MONTHLY DIGEST JUNE 2026

A resource to animate education, prayer, advocacy, and action among the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Philadelphia, our Associates, and Partners in Mission.

We continue to hold in prayer and reflection the Direction Statement of the General Chapter 2024, part of which states, "[We commit] To be a healing presence, advocating with and responding to persons experiencing marginalization and addressing human activity and systemic injustices responsible for the abuse of Earth and the miseries of our day."

POLICY UPDATE: CEASE FIRE UPDATE ON COMMON SENSE GUN LEGISLATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

Cease Fire PA is a statewide advocacy organization focused on reducing gun violence through education, public policy, and community action in Pennsylvania. The organization works with survivors, faith leaders, healthcare professionals, educators, and community groups to advocate for what it describes as "common sense" gun safety laws. Their efforts focus on preventing firearm suicides, community violence, domestic violence shootings, and mass shootings.

On Tuesday, June 2, 2026, Cease Fire PA and partner organizations will host their annual "End Gun Violence Advocacy Day" at the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg. Participants will gather to meet with legislators, rally publicly, and encourage lawmakers to support gun violence prevention measures.

Advocacy Day is intended to bring together Pennsylvanians affected by gun violence while encouraging civic engagement and direct advocacy with elected officials. The event also seeks to promote legislation that the organization believes will improve public safety and demonstrate public support for evidence-based firearm policies. Through its "Common Agenda to End Gun Violence," Cease Fire PA supports measures such as universal background checks for all firearm sales, safe firearm storage laws, reporting requirements for lost or stolen firearms, Extreme Risk Protection Orders, waiting periods for firearm purchases, and increased investment in community violence prevention programs. The organization states that these proposals are designed to help reduce suicides, illegal firearm trafficking, accidental shootings, and gun-related deaths throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Resources:

Cease Fire PA: Our Story
https://www.ceasefirepa.org/about-us/our-story/

Cease Fire PA: Common Agenda
https://www.ceasefirepa.org/our-work/common-agenda/

End Gun Violence Advocacy Day
https://act.ceasefirepa.org/a/advocacy-day-2026

Advocacy:

Below is information about two Secure Storage bills introduced by Representative Tim Briggs. Please use the link below to sign up for advocacy:

Take action now and tell your rep to sign on as a co-sponsor of HB 2244 and HB 2245.

- HB 2244 is PA's secure storage bill.
- HB 2245 would eliminate the sales taxes on gun locks and gun safes sold in PA to help get secure storage devices into the hands of more gun owners.

UPDATE: ENCYCLICAL LETTER MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS POPE LEO XIV

On May 25, 2016, the presentation and promulgation of Pope Leo XIV's Encyclical Letter, *Magnifica Humanitas* was held at Synod Hall in the Vatican. This is the Pope's first Encyclical Letter.

At the presentation of his first social encyclical Pope Leo XIV appealed for artificial intelligence to be placed firmly at the service of humanity, warning against technologies that foster domination, exclusion and war.

Addressing participants gathered in the Synod Hall on Monday for the presentation of the encyclical, the Pope described the current technological revolution as an "epochal turning point" comparable to the upheaval confronted by Pope Leo XIII during the Industrial Revolution. (Source: Vatican News)

To read more about his historic Encyclical Letter as well as the Encyclical Letter itself please click on the links below:

https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2026-05/pope-leo-xiv-encyclical-magnifica-humanitas-ai.html

https://www.usccb.org/news/2026/pope-urges-humanity-build-civilization-love-digital-world

https://www.usccb.org/magnifica-humanitas

https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/events/event.dir.html/content/vaticanevents/en/2026/5/25/presentazione-enciclica.html

https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY: HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

Throughout the United States and around the world, human trafficking continues to be a widespread form of exploitation that impacts individuals and groups globally. While large-scale sporting events generate visibility, economic growth, and international participation, these events may also create circumstances that heighten vulnerability to exploitation.

According to the Alliance to End Human Trafficking, human trafficking is not confined to the timeframe of these events alone as they often exist within local industries and community systems. However, it is important to understand that both labor and sex trafficking can take place before, during, and long after an event has ended. Through increased awareness, collaboration, and communication organizers of these events can take a survivor-center approach to help ensure that major sponsored events promote safety, dignity, and accountability during the event and after.

In July of 2026, Philadelphia will celebrate the nation's 250th anniversary and was chosen to host events connected to the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Philadelphia was chosen because of its deep historical significance, strong infrastructure, and ability to welcome large international events. As the birthplace of American democracy and home to landmarks such as Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, the city holds a central role in the story of the United States.

As Philadelphia and other cities prepare to host large public events connected to the 2026 World Cup and national celebrations, it is important to remain aware of the heightened risk of human trafficking that can occur during large gatherings. Increased tourism, temporary labor demands, and crowded public spaces can create conditions where exploitation can become more difficult to recognize. Promoting awareness, education and community vigilance can help protect vulnerable individuals and encourage a culture of safety, dignity, and accountability throughout these events.

Advocacy:

Contact your Representative to ask them to pass the bipartisan Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1144) This legislation is key for the prevention of human trafficking and the prosecution of perpetrators - and to ensuring that survivors get the support they need to heal and thrive. Click here to contact your representative https://www.congressweb.com/GSNAC/383/

Resources:

Alliance to End Human Trafficking
https://alliancetoendhumantrafficking.org/

Indicators of Human Trafficking:
https://alliancetoendhumantrafficking.org/faqs/#human-trafficking

City of Philadelphia
https://www.phila.gov/2026-04-17-fifa-world-cup-2026-philadelphia-safety-and-event-information/

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHT: TOOLS FOR POLARIZED TIMES

In our current times of political division, many congregations of women religious are seeking tools and models to facilitate conversations across differences. At a recent gathering of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), leaders, communicators, and justice promoters learned one such model from Irshad Manji, the founder of the Moral Courage College. Manji teaches five core practices that help people engage across political, racial, and cultural differences with empathy and integrity.

The first skill is to pause and breathe before reacting. A moment of reflection allows reason and compassion to guide the discussion. Second, moral courage encourages people not only to seek common ground, but to intentionally create it. Even amid disagreement, recognizing shared humanity builds trust and reduces hostility. Third, conversation partners are called to ask sincere questions before defending their own positions. Genuine curiosity opens the door to understanding rather than debate. The fourth skill is listening to learn, not to win. In a culture that rewards quick rebuttals, careful listening demonstrates respect and humility. Finally, moral courage invites people to ask, “Tell me more.” Continuing the conversation rather than shutting it down creates opportunities for deeper connection and growth. These five skills offer a powerful framework for navigating today’s polarized world with empathy, honesty, and courage.

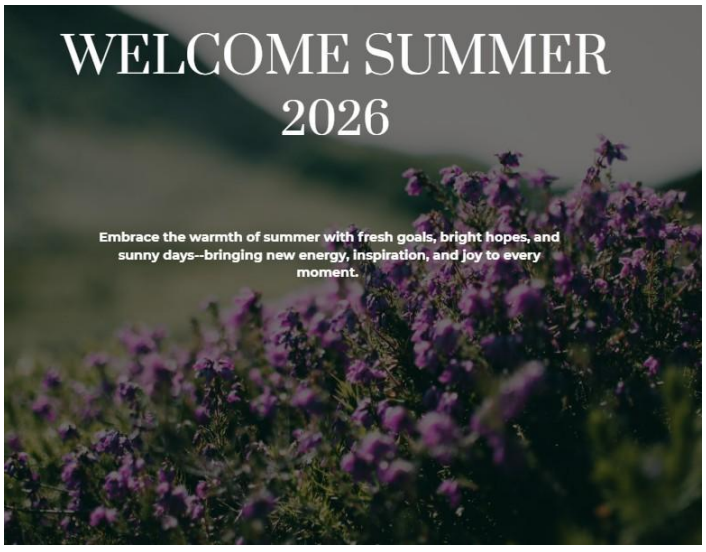
PRAYER AND REFLECTION: JUNE 2026

June is a time to look forward to the pace of summer, which gently invites us into longer days and quieter moments. This season offers an important reminder for all engaged in justice ministry: stepping away is not stepping aside. Those who labor for peace, human dignity, and care of creation often carry the weight of urgent concerns, constant advocacy, and the deep desire to respond faithfully to the needs of our world. Yet even the most committed hearts require moments of pause.

Reflection and renewal are essential parts of sustaining the work of justice. Time away from the noise of constant action allows space to listen more deeply—to God, to one another, and to feel the presence of the Spirit within our work and in our lives. In these moments of rest, we pray that we will rediscover clarity, hope, and the strength needed for the journey ahead.

Summer can become a sacred invitation to slow down intentionally. Whether through prayer, reading, time in nature, quiet conversation, or simply allowing ourselves time to appreciate moments of stillness and renewal that helps ground the work of justice with compassion and a clearer sense of nurturing ourselves and our communities.

Our Monthly Digest will return in September, and will continue to offer opportunities for prayer, education, and advocacy. As we move through these summer months, may this season bring moments of renewal, rest, and quiet reflection, allowing us to return to the work of justice grounded in the hope that we can continue to build a more compassionate and just world.



"Rest" *by Christina Rossetti*

O Earth, lie heavily upon her eyes; Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth; Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs. She hath no questions, she hath no replies, Hushed in and curtained with a blessèd dearth Of all that irked her from the hour of birth; With stillness that is almost Paradise.

Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

LOOKING AHEAD: JUNE 2026

- * Monday, June 1st at 1PM - SSJ Corporate Stand prayer witness at Sacred Heart Church in Camden.
- Tuesday, June 2 - Advocacy Day with Ceasefire PA in Harrisburg
- Tuesday, June 2 from 3-4:15PM - Georgetown's Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life will offer a panel discussion on Pope Leo's new encyclical. Panelists include Archbishop Coakley, Emilce Cuda, Daniel Daly, Meghan Sullivan, Bishop Tighe. Register here. This event will be recorded and posted later online.
- Friday, June 5th at 2PM - First Friday monthly vigil with Catholic Mobilizing Network to end the death penalty. You can join the prayer live (register here) or see the recording on CMN's YouTube channel.
- * Friday evening, June 5th at the Gesu School with Ignatian Volunteer Corps - Stories That Shape Us: An Ignatian Reflection on Work, Faith, and Service at Every Stage in Life featuring Fr. James Martin, SJ, and the Honorable Bob Casey, Jr. - 6PM for networking, 7PM for the program - Note: Three Sisters of Saint Joseph are currently Ignatian Volunteers - event is free - register here.
- * Saturday, June 6 from 10AM-12PM - Faithful Philadelphia Corpus Christi Eucharistic Procession in South Philadelphia from Annunciation BVM to Shrine of St. Rita - flyer in English, flyer in Spanish - RSVP here.
- Tuesday, June 9 - Advocacy Day with Clean Water Action in Harrisburg
- * Thursday, June 11 at 7:30PM - Join The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph for a panel of speakers from across the CSSJ community who will offer initial thoughts on the document from their respective areas of experience and expertise, including theology, technology, and justice. Panelists include Sr. Colleen Gibson, SSJ, Coordinator of Pastoral Care at St. John-St. Paul Catholic Collaborative in Wellesley, MA and Mr. Fred Robinson, Director of Technology for the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Brentwood, NY. The one-hour session will include Q&A from participants. A link to a recording of the panel will be sent to those who register. Register here.
- * Tuesday, June 16 - Alliance to End Human Trafficking events at Motherhouse and Villa during this first week of the World Cup. These events include prayer at 11:45AM at the Motherhouse, a brief intro during lunch, and an opportunity for Sisters at the Villa to engage more in the afternoon - stay tuned for more details!
- * Thursday, June 18 from 12-12:30 - U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph - Dear Neighbor Series: LGBTQIA+ Pride Month. Register here.

- Thursday, June 25 at 12PM - LCWR prayer for 250th anniversary of the U.S. More info here on page 4.
- Saturday, June 27 - A Day of Reflection on Social Justice with Sister Carol Zinn, SSJ at Daylesford Abbey. A flyer is here
- Saturday, June 27 - Pax Christi Statewide Summit in Camp Hill, PA - more info and register here

*Indicates a CSSJ sponsored or co-sponsored local or virtual event.