



Leaning on Jesus

During the pandemic, when we were almost completely in cloistered seclusion at the convent, going out only for the most urgent doctor's appointments or essential shopping, our lives continued with the daily rhythm of prayer, meals, communal time, and work. Some ministries continued online. And, we were praying without ceasing for so many people out in the world.

All these prayers were added to our usual prayers for regular life concerns and for the state of our sisters, our neighbors, and the world. This was a heavy load of prayer. The more I prayed, the more I needed a solid source of spiritual comfort.

Many years ago, when I was a hospice chaplain, I made a first visit with a new patient who was Jewish. This was a Roman Catholic hospital, so when a room was made ready for a new patient, the staff always hung a crucifix on the wall at the foot of the bed where it was clearly visible to anyone in the bed. We were instructed during the first visit to ask if the patient wanted the crucifix, or a plain cross, or whether they wanted us to take it down.

I assumed this Jewish patient would ask me to take it down, but instead he said, "No, leave it up, I can use all the help I can get!" Then he thought for a minute and pointed at the crucifix and added with emphasis, "He knows. He knows what I'm going through."

During the pandemic, Jesus became my most reliable source of strength and comfort because he is always available to me and because he lived a human life with all its joys and suffering. In times of difficulty, he knows what we are going through. I continue to need his solid reassurance and find that he is indeed always present, understanding, and providing the spiritual strength I need to carry on.

—Sr. Ellen Francis, OSH

What has changed over time in your relationship with Jesus? How are you preparing for the coming of the Christ child this Advent?



RELIGIOUS LIFE SUNDAY 2024

Celebrate with us!!



The third Sunday in Epiphany, January 21, 2024, will be the second annual observance of Religious Life Sunday!

In 2022, the General Convention of The Episcopal Church approved Resolution B004, "Foundation of Religious Life Sunday." The purpose of this observance is to share with all Episcopalians the presence of Episcopal vowed religious orders and what resources and support we have to offer for the faith journey.

We believe that Religious Life has something for everyone in The Episcopal Church! You can help us spread the word by inviting one of us to speak to your parish, in person or by Zoom, and by telling others about the Order of Saint Helena. The website for Religious Life Sunday has links and resources (religiouslifesunday.org.) Let us know how we can help!

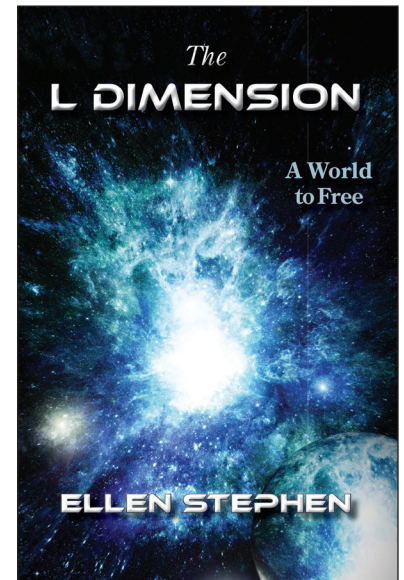
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SISTER ELLEN STEPHEN, ever the science fiction fan, has written her own sci-fi adventure! **The L Dimension** is now available at amazon.com.

"Throughout the galaxy, HumX is known as the Rainbow planet of pleasure, where all its inhabitants—who are wonderfully diverse—live long and pain-free lives. For centuries, this rosy image has been perpetuated by government-supported scientists who have imposed a birth lottery on the young and Eversleep on the old to keep the population in check. The entire system, however, now threatens to fail. And fear that the impending disaster will become public knowledge has resulted in stricter monitoring and regulations.

But two teenagers, Sylva and Lexo, aren't fooled. Nor are a small group of scientists working to replace denial and control with acceptance and freedom, and the distractions of nonstop pleasure and entertainment with wisdom and joy in a new dimension—**The L Dimension**. Will they succeed? Or is HumX doomed?"

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BISHOP ANN RITONIA'S CONSECRATION

On September 30, Sister Miriam Elizabeth attended the ordination of The Right Reverend Ann Ritonia as suffragan bishop for armed forces and federal ministries at Saint John's Episcopal Church in Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C. Bishop Ritonia became a friend and supporter of The Order of Saint Helena after meeting Sister Miriam Elizabeth through Kindling Prayers, a ministry of prayer for and with women who are discerning for election and ministry as a bishop in The Episcopal Church.

A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Bishop Ritonia is the first woman ordained to this position in the ministry's nearly 60-year history.

Joy in Receiving New Bahamian Associate!



On August 15, Tiffany Hall-Sweeting (wearing associate's wooden cross) was received as an OSH Associate at Christ Church Cathedral in Nassau, Bahamas, by The Very Rev. Harry Bain, cathedral dean. Tiffany served as the diocesan youth director for the Anglican Diocese of The Bahamas for 18 years prior to entering seminary at Codrington College in Barbados where she is training for the priesthood. She initially learned of OSH from friends

who are also associates and is glad to join as an associate herself.

Left to right: Brother Michael Jude, Community of the Gospel; The Rev. Desiree Johnson, 3rd Order Companion of the Society of St. Francis and Tiffany's best friend; Tiffany Hall-Sweeting; and The Very Rev. Harry Bain.

Reconditioned Chapel Bell Rings Again

Before



Our bell has called sisters and guests to chapel in three different locations: at The Margaret Hall School in Versailles KY, and at the convents in GA and SC.

Please join us in chapel.

Matins: 7 am
 Diurnum: noon
 Vespers: 5 pm
 Compline: 7 pm,
 except Sundays

Closed Mondays

After



Joy in Receiving New Ghanaian Associates!

In October, Sister Rosina flew to her home country of Ghana, West Africa, where she will stay until mid-January. Sister Ellen Francis accompanied Rosina for the first three weeks. In

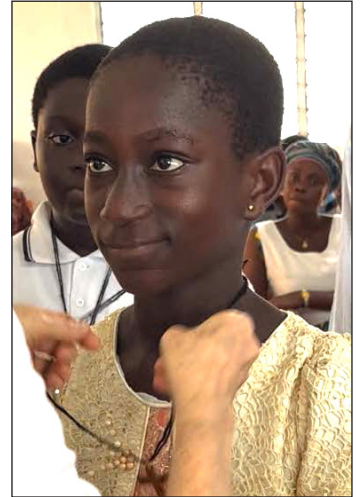
addition to sight-seeing and meeting Rosina's family and friends, Ellen Francis received 18 new OSH Associates on November 12 at The Church of The Presentation of Christ.



Sr. Ellen Francis wearing the stole given to her by Sr. Rosina's brother, The Very Reverend Emmanuel Williams, and his wife, Juliana Williams, shown here.



Samuel Kristus Ampah



Cassandra Owusu



Sr. Rosina comforts her granddaughter, also named Rosina, who wanted to be old enough to receive an associate's cross.



Grace Affedu Baisie

Eduward K. Dennis

