WE ARE ONE
St. Joseph Workers Create Their Community Covenant

In August, six women arrived in Orange, CA to start their year in the St. Joseph Worker Program. Before they dove into their service opportunities, they engaged in a week of learning about the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, the needs in Orange County, the program’s core values, and one another. As orientation closed, the six St. Joseph Workers (SJWs) worked out how they would live in intentional community. The result is their Community Covenant.

“From the beginning, we knew the importance of building our community on two foundations: honesty and authenticity,” Annie says. “In creating the Community Covenant, we emphasized the importance of direct communication and, most importantly, the values we strive to live out day-to-day together.”

The Community Covenant includes a mission statement (see page 14), weekly schedules, and spiritual commitments. It identifies the core values the SJWs will support: raising money for the Pregnancy Resource Center and creating “health bags” to pass out to homeless persons. It also breaks down simple things, like cleaning and cooking schedules.

Lutonia points out “[It] provides a clear role for each community member, we all have a chance to help one another out when we go through busy schedules, and this prioritizes our community time together.”

The process wasn’t without challenges. Though the SJWs worked out how they would live in intentional community. The result is their Community Covenant. The other SJWs agree. Annie points out that the sisters are the “source” of the values and mission of the congregation, after all. For Honorine, being an SJW is a way of continuing the sisters’ legacy. “We belong to the same family.”

Creating the Community Covenant turned out to be an incredible bonding experience for the six women. “Sitting around our dining table and drafting our Community Covenant together is one of the most meaningful moments I have spent with my community,” Honorine says. “It sent me messages of hope and joy for the entire year, because we are all new to this experience. We all came from different corners of the world and carried our own strengths and weaknesses. We have different backgrounds and ways to spend one-year instilling in ourselves and the people we serve the values of spirituality, leadership, social justice, and simplicity.”

“I want to learn to more open with my community,” says Lutonia, “and to also try new ventures, such as cooking, baking and being more confident with myself around different people.”

“Something that I hope the SJWs take from me is not being afraid to do something new outside of one’s comfort zone,” Annie comments. “A sense of adventure is always around the next corner; don’t be afraid to try new things.”

Meet the 2019-2020 St. Joseph Workers

**Annie Voegele**
Hometown: Columbus, OH
Transitioning from: University of Portland
Service Site: Mission Hospital

“I am a Registered Nurse with a passion for serving alongside the poor and other vulnerable populations where there is great need. I am excited to grow in leadership, further understand God’s plan for me during this year and afterwards, explore social justice issues pertinent to the LA area, and live in a community with other life-giving women.”

**Honorine Uwimana**
Hometown: Kicukiro, Rwanda
Transitioning from: Pharmacy Career
Service Site: Regina Residence

“I believe that I have already recognized my call: service to others. Every day brings the question: what have you done to make the world better today? I hope that through St. Joseph Worker Program I will be able to answer that question. I long to wake up every day to make someone’s life better. I hope to learn from the core values of the Sisters of St. Joseph and transmit them to whomever I will meet.”

**Ana María Feijóo Otaívaro**
Hometown: Cali, Colombia
Transitioning from: Holy Child Volunteer, Dominican Republic
Service Site: Mission Hospital

“I have been very blessed to be able to be a St. Joseph Worker for the upcoming year and serve at Mission Hospital, where I hope to get closer to human truth, pain and fragility, and from this situation walk with them, promoting life from growth and service, carrying a deep message of love and trust in a living Christ for both myself and those around me.”

**Lutonia Naicker**
Hometown: Durban City (East coast province of South Africa)
Transitioning from: Culinary Career (New Zealand)
Service Site: Isaiah House and Mary’s Kitchen

“I strongly believe that food can truly bring everyone together. We all come from different walks of life, and yet, still we believe everyone can make a difference. Sometimes that way can begin by sharing a simple meal. I was looking for a way to give back on a long-term basis, in hopes I could do so alongside the Church.”

**Chelsea Yu-Hsien Lin**
Hometown: Taipei, Taiwan
Transitioning from: Loyola Marymount University (Health and Human Science)
Service Site: Hunt Family Health Clinic

“Im passionate about learning more about theology. I enjoy continually practicing my faith and also enjoy how fascinating the human body can be. I find it interesting to mix religion and science together to explain the mysteries of the world. I hope that this year I can gain more experience in both of my passions.”

**Mary Furlong**
Hometown: Old Orchard Beach, Maine
Transitioning from: L’Arche Wavecrest

“I was a Health Science major and was passionately involved in Best Buddies and My Brother’s Keeper during my time at Stonehill, which inspired me to pursue a year of service. I look forward to staying away from the snow this year and exploring a new part of the country.”
WE ARE ONE

We are MESSENGERS from four corners of the world, united and devoted to freely explore our values and honor our diversity as a source of communal strength.

We are CHAMPIONS of social justice and leadership, open to celebrate the joys of discovery and embrace all the dimensions of our humanity.

We are SERVANTS of the Kingdom communicating the good news with kindness and support, compassion, and commitment.

We are READY to build and lead our world on the basis of service to our dear neighbor and communion with the Holy Trinity.

We are ONE, as the body of Christ, the Church, is one.