General Council. She was also on hand to translate for the Brazilians who participated in the Mission Effectiveness program during their visit to Rome.



John and Carolyn Fletcher were on a mission. First, their visit to France included a week of bicycling through Provence. Then, they couldn't be so close to Le Puy without visit. John's sister is a sister from Rochester, New York, and he wanted to take pictures of the Kitchen to share with her. The Fletchers live in Portland, Oregon.

CSJ Pilgrimage/Retreat 2022



The annual pilgrimage of the Congregation of St. Joseph took place October 5-10 in Le Puy was led by Sister Carol Crepeau. As a part of the pilgrimage, the group spent a day in La Chaise Dieu, site of the Benedictine abbey founded in 1043 by Robert de Turlande (left) and reconstructed in the 14th century by Pope Clement VI. Some members went on a tour of the abbey, which included a visit to the Medieval tapestries that used to hang in the chapel but are now preserved in one of the halls of the abbey. After leaving Le Puy, the group visited Lyon, Annecy, and Taizé before they headed back to the USA on October 15.



The group sits in the medieval monks' stalls for Mass in the chapel at La Chaise Dieu abbey.

[Click here](#) to see more photos of the pilgrimage.

Mission in Russia from 1862 to 1922

by Sr. Benedicte de Vaublanc, Chambéry

When Sisters were called to Russia, the situation for Orthodox Russians was very difficult. The Sisters' arrival there had to take place with the greatest discretion in order not to bring about persecution. The Sisters arrived in lay clothes. All proselytism was forbidden, and correspondence controlled by the Tsar's police.

Development of the Russian Province – A first effort with an orphanage in Saint Petersburg met with failure. In 1872, the Sisters were called to Moscow to open the Saint Peter and Paul School, which welcomed orphans and poor children from the Polish parish. The French parish in Moscow requested their presence in a home for the elderly, Saint Darius, and asked them to open Saint Catherine School for the privileged. This was soon followed by a day nursery for children of the working classes. Saint Petersburg asked the Sisters to staff a hospital, an orphanage, a boarding facility for teachers, a clinic, and an international orphanage.

More foundations followed, such as an orphanage in Odessa on the Black Sea and a school in Tarnopol, in Poland, close to the Russian border. The latter was founded in 1903 with a view to having a permanent novitiate, allowing for the recruitment of Sisters, indispensable for the mission in Russian territory. In 1912, the Russian Province had 98 Sisters serving in 10 establishments, serving 985 students and 420 sick and infirm.

Sisters on the Russian front in 1914 – At the beginning of World War I, three Sisters went to nurse Russian soldiers on the front. Their ambulance was surrounded by the Germans, and the personnel and wounded were soon prisoners. Under mortar fire, exhausting work went on day and night to treat the German and Russian wounded. After six weeks of captivity, the Sisters were freed and triumphantly welcomed back to Saint Petersburg (1).



The revolution de 1917 – Upon the Tsar’s abdication in Saint Petersburg, the Bolsheviks took power and established themselves in Moscow. Everything was nationalized: schools, churches, apartments,

and commerce. There were no supplies, famine reigned, mothers had to go to work, and their children spent time in centers where it was forbidden to speak of God and to teach religion. Since France did not recognize the new government, any French citizen was under suspicion.

In September, 1918, four Sisters from Saint Catherine School were arrested and transferred to overcrowded prisons in terrible conditions where common criminals ruled. Three of the Sisters were released without trial after one month, but Mother Adèle Dejay would spend three more months there. Mother Josephine Morens, administrator of the Saint Peter and Paul School, would also remain a prisoner for three more months until she was declared innocent.

The administrator of a school in Saint Petersburg, Sister Anastasie Girard who had become a Russian citizen, was arrested on Easter 1920, through an error in her identity. After 325 days of detention, she was freed and then newly accused of espionage. Arrested again, she was imprisoned with those sentenced to death and the deported. She saw prisoners depart for Siberia, “scarcely dressed, with some barefoot.” (2) She had only prayer as a resource. Two months later, she was freed without explanation.

The departure and abandonment of the missions – From 1919 on, all French citizens had to leave the Russian territory. As much as they could, even upon leaving prison, the Sisters took up their missions once again. When this became impossible, they entrusted their works to personnel, parents and to former students. Sister Anastasie and Sister Gasparine were the last to be repatriated to France in July 1922. This was a very difficult time for the Sisters, who had devoted all their strength and their hearts to Russia, “With our hearts broken at leaving so many children and so many friends who could not follow with us, only our prayer could help them. Only God can come to their aid,” said Mother Anastasie Girard.

1 *Journal de Sœur Amédée Philippe, prisonnière des soldats Allemands en 1915.*

2 *Recit de Mère Marie-Anastasie Girard.*

The Global Coordinating Committee



The Global Coordinating Committee (GCG) met on October 22-24 to discuss various issues pertinent to the Sisters of St. Joseph worldwide. Congregational leaders from Argentina, Canada, France, Italy, the UK, and the USA attended. One of the group's important discussions was how to inform and deepen the charism with our lay partners and friends.

The GCG examines social justice on a global scale and advocated for the second of two Roots and Wings programs for young sisters making final profession.

The Global Coordinating Committee also supports representation of the Sisters of St. Joseph at the United Nations. Sister Barbara Bozak (Chambéry-USA) is our delegate. [Click here](#) for an outline of her report.

Sister Mary Elizabeth Nelsen (Orange-USA) displayed some posters that she painted in watercolors that she used as themes for the three-day meetings.



The International Centre Board



Sister Vianney



Sister Celine

Two new members joined the Centre Board: Sister Celine Kathathoor (Chambéry-India) and Ms. Carole Umana of the Canadian Federation (on the right standing). Other members include (standing) Sister Lucia Gallo of the Italian Federation, Sister Catherine Barange of the Lyon Congregation (secretary), Sister Odile Gaillard of the Institute St. Joseph (treasurer), and Sister Maryellen Kane of the US Federation (president). Seated is Sister Simone Saugues of the Institute St. Joseph (translator), Sister Dolores Lahrs of the Chambéry Congregation substituting for Sister Celine who was unable to attend the meeting and Sister Vianney Thanniath of the Annecy Congregation (vice president).