

Mission Messages

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

Spring 2022



Discover the Signs, Create the Journey



Traffic signs guide, warn, and regulate the flow of vehicle or pedestrian traffic. Some have universal meaning. The stop sign in most countries is a red octagon or circle with white lettering and everyone knows what to do when they see it. Physical signs like this can create metaphorical connections and other symbolism to those that see them.

As we entered the final 100 days of the 2021-2022 program year, our SJWs discern the next steps on their journey. They've reflected on their year of service and the signs that have guided them. Like when driving a car, they are paying close attention to signs along their highway of life.

The signs have deeper meanings: to go a different way, understand that as one path ends another path emerges, the importance of not stopping, and that it is okay to take a break. Their journey has been paved with lessons in personal growth and development.

We invite you to join with our SJWs and pay attention to actual road signs. What metaphorical symbolism do you recognize for your journey? Perhaps you will find a specific reminder to guide you to your destination.

You're Invited

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

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.

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A Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange

Emily: Navigating the Way Forward

I choose a sign that depicts a two-lane road merging into one when the right lane ends. This year has presented new opportunities to challenge myself and to try new things and although this lane of my life will be ending soon, I don't plan on getting off the road I'm traveling on. I'll take what I've learned about the values of service, simplicity, and leadership and also the memories I've made at my service site, the Regina Residence, and with my community from this year with me as my lanes merge.

Emily Michaelis is from the University of Central Missouri currently serving as Activities Assistant, St. Joseph Center Regina Residence, Orange, CA.



Nina: Keep Going!

The sign I chose was "No stopping at any time." Although the phrasing of the sign is a bit absolute, it still speaks to my experience during this year of service. There have been many times - whether due to homesickness, adjusting to a new place and way of life, or being overwhelmed with fulfilling the responsibilities I have to my community and job - where this year has made me want to "stop" and abandon all my responsibilities for a moment. But instead, I've learned to persevere, to be more resilient, and to honor my needs and values through the process. Of course, it's good to pause every once in a while: to rest, to reflect, and to recharge. But in this year of service, I have also learned the importance of not stopping just because something is difficult. Oftentimes, these difficulties turn out to be the most fruitful experiences.

Nina Dorsett graduated from Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. She is currently serving as Campus Ministry Assistant at Rosary Academy, Fullerton, CA.



Emma: Discovering a New Path

The sign I have chosen to represent my year of service is a “Detour” sign. A detour invites us to go a different way; or to change route. In my year of service, I have experienced so many opportunities to change my way of life and learn what it means to be for and with others. I came into this year hoping I would be able to build meaningful relationships with the children of St. Joseph School and with my fellow community members. While I think I have been successful in this, I could have never anticipated the challenges that would come along with it. I will not lie, there were times where I wanted to give up and, in those times, I had to look for a new way. This year has taught me, there is always another route. Failure does not have to be a destination; it can be an opened door to a new path.

Emma Shay is from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio and is currently serving as Classroom Aide at St. Joseph School, Santa Ana, CA

Cindy: One Dream, Infinite Options

The sign I chose to represent my year of service is the roundabout circle. A circle is usually thought of as something infinite and it is, but a circle has a million different points of exit and entry. I felt for a long time that I needed to stay within the circle and just focus on one thing, never really venturing too far out. This program made me realize that although the things you focus on are important, you should explore and see new things and grow.

I came here with one focus and that is still my main focus, but I learned that it is okay to sometimes take a break from that and come back later or find new things you enjoy. It’s okay because that is a natural thing to do. We’re human. I’m human. When you take different exits, you can find things that you never knew you needed, and they lead back to that initial focus or dream you had with more knowledge and resolve.

All in all, I, would say the program taught me that although our lives have a tendency to be circular, especially as it pertains to our goals, the space between the beginning and end should not just be one thing.

Cindy Emenalo graduated from the University of Notre Dame and is currently serving at Mission Hospital/Family Resource Center, San Juan Capistrano, CA.





Under the guidance of St. Joseph in the St Joseph Worker house, staff and Workers ponder the possibilities. Our road to serve the dear neighbor in our community is comprised of many different paths to respond to the needs of the times.

"When I began the SJW Program, I thought my path was leading me to becoming a teacher. Over the past couple years, I have gained more clarity and now see my path as leading schools not with me taking the role of a teacher, but of a social worker."

Tricia, SJWP Alum 2020-21

"After my memorable time working with the Mission Hospital Family Resource Centers, I wanted to explore my interest in medicine. I worked for a private dermatology office in Los Angeles, but God quickly showed me that a shiny medical office does not substitute heart and mission. I decided to try something new and am now in a fellowship with Partners for Justice, a nonprofit that works with Public Defenders to break cycles of poverty and incarceration."

Soyeon, SJWP Alum 2020-21

◀ *Zig-zagging from the top to the foot of the stairs at the new St. Joseph Worker House are Mary Vagnone (staff), Emma, Emily, Nina, Christina Cardona (staff), Cindy, Sister Joanna Rosciszewska and Yesica Villalobos (staff).*



Help Us to Help the Dear Neighbor

Thank you for the many ways you support the St. Joseph the Worker Program – your presence, prayers and contributions - spreading the news and sharing your resources! Our financial needs are increasing as we have moved out of the Motherhouse to make way for Mercy Housing - Villa St. Joseph.

We welcome any amount to help us cover these expenses for one St. Joseph Worker:

- \$50 - weekly food costs
- \$100 - transportation to the service placement
- \$200 - Anti-Domestic Violence Advocate certification
- \$390 - monthly medical insurance per Worker

Please consider a gift. Donations are graciously and gratefully accepted:

- Online at sjworange.org
- Checks to St. Joseph Worker Program may be mailed to 440 S Batavia St, Orange, CA 92868