

**PJIC Office Update, June 2022**  
**Reflections on A Spirituality of Advocacy**



This year the Feast of Pentecost has been an invitation to pray to the Holy Spirit as Advocate and ask for insight and wisdom to understand what a spirituality of advocacy is and how I am living it.

*Spirituality of Advocacy* is a not term we are accustomed to hearing. But, these past months, women religious around the world have been called to explore and engage in a spirituality of advocacy. The [International Union of Major Superiors \(UISG\)](#) based in Rome, Italy has a new initiative, [Sisters Advocating Globally](#). Sr. Sheila Kinsey, FCJM, coordinator of another UISG initiative, [Sowing Hope for the Planet](#), has begun several webinars on advocacy with a reflection on the Spirituality of Advocacy. They have been mini retreats for me!

For over 52 years I've been involved in active ministry where I've done advocacy, with people and with Earth, our Common Home. As PJIC Director for over 12 years, the demand for advocacy with legislators, policy makers, corporate leaders and other stakeholders and decision makers has grown and gotten more complex. So, it was with a hungry spirit, curious mind, and grateful heart that I received Sr. Sheila Kinsey's thoughts on the Spirituality of Advocacy.

Many years ago, Marshall Rosenberg's teaching on non-violent communication, especially his book on Practical Spirituality, taught me valuable skills to bring to my ministry. I am still learning and fail often in living what I learned, so it is good to be reminded of the importance of listening, of communicating clearly and of the power of presence, mindfulness, and relationships. As I listened to Sr. Sheila, I was reminded that these are elements of a spirituality of advocacy with nonviolence as the bedrock!

Sr. Sheila's reflections open the richness of a spirituality of advocacy. She invites us to look at the word "advocate" as a way of describing the Holy Spirit working through us and moving us. She reminds us of our "co-responsibility in creating and putting into place new processes and changes" (Fratelli Tutti 77). As we practice the "See, Judge and Act" model and give our voice in support and defense of human (and other than human – my addition) rights, we hold to four

essential values: respect, honesty, justice, and wholesome relationships. Some of the ways we manifest a spirituality of advocacy is through contemplative nonviolent prayer, reflection, and lifestyle as we live the sacrament of the present moment and respond to the signs of the times.

When we think of advocacy, I invite us to break out of our most common understanding of advocacy – legislative advocacy in person, email, phone calls and letters, important as it is. Imagine yourself as living a spirituality of advocacy as you listen to others, to the news, to those who think differently and are different. Imagine being a bridge builder and growing relationships seeded in respect, dignity, and right relationships.

It is good to remember that we can do together, what we cannot do alone, and this is true regarding a spirituality of advocacy. Just this past year Sisters of Charity of New York, through the PJIC Office and its committees, sponsored and supported programs such as BREAD's Racial Wealth Gap Simulation, NETWORK's Conversation on White Supremacy and American Catholicism, ROAR's Rights of River online conversation, Interfaith Prayer for World Day of Refugees and Migrants and so many other activities. [Click here](#) to see a list of highlights of PJIC Office and its committees. To accomplish these actions and activities, sisters, associates, and volunteers collaborated with each other and with local, state, national and global groups who share similar values.

“The language of the Spirit is love.” were words spoken in yesterday's homily at the Mass for the Feast of Pentecost. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, the Spirit of Truth will be with us always and help us bear witness to him. We give thanks for Sisters of Charity Sisters, Associates and Colleagues who speak the language of love through their lives. This is living a Spirituality of Advocacy. As we begin the Liturgical Season of Ordinary Time, let us join with the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who works through us and moves through us, in renewing the face of the Earth. May we continue to reflect on a spirituality of advocacy and how I / we are called to live it.

**Sisters Acting Globally Video Resources:** Women in Conflict, Sister Sheila (FCJM), Rome, 4 min on Integrity for Nonviolence. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xv9TcxcaOe0> and Sisters Empowering Women, part 1/4, 30 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vnw9KHtKEyQ>

*Carol De Angelo, Director, SCNY Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation,  
cdeangelo@scny.org*