

Companions News

Welcome to the **JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS QUEENSLAND** Quarterly Newsletter
December 2023

Editorial

Joy during the Journey

So far this year, we've focused on three of Jesus' promises to us:

Hope, Love and Peace and now our emphasis is on **Joy!**

There are obviously different kinds of joy we experience during the course of a lifetime: from that of a happy preschooler to the satisfaction of achieving a university degree or trade or commercial qualifications; from the first foray into independent living in our teens, to the satisfaction of creating a home and nurturing children to adulthood; from the choice or acceptance of a single life, to embracing the gift of that vocation. Our lives are filled with opportunities to be joyful.

Christmas is an ideal time to us to contemplate the message proclaimed by the angel Gabriel to Mary when inviting her to accept her role in God's plan for our salvation. Beginning with "*Rejoice! The Lord is with you*" Gabriel went on to initiate the most intimate conversation that enabled us to become God's own children. As we contemplate Jesus' birth, we have pause to sing the song the angels sang on that first Christmas morning: "*Joy to the world!*"

Let's spend a few minutes contemplating:

- ◆ What brings joy to my life?
- ◆ Is there opportunity to increase that joy?
- ◆ How could I create more joy in the lives of others?



Saint Mary MacKillop understood that message of joy. Like Mary, the mother of Jesus, she knew that it was God's love coursing through her, that enabled God's work to proceed. She was under no illusion as to its root cause and also that it was God who would see it through. She wrote to the sisters in 1870, "*My heart is filled with a peace and joy that I cannot describe.*" Despite the privations of such an austere life; the challenges arising from Mary's determination that the sisters would be self sufficient and form their own particular constitution suited to an Australian situation; God's own particular work progressed. Ten years later it was no different as Mary encouraged her sisters, "*We have cause to be happy when we think of God's love.*"

This Christmas are we able, as Josephite Companions, to sing with the psalmist:

"God has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!"

How can we share the source of that joy with others?

Janette Dobson

Rockhampton Josephite Companion



QUEENSLAND COMPANIONS LEADERSHIP TEAM

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**FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
QUARTERLY NEWS PLEASE EMAIL:**
qld.companions@sosj.org.au



Being a Josephite Companion in 2023 and beyond...

Greetings everyone from the Queensland Josephite Companions Leadership Team. This year we developed our Companions' Jam Recipe and now we are looking at how to make variations to the recipe to fit the different palates that exists within our groups. Below is an outline to assist your groups to develop your 'Jam' in your own unique way.

It has been a busy year and we are looking forward to an exciting 2024. In 2023 we not only developed the 'Jam' recipe but we also participated in the inaugural 'Companions Day' in September and we look forward to continuing this tradition. In 2024 we will be planning a retreat in the first half of the year to allow people to participate in person or online...more details to come.

The Companion Movement has seen many changes in the last couple of years and 2024 will be no different. The Leadership Team is looking forward to working with JCoLT, our overarching leadership body, in developing the Companions not only in Queensland but across Australia and internationally.

The Leadership Team is farewelling Carolyn Grimward who has been volunteering in the office for the past five years. Carolyn has been a great support not only to the Queensland Companions but to myself as Chair. On behalf of the team and all the Queensland Companions I want to thank Carolyn for her support, dedication and friendship. Enjoy a well-deserved break.

Hoping you all have a peaceful Christmas and safe New Year. See you all in 2024.

Pauline McGuire

on behalf of the Josephite Companion Leadership Team Qld 2023

While making sure our unique flavour stays the same, as vibrant Josephite Companions, we want to ensure we are enriching and developing the Jam by:

Loving – ensuring our Josephite hearts are open to each other and the wider community.

What comes to mind for our group...

Nourishing – nourishing our groups through prayer and social gatherings that allows participation by all.

What comes to mind for our group...

Sharing – sharing with one another all that we can spare; time, talent or treasure.

What comes to mind for our group...

Listening – listening with Josephite compassion to the needs of our fellow companions, our families and all who need support.

What comes to mind for our group...

Evolving – by evolving and responding to the opportunities that arise, we ensure we are continuing to meet the needs of our time.

What comes to mind for our group...

Believing – believing in a loving, compassionate God strengthens our commitment to live justly, love tenderly and walk humbly as we travel the Josephite Path.

What comes to mind for our group...

Continued on page 3



Being a Josephite Companion in 2023 and beyond...

Continued from page 2

The Josephite Companion Movement is a group of like-minded people who embrace the Josephite Charism. We honour the history and stay connected through our relationships with the Sisters of St Joseph and our fellow Companions. We journey together as active members of our groups and the local community, encouraging variety and new beginnings through **Friendship, Prayer and Service**.

As people with Josephite Hearts, we extend the hand of friendship to our fellow Companions, the Sisters and all those who need a safe shoulder or a hand up.

Following the example of St Joseph, St Mary of the Cross and Fr Julian Tenison Woods, we value a prayerful life, allowing prayer to strengthen our relationship with God and relying on this relationship to keep us centred and focused in our daily lives.

Our baptismal call leads us to service. We endeavour to undertake our service and all aspects of our lives, through a Josephite lens: justly, lovingly and humbly.

The three pillars, **Friendship, Prayer and Service**, are the cornerstone of being a Companion and form the basis of our commitment to live as Josephite Companions.

Prayer Requests

Please remember in your prayers those who are ill and in need of support, and their families.

Also prayer for those members recently deceased and those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

Christmas and Advent Prayers

If you are looking for suitable prayers for Advent and Christmas you cannot go past the Sisters of St Joseph website: www.sosj.org.au

Once you have found the website, click on **Resources**, then **Resources Database**, use the drop-down menu to find **Feasts and Commemorative Days** and on the third page you will find two examples of **Advent prayers** suitable for group or personal use.



e-Companioning

Since our first e-companioning on 7 August several Companions have continued to meet on a monthly basis. While the format of the meeting is informal, each month has a focus on some aspect of the life of Mary MacKillop and the Josephite charism. The response has been positive as can be seen in the following comments:

- * *I have really enjoyed the online meetings as they give a connection to others of like minds.*
- * *It is interesting and rewarding to share in the lives of other companions.*
- * *These meetings could become a wonderful sharing and listening space that can unite us as Companions, broaden our outlook and be a positive, supporting platform despite difficulties and distance.*
- * *I find the contemplative essence of the meetings very helpful in drawing the group into the spirituality and charisma of Mary MacKillop and the Josephite way of life.*

Anyone may join by contacting Bernadette who will forward details of the meeting date and time and the Zoom link. Our first meeting for 2024 will be in February.

Bernadette Roche: broche@onthenet.net.au

Around the Ridges...

BRISBANE NORTHSIDE

This group meets four times a year on a Saturday at St Joseph's Convent, Bage Street, Nundah. We begin with morning tea with the Sisters followed by prayer and discussion. If you wish to be on the contact list for this group please get in touch with **Marie Sellin** on 0421 323 063 and she will send a reminder closer to the date if there are any changes. The dates for 2024 are 16 March, 8 June, 24 August and 9 November.

ALLORA – Robyn Phelan

Allora Companions recently renewed our commitment to the Josephite Charism through Friendship, Prayer and Service in a meaningful ceremony performed by **Sr Monica Cavanagh** at a Sunday Liturgy. Sr Monica is well known to most of the group and everyone was delighted to make their re-commitment in her presence.

Sr Monica was in her home town for a family reunion and the Parish took the opportunity the following day to acknowledge her 50 years of Profession. Monica delivered a thoughtful reflection on Mary MacKillop as well as giving a precis of her years as a Sister of St Joseph.

Last month we participated in a mini retreat beautifully facilitated by **Bernadette Roche**, fellow Companion and member of the Leadership Team. Sessions included The Story so Far (with references from Sr Mary Cresp's book *Evolution of a Movement*), Allora's Story, the Companions Jam Recipe and Annie MacKillop. We had joined in the Webinar in September launching Annie MacKillop as the original Companion. We embrace her as a wonderful sister, friend, colleague and companion to Mary MacKillop.

*Let us be joyful
and thank God.*

Mary MacKillop 1874



Above: Allora Companions who participated in a recent mini retreat facilitated by Companion Bernadette Roche



Left: Allora Companions who renewed their commitment to the Josephite charism recently, in the presence of Sr Monica Cavanagh rsj

JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS QLD OCTOBER 2023				
BREAKDOWN				
INCOME	AMOUNT	EXPENSES	AMOUNT	NOTES
		STATIONARY	\$372.74	
		POSTAGE	\$1,184.01	
		TRANSPORT	\$133.63	
		FLIGHTS	\$756.00	FACE TO FACE MEETING
		ACCOMMODATION	\$1,275.00	FACE TO FACE MEETING
		GIFTS	\$82.39	CANDLES FOR NEW COMPANIONS/FLOWERS FOR MEETING
		OTHER	\$230.89	ZOOM LICENSE
		JCOLT Donation	\$600.00	
		FOOD	\$440.60	FACE TO FACE WEEKEND
CASH AND CHEQUE DEPOSITS	\$5,019.85			
FACE TO FACE	\$570.00			
DONATED OFFICE SPACE	\$0.00		\$0.00	DONATION SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION
SECRETARIAL SUPPORT	\$0.00		\$0.00	CAROLYN GRIMWARD
FACE TO FACE FLIGHTS DONATED X 2	\$0.00		\$0.00	
	\$0.00		\$0.00	
TOTAL	\$5,589.85	TOTAL	\$5,075.26	

OPENING BALANCE: \$8,723.57

CLOSING BALANCE: \$9,116.25

And it amounts simply to this, that joy is the first act of divine love. The fruits of the Holy Spirit; joy, peace, mercy. Joy, peace, and mercy are the principle acts of the love of God in our soul. And so if we want to increase our joy, we have to strive to grow in divine charity and love of God and neighbor.

Fr Hugh Barbour, Norbertine priest from St Michael's Abbey, Orange County, California USA, on *Catholic Answers* Podcasts July 2020

Joy is prayer, Joy is strength, Joy is love, Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls... A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of Christ risen.

St Teresa of Calcutta

Joy, with peace, is the sister of charity. Serve the Lord with laughter.

St Padre Pio





DONATION TO THE QUEENSLAND COMPANIONS MOVEMENT

NAME:

PHONE NUMBER/S:

AMOUNT GIVEN: (PLEASE CIRCLE)

\$20 \$30 \$40 \$50 OTHER \$.....

ALL DONATIONS CAN BE FORWARDED TO:

JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS QUEENSLAND LEADERSHIP TEAM
VILLA MARIA CONVENT
123 WARREN STREET
FORTITUDE VALLEY QLD 4006

EMAIL: qld.companions@sosj.org.au

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OR PAID BY DIRECT DEPOSIT:

COMMONWEALTH BANK
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BSB: 064163
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 10429581
REFERENCE: SURNAME AND INITIAL (E.G. CAMPBELL M)

Thank you for your donation!

