

COSMIC IN DIMENSION

Reflections on the SSND Pin

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At our General Chapter in Brazil I often held on to my silver chain and SSND pin as we prayed and labored through the evolving words and phrases of the many drafts of our *Call to Solidarity*. One phrase, “*cosmic in dimension*” felt essential to me - I could let go of other phrases, but not that one. Although it specifically refers to Eucharist, all of life seems to become more cosmic as I get older. As we begin our 175th Jubilee year, I feel our SSND pin has also become more “*cosmic in dimension*”.

The **CIRCLE** is the shape of our home planet earth and the shape of ships’ wheels and wagon wheels enabling SSND to spread like wildfire all over 19th century Europe, North America, and three other continents. The circle shapes the bond which unites our local and global communities. It shapes the elevated Host, the sun, the moon, the plates which hold our bread, the Embrace in which we live and move and have our being.

Our SSND **Charism** is a **Circle** celebrating solidarity at round tables where all are respected and included, and challenging solidarity at rectangular tables where one is head and others are less. Justice and peacemaking call us to transform swords into plowshares and rectangular tables of privilege and exclusion into circular tables of unity and inclusion. We strive to live authentic Eucharist at every table.

Our SSND **CROSS** extends its arms equally in four directions, connecting all with the slender threads of SHALOM, the SSND social justice network. In the Sign of the Cross we bless and are blessed with water, oil and ashes, and our very bodies form a Cross as we stand with arms outstretched embracing the cosmos. Our planet is crisscrossed by an infinite number of lines of latitude and longitude, and each crossing is a locus for Love to flow and be incarnate in each human and non-human being. Solidarity with creation calls us to live interdependently within the web of life.

Our Blessed Theresa reminds us, “*Where the Cross is, there Christ is near!*” We are called by the Cross to do the seemingly impossible – to listen to the cries of Earth and its peoples- to respond together with passion and love and abandon- to lay down our lives while risking all we are and all we have for the mission of Jesus Christ.

The bulging **M** of our pin is shaped by two pregnant wise women who stand with arms around each other. Mary shouts **MAGNIFICAT** into the cosmos as Elizabeth smiles and nods her graying head in affirmation. Mary's strong words topple the mighty and call us to respond together to fill the hungry with good things- to educate especially the marginalized and forgotten- to collaborate internationally, connecting our ministries for the transformation of the world - and above all, to embrace each other in sisterly love.

The **M** is the dilated womb of Third World women as they squat in labor on the cross, birthing the Infant Christ again and again.

The **M** is our widely stretched SSND Heart, open at the bottom to hear the cries of the forgotten, beating and bursting with the hospitality and inclusivity of our charism.

The **M** becomes our communal Cana jug, and as we contemplate Jesus and Mary at the wedding feast, the daily faithfulness of our lives is transformed into sparkling wine. Stretched across the globe, in the spirit of Theresa, we lift our jug and pour it out in communal self-gift, rejoicing with Jubilee hearts!

The **CIRCLE**, the **CROSS**, the **M** - the more I consider the simple design of our **SSND** pin, the more it feels alive and truly "*cosmic in dimension*" !