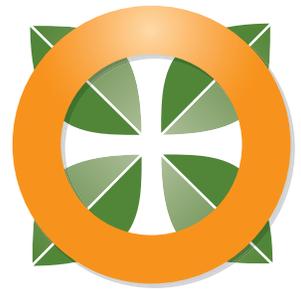


# Mission Messages

A publication of the **St. Joseph Worker Program of Orange**

Spring 2019



## Working Together to Bridge Social Issues

For the past three years, St. Joseph Workers and Staff from Brentwood (NY), St. Paul (MN), Los Angeles, Napa, and Orange (CA) have gathered annually for one weekend in Orange, CA. The time centers on growing in the mission and core values, as well as connecting with fellow St. Joseph Workers.

On Saturday, January 26th, we joined together to complete a community human trafficking project. The morning began with a presentation by Dr. Sandra Morgan, from the Global Center for Women & Justice at Vanguard University, who is globally recognized for her expertise on combating human trafficking and working to end violence against women. We then divided the city to work with over 100 local businesses regarding Assembly Bill 2034, which requires 13 types of businesses in California to have information posted on human trafficking in the entrance. We handed out posters in five different languages, provided education, and we are inspired to do more!

Check out the bill at <http://bit.ly/AB2034> to learn more and listen to this podcast <http://bit.ly/SandraMorganPod> by Dr. Sandra Morgan which explains how you can also get your community involved!

### **Mission**

Empowering women to respond to the needs of the times in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

### **Vision**

We create a year-long service opportunity for women in preparation for a life-long commitment to social change and personal transformation. Individual growth and development is built on the values of leadership, spirituality, social justice and intentional community grounded in living simply and sustainably. Rooted within the spirit of the Sisters of St. Joseph, St. Joseph Workers live the mission: "Love of God and the dear neighbor without distinction."

### **You're Invited**

We invite women aged 21-35 to become St. Joseph Workers from August to June.

### **Contact**

Sister Joanna Rosciszewska: 714-515-0471  
Gena Gadiant: ggadiant@csjorange.org

[www.sjworange.org](http://www.sjworange.org)

**A Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange**

# Bridging the Immigration Gap at the Border

*In Fall 2018, the St. Joseph Workers traveled to many different service sites and engaged in outreach and social justice opportunities. They shared meals with individuals experiencing homelessness, spent time at Sr. Alicia Rivera's mission in Tijuana, participated in the Interfaith Prayer Service at San Juan Capistrano Basilica, and walked along the U.S.-Mexico border in solidarity with migrants.*



On December 8, 2018, I headed to San Diego with a trunk full of toiletries and feminine hygiene products. I met up with about 100 other people who were willing to drive down to Tijuana to aid the refugees any way that we could. After some organization of cars and donations, we headed down south in a caravan of our own to Barretal, the main shelter for the migrants. I was inspired by how many people were willing to pack up their trunks and donate their time to this cause, but I was even more inspired to talk to the refugees who had left everything behind.

Seeing the kids at the shelter made me realize that they had seen so much at such a young age and traveled so far to be sleeping under thin tents that had been worn down by the rain the previous week. Seeing the parents at the shelter made me realize that they must have had so much hardship and fear in their daily lives to completely relocate their family and make the treacherous journey up north. Every story that they shared with me moved me to tears and all shared the common theme of love – they made the decision to make the dangerous journey in order to help those they love. Parents did it for their children, adults did it for their families back home. Each story brought up a loved one for whom the migrants were trying to get a better life.

So how can we stand in solidarity with our migrant brothers and sisters? We too should love one another.

With immigrants today, with immigrants tomorrow.

*- Fernanda Velazco, 2016-2017 SJW*



*“Solidarity is embracing the complexities of your unique identity and empowering our neighbors experiencing systemic oppression to do the same. Solidarity is inviting all to join in this circle of compassion so that we can live in a just society. The great poet Maya Angelou wrote, ‘Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope.’ This is my prayer: that we may come together in unity so that our love can change the world.”*

*-Luz Peredo-Muniz, SJW 2018-2019*



# Together, May We Continue to Build Bridges With ALL We Encounter

Last month, I had the privilege of getting involved with a truly powerful project organized by the St. Joseph Worker Program concerning human trafficking. Prior to my experience with this event, I believed that I was already knowledgeable about the extent of human trafficking around the world. Little did I know how impactful this project would be on not only the community, but also my own understanding and awareness about this social issue. Initially, we were tasked with making calls to various businesses around Orange County to spread awareness about Assembly Bill 2034 Section 52.6. This bill requires specific institutions to post information about human trafficking hotlines to the public and employees. It was shocking to discover very few institutions were even aware of this mandate, making it clear that human trafficking was not being taken as seriously as it should be.

Then the day came to distribute our informational posters around the community. We began our morning listening to Dr. Sandra Morgan share her expertise about the fight against human trafficking. Immediately, I was shocked to learn not only about the intricacy of

the human trafficking business, but also how present it is in our community. From exploited immigrants to an entire underground child labor organization in Africa, the human trafficking trade preys on millions. It was heartbreaking to hear the individual stories of victims trafficked for exploitation all around the world. From this one presentation, my perception of human trafficking completely changed, and I realized just how necessary this project was for our community.

Overall, I was beyond grateful to join a group of women who shared a passion for making a difference in the community. This experience taught me the importance of educating yourself and studying issues like human trafficking, becoming a voice in your community, and working to make a difference. Thank you to all of the amazing women I met through this project for being powerful role models in our community and making a difference in the lives of those around you.



*Natasha Pena is a high school junior collaborating with the St. Joseph Worker Program*

# Service Year- A Foundation for the Future

## What most touched your heart during your time in the SJWP?

My heart was touched most by the people I was surrounded by and the connections we shared. I felt a special connection with my fellow SJWs, my colleagues and those



I served at Taller San Jose Hope Builders (TSJ), and the Sisters of St. Joseph. We all supported each other in different capacities. I always knew I

would have my fellow SJWs at home and be able to share our joys and challenges of the day. I will never forget the joy and gratitude expressed by the trainees at TSJ when they did well on a test or assignment after studying with me or asking for extra help. I will never forget the generosity expressed to me by my colleagues at TSJ and my fellow SJWs. The Sisters of St. Joseph were always there when I needed them, and I loved the quality time I spent with them in both work and play. Everyone was always so nice to us and often invited us for meals and small outings. It was so humbling to learn how to receive that generosity and accept it as a gift for giving of myself for a year. In giving you shall receive. I received much more than I could have ever imagined during my SJW year.

## What did you learn and where are you now with those experiences/values/reflection?

As I look back on my SJW year, I've learned to focus more on living in the moment and savor the graces that

each life experience brings. I have learned not to focus so much on what's next or question what the experience is leading me to. With every experience, whether positive or less than positive, I try to embrace it, love it, and let it go, trusting that it is a building block within God's plan for me. Each experience in life will come and go, and it is important for me, at this stage in my life, to have the wisdom to recognize the blessings that come and learn from the challenges. My SJW year provided me with many meaningful building blocks that contributed to the person I am today, the person that God created me to be.

## What advice would you offer potential/future SJWs?

**In giving you shall receive.** As you give of yourself, you will be surrounded by great generosity. Humble yourself to accept this generosity with an open heart. **Savor the graces you receive during your St. Joseph Worker year.**

Enjoy your time with those you serve, your fellow St. Joseph Workers, and the Sisters of St. Joseph because your time with them passes by quickly. **Trust in God and keep your heart open to all possibilities.** As the moon rises so do the possibilities.

Remember that you were made for mission. Do not lose the momentum you have gained through your experiences as a St. Joseph Worker. Continue to be the light of the world wherever God leads you next.



*-Celina Roybal, SJW 2015-2016*

## Thank you for your support!

We are grateful for the many ways you support the St. Joseph the Worker Program – your presence, prayers and contributions - spreading the news and sharing your resources! Each St. Joseph Worker is placed at a local site where their gifts and talents are needed most. Because of your support we are able to focus on the values and the personal development needs of the women who serve.

We welcome any amount to help us cover these expenses for one worker:

- \$1000 monthly room and board
- \$250 project service at the border
- \$50 monthly transportation to worksite.

Please consider a gift to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange. Donations are graciously and gratefully accepted:

- Online at [sjworange.org](http://sjworange.org)
- Mailed to St. Joseph Worker Program at 440 S Batavia St, Orange, CA 92868