

PEACE MINISTRIES: A Family of Ministries Rooted in Christ's Gospel of Peace

By Kelly Marsicano, Communications Coordinator, Peace Ministries

Strengthening and sustaining the ministries of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace has been the mission of Peace Ministries, Inc. since its inception eight years ago. Now, the seeds that were planted have begun to blossom.

Sowing the Seeds

In March 2014, the Congregation formed Peace Ministries to strengthen the sisters' ability to govern and advocate for their sponsored ministries in New Jersey. Those ministries include Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck; York Street Project, St. Joseph's School for the Blind and Peace Care, all in Jersey City; and Waterspirit in Rumson.

The early years were guided by the vision of the Congregation, as expressed in the document *Hopes and Aspirations for the Future of our Ministries*, which was the result of the reflection process by a group of sisters and lay partners discussing how they wanted to move forward into the future.

"We believe that through extending compassionate care to others, especially to those who are most vulnerable, we bring forth the 'reign of God' here and now, helping to make our world a more just, loving and peaceful place for all," the document states. "The commitment now, as in the past, must be to this Mission of Jesus, summed up in the call to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with God. This is the heart of each ministry and so must remain."

The Peace Ministries board of trustees and staff spent the first five years focused on learning, listening and deepening engagement with the ministries.

Season of Growth

In 2019, as Peace Ministries marked its fifth anniversary, the board of trustees embarked on a strategic planning process to reflect on the learnings of the early years

and identify the near-term priorities and resources needed to support the ministries moving forward.

Five key areas were identified as the building blocks for the strategic plan: recruitment of new leaders, sponsorship models, formation, advocacy, and governance.

Just as Peace Ministries was making headway in the planning process, the pandemic hit. But that didn't slow them down. In addition to approving the final strategic plan in 2020, another key accomplishment was achieved that year—the Core Values booklet.

There are eight core values (page 14) that define Peace Ministries' direction and identity. They are derived from the foundational statement *Hopes and Aspirations* and guide the sponsored ministries and unite them as a family of ministries. Although each sponsored ministry has its own unique purpose and mission, all embrace a heritage rooted in these common ideals. The publication serves as a resource to the ministries as they affirm and enhance the expression of these core values in their organizations.

The Core Values booklet was distributed to each sister and associate in the Congregation and was very well received.

"This is a wonderful tool for education and for discernment. The spirit of the CSJP is alive and will live on into the future with the assistance of this document," said Charlotte Davenport, CSJP.

"The way you've set it out—CSJP Constitutions, CSJP Tradition, Scripture, followed by Dimensions of ... is really inspired," said Margaret Byrne, CSJP. "I often recall what John Dear said at our Chapter: *Be who you say you are*, and this booklet must surely be a challenge and a support to match words with deed and spirit."

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YORK STREET PROJECT

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY.

HolyName 

THIS PLACE IS DIFFERENT.



ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

LEARNING TO BE ALL WE CAN BE.

PeaceCare 

EXCEPTIONAL CARE. DEDICATED PEOPLE.



WATER SPIRIT

WATER IS LIFE.



PEACE
CSJP

PURSuing JUSTICE, WE SEEK GOD'S GIFT OF PEACE.

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Mission Alive, a mission review process, was implemented to ensure just that—that the core values of the Congregation and the ministry’s mission are demonstrated and experienced in its policies and programs, as well as in the everyday behaviors, attitudes and actions of its staff.

“We hope that each person who participates in, as well as those who receive benefit from, these works of compassion and care will find in each of the ministries a spirit of peace, respect, collaboration and justice,” states *Hopes and Aspirations*.

The process, which is conducted every two years, can be utilized by each of the ministries and adapted based on their varying missions, constituents and size. During each round of the process, two core values are considered to help reinvigorate and deepen the ministry’s commitment and connection to mission.

Upon reviewing the final report of York Street Project’s Mission Alive process, Susan Francois, CSJP, called

it “a treasure in that the process resulted in both formation and transformation.”



Flourishing

In recent months, Peace Ministries brought on board a communications coordinator to help further develop its internal and external communications. In May 2022, Peace Ministries joined the digital world by launching its website, www.csjp.org/peaceministries, and implementing a social media presence on Facebook and LinkedIn, with more platforms soon to follow. Creating a newsletter is also high on the project list.

These actions are a labor of love not just for the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace but for the communities in which the ministries serve. Peace Ministries is rooted in the call to make Christ’s gospel of peace come alive through works of justice and is confident the ministries will continue to flourish and serve the people of God for generations to come.

Core Values



Compassionate Care: Enter into another’s experience, literally “suffering with another,” in order to respond to their situation.



Peace Through Justice: Foster the common good, resist all forms of racism and discrimination, strive for economic justice and advocate to protect our planet are all acts of peacemaking.



Preferential Option for Those Who Are Poor and Vulnerable: Strive to be *with* those who are poor and marginalized in their circumstances, and not just *do* for them.



Respect for Human Dignity: Treat all people with deep respect without regard to external circumstances of race, socioeconomic location, gender, religion, age, abilities or country of birth.



Reading the Signs of the Times: Apply a broad, reflective perspective, seeking consistency among a number of critical considerations: the details of a particular situation, core and gospel values, necessities for human flourishing, and claims of the common good.



Care of Creation and Stewardship: Respect creation by acting as stewards, mindful of our responsibility to future generations.



Collaboration: Practice mutuality in relationships, share ideas and talents, be open to learning from others, and use imagination.



Solidarity: Protect and promote the good of all within the ministry as well as reach out beyond to the wider community to cross borders and promote human rights and development.

Learn more at: <https://csjp.org/peaceministries/core-values>