



YEAR XCVI - N° 2/2020

SPECIAL ISSUE - TIME of PANDEMIC

PACE E BENE

SUORE FRANCESCANE MISSIONARIE DEL SACRO CUORE

IN TIME OF PANDEMIC

FMSC IN MISSION

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THE ENCYCLICAL “FRATELLI TUTTI”, A BEACON OF HOPE TO THE HUMANITY

Pope Francis signed his new Encyclical “Fratelli Tutti”, on October 3rd at Assisi before the tomb of St Francis. It is the fifth time he visits Assisi during his pontificate.

The encyclical is really a beautiful gift offered on the vigil of the feast of St. Francis, to the whole Church, to all men and women of goodwill, who welcome the message of Fraternity and Social Friendship. We as Franciscans for us it is significant that once again this great social teaching of the Pope has been inspired by the words of the Poor Man of Assisi. Moreover it is in perfect continuity with the central message of *Laudato Sii*, in which the Holy Father taught us the importance of feeling interconnected and in communion with the whole of creation, assuming a vision of integral ecology. This encyclical letter, as the title suggests, will be a prophetic message and an urgent appeal to remember that “God created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity and called them to live together as brothers and sisters among themselves”.

The Holy Father celebrated the Eucharist in the basilica of St. Francis of St. Francis, which houses the tomb, the mortal remains of the saint. A small congregation of the religious and the faithful in the basilica and a good number of people in the square outside participated in the Eucharistic celebration respecting the pandemic regulations.

It was a very significant and moving, sight that the Pope walking alone to the altar under the tomb to celebrate the Eucharist, as if he is entrusting the whole humanity to the Lord in the company of St. Francis who at this moment understands well the preoccupations of his heart. The suffering he bore within was very much visible on the face of the pope, in his deeply recollected movements. It made us recall the great event the world witnessed on 27th March 2020 when he imparted the blessing, *Urbi et Orbi* against the pandemic. The whole world watched the sight of Pope walking alone in the St. Peter’s square, in rain and water (in a back ground siren of the rushing ambulances) raising the Blessed sacrament and invoking the Almighty for His mercy upon a world confounded by the fear of the pandemic covid -19.

During the Eucharistic celebration in Assisi the Holy Father he did not give a homily after the proclamation of the Gospel, instead, he spent several minutes in silent reflection and then continued the Mass. At the conclusion of the Mass Francis put the text of the encyclical on the altar and signed it. This marked the first time a papal encyclical was signed outside Rome.



Francis’s trip to Assisi was his first trip outside Rome since the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic.

The Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, aims to promote a universal aspiration toward fraternity and social friendship, the ways to build a better, more just and peaceful world, with the contribution of all, people and institutions. With an emphatic confirmation of a ‘no’ to war and to globalized indifference. In the background of the Encyclical is the Covid-19 pandemic that, the Pope reveals, “Unexpectedly erupted” as he “was writing this letter”.



He says, “The global health emergency has helped to demonstrate that no one can face life in isolation” and that the time has truly come to “dream, then, as a single human family” in which we are “brothers and sisters all”. This vision of the single human family is always evident in his talks on all occasions. His eyes always reaches far beyond to the corners of the world to the misery of the human life due to our fragmented, selfish style of living.

The Pope indicates in the encyclical, the spirit and mission of St. Francis, “Francis did not wage a war of words aimed at imposing doctrines; he simply spread the love of God. He understood that “God is love and those who abide in love abides in God” (1 Jn 4:16). In this way, God became a father to all and it inspired the vision of a fraternal society.

Pope Francis reflection upon the parable of the Good Samaritan is the theological core of the encyclical. He says this parable is an “ever new” call from Jesus to “rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond”. It invites the reader to an introspection of his or her inner struggle between one’s own security and personal sacrifices required by charity. The parable “speaks to us of an essential and often forgotten aspect of our common humanity, we were created for a fulfilment that can only be found in love.”

The Pope says that Bartholomew, the Orthodox Patriarch was a source of inspiration in the preparation of *Laudato Sii*. In the case of “*Fratelli Tutti*”, he was particularly encouraged by the Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, whom he met in Abu Dhabi, where they together declared that “God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters”.

The Pope denotes that this meeting was not a mere diplomatic gesture, but a reflection born of dialogue and common commitment. The appeals they made together to the whole human world for peace, justice and fraternity are given at the conclusion of the encyclical.

This encyclical as a whole indeed is an invitation for all of us to broaden our perspective to view a “world without borders” and to view every single person on the planet, and yes the planet itself, as brother and sister. In particular, he pleads on behalf of the world’s poor on the margins of society, as well as the handicapped, the infirm and the elderly who often live on the margins but who ought to be at the center.

Fratelli tutti is a profound encyclical. It can change minds and hearts. It can be one avenue to do nothing less than “renew the face of the earth”. Let us welcome this encyclical with a thankful heart and honestly look for ways in which we ourselves, as individuals and as a community, can respond even better to the various impelling invitations it carries.

In the time of the Pandemic, Pope Francis announces the Year of St. Joseph: “The world needs fathers”



The Pope has announced a special Year of Saint Joseph, on the day of the 150th anniversary of the Quemadmodum Deus Decree, with which Blessed Pius IX declared Saint Joseph Patron of the Catholic Church. In the Vatican decree, this choice is motivated as follows: *"In order to perpetuate the entrustment of the whole Church to the powerful patronage of the Guardian of Jesus, Pope Francis has established that, from today's date, the anniversary of the Decree of the proclamation as well as a day sacred to the Blessed Immaculate Virgin and Bride of Joseph most chaste, until 8 December 2021, a special Year of Saint Joseph will be celebrated"*.

In the introduction of his letter, PATRIS CORDE, Pope Francis clearly expresses his desire to dedicate a year to Saint Joseph by inserting him in this difficult time of the pandemic.

He said: *"Now, one hundred and fifty years after his proclamation as Patron of the Catholic Church by Blessed Pius IX (8 December 1870), I would like— as Jesus says, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mt 12:34), to share some personal reflections on this extraordinary figure, so close to our own human experience..*

My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, when we experienced, amid the crisis, how "our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked. People who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines, or on the

latest television show, yet in these very days are surely shaping the decisive events of our history. Doctors, nurses, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests, men and women religious, and so very many others. They understood that no one is saved alone... [...]

How many people daily exercise patience and offer hope, taking care to spread not panic, but shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday ways, how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, looking ahead and encouraging the practice of prayer. How many are praying, making sacrifices and interceding for the good of all".

"Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.

Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and of gratitude is due to them all."

After the **INTRODUCTION**, Pope Francis presents the figure of St. Joseph as it emerges from the Gospel passages and proposes him as a model for everyone, identifying some particular characteristics of his person, vocation and holiness.

Saint Joseph is a **BELOVED FATHER**: *"The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself... "at the service of the entire plan of salvation...*

Thanks to his role in salvation history, Saint Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people..."

He is a **TENDER AND LOVING FATHER**; love which he gave above all to the Son of God, entrusted to his care: “Jesus saw the tender love of God in Joseph: As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him” (Ps 103:13). Pope Francis defines Saint Joseph as **AN OBEDIENT FATHER** because “As he had done with Mary, God revealed his saving plan to Joseph.

He did so by using dreams, which in the Bible and among all ancient peoples, were considered a way for him to make his will known...

In every situation, Joseph declared his own “fiat”, like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane....

All this makes it clear that “Saint Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood” and that in this way, “he cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation”.

Pope Francis continues the list of Saint Joseph’s characteristics and he presents him as a **AN ACCEPTING FATHER**: “Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally.

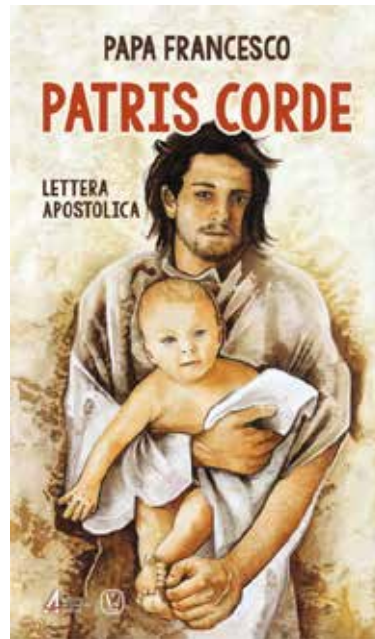
He trusted in the angel’s words. “The nobility of Joseph’s heart is such that what he learned from the law he made dependent on charity;...

Often in life, things happen whose meaning we do not understand.

Our first reaction is frequently one of disappointment and rebellion. Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history...

In our own lives, acceptance and welcome can be an expression of the Holy Spirit’s gift of fortitude. Only the Lord can give us the strength needed to accept life as it is, with all its contradictions, frustrations and disappointments...”

Saint Joseph is a **CREATIVELY COURAGEOUS FATHER**, “...creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth,



who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence....

At the end of every account in which Joseph plays a role, the Gospel tells us that he gets up, takes the child and his mother, and does what God commanded him (cf. Mt 1:24; 2:14.21). Indeed, Jesus and Mary his Mother are the most precious treasure of our faith”.

Pope Francis points St. Joseph as the patron and model of fathers who work to support their family: he is a **WORKING FATHER**: “Saint Joseph was a carpenter who

earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labour...

Work is a means of participating in the work of salvation, an opportunity to hasten the coming of the Kingdom, to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them at the service of society and fraternal communion..”

Taking up a definition by the Polish writer Jan Dobraczyński, Pope Francis says that Saint Joseph is a **FATHER IN THE SHADOWS**, “In his relationship to Jesus, Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father: he watched over him and protected him, never leaving him to go his own way...

In a similar way, Joseph acted as a father for his whole life. Fathers are not born, but made.

A man does not become a father simply by bringing a child into the world, but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child.”

In the Conclusion, Pope Francis points out once again “The aim of this Apostolic Letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal...”

The saints help all the faithful “to strive for the holiness and the perfection of their particular state of life. Their lives are concrete proof that it is possible to put the Gospel into practice”.

THE WORLD, I WOULD LIKE...

Pope Francis indicates values and attitudes to face and overcome the CRISIS



Pope Francis, in an interview with journalist Fabio Marchese Ragona, answered various questions by outlining itineraries and choices to be able to emerge from the present world crisis as a “better” humanity.

We welcome his reflections, as true provocations of the Holy Spirit, precious indications for being missionaries of God’s love in our difficult time.

Get out of the crisis BETTER

Pope Francis said that a CRISIS never results as BEFORE: either we are BETTER or we are WORST.

HOW TO GET OUT BETTER? In this, our DECISION is required.

HOW DO YOU COME OUT BETTER? You must a Revision of EVERYTHING. THE GREAT VALUES ALWAYS REMAIN the same but that must be TRANSLATED in the HISTORICAL moments, which are not the same.

The VALUES do not change with history, but the expression of values must be inculturated, with the culture of the time.

The Pope invites us to analyze the situations of our time.

He therefore enumerates a series of dramatic situations, from children who suffer from hunger and the children who cannot attend to school, the wars that devastate many areas of the planet etc. “The statistics of the United Nations - he stresses - are frightening about this”. He warns that if we emerge from the crisis “without seeing these things, the exit will be another defeat. Moreover, it will be worse. Let us look only at these two problems: children and wars”.

Pope Francis affirms that we must get out of the crisis on concrete things.

We have to ask ourselves how this situation can be changed. He claims that the spending for war for a month would be enough to feed all of humanity for a year.

To come out better we have to be REALISTIC, it needs REALISM.

THE VACCINE.

Regarding the vaccine, Pope Francis affirms that ethically everyone must take the vaccine. It is not an option, but it is an ethical action. “Because you play with your health, you play with your life, but you also play with the lives of others” ...

CLOSENESS - FRATERNITY

For the Pontiff, this is the time to “think about the “we” and erase the ‘I’ for a period of time, put it in parentheses. Either we all save ourselves with the ‘we’ or no one is saved “.

“CLOSENESS helps to face the pandemic crisis.

It needs UNIVERSAL FRATERNITY to get out of this crisis all together.

How can we speak of FRATERNITY?

The word closeness helps us to think about fraternity.

Get close to each other ... avoid gestures that create distance. Get close to problems, to people.

When I do not experience closeness ... it is not just distance, but it indicates the CULTURE of INDIFFERENCE.

Sometimes we speak of a “healthy indifference” to problems ... but indifference is never healthy.

The culture of indifference destroys because it distances me.

The key word is the word CLOSENESS. I approach people, my brothers and sisters, people who suffer and who are in difficulty. I approach not only to help, to solve this specific problem, but also to pave the way, to move forward in a solution to this crisis. “

“CLOSENESS against the culture of INDIFFERENCE that distances us; but gestures that create closeness: this can help us”.

THE TIME OF “WE”

Pope Francis also helps to reflect on the administrative class (Church, politics ...). He explains that it has the right to have different points of view, to wage political struggle, but in this time, we must play for unity. In this time, there is no right to move away from unity.

“At this moment, the entire administrative class has no right to say, I ... I ... “We must say “WE” and seek unity in the face of the crisis.

A politician, a pastor, a Christian, a Catholic, a manager, a bishop, a priest who at this moment is unable to say WE, is not up to the situation.

The WE, the common GOOD, of everyone must prevail... Conditions cannot be imposed, that is selfishness; it is a different way of not going on the path of solving problems.

THE UNITY ... is superior to the conflict...

Conflicts exist in life, but conflicts have to go on vacation right now.

The unity of the country, the Church, the Society... fraternity must be emphasized.

This moment of crisis is a moment of sowing... the sowing of the common good.

I tell all the leaders (pastoral, political, entrepreneurial) to cancel the word “I” for a while and say the word “we”. You cannot do your own business at the cost of your brothers, sisters who are suffering the crisis. In the face of the crisis, all together ... WE and cancel the self.

The “I” that takes must be canceled ... while the “I” that does must act ...”

To be CLOSER to those who suffer, one must not give answers but ask the right question.
“You have to ask: What do you need? Then solve problems.
A CLOSENESS to ask how I can help you and... this is fraternity.
On the needs of others I take a step forward, I am generous...
I have seen so many good things ... People who understood the needs and went out to help, to be close. Help does not have to be for a moment...
CLOSENESS to accompany,
CLOSENESS to solve
CLOSENESS to open roads of hope.
HOPE is sown with CLOSENESS. I take you by the hand and help you. This is FRATERNITY.
We must be inventive, help us to find ways of closeness.
Nobody is saved alone and if you do not approach so that everyone is saved, you will not be saved either.
What I say is very simple, but life is like this. Nobody saves himself !!!”

THE THROWAWAY CULTURE

On the culture of waste, Pope Francis puts it this way:
“Let’s not forget a brutality of this time: the throwaway culture ...
Children are discarded, not wanting them ... or not accepting them when something is wrong with them.... They are unwanted even before they are born...
The problem of abortion is not a religious problem, it is a human problem, of human ethics, and it is pre-religious. It is a problem, which even an atheist must solve in his conscience.
Scientifically, in the third week, there is already a human life in the womb. I ask this question, is it right to kill a human life to solve a problem? No! It is not right. It is a human problem.
People abandon children even when they do not have anything to feed them ... Children are not able to produce anything so that, they must be discarded.
Abandon the elderly because they too are not able to produce anything.
Discard the sick, speeding up the time to end life.
Discard so that it is more comfortable for us and does not bring us so many problems; this is the throwaway culture.
Discard the migrants...
To counter the throwaway culture, you need to accept ... all as brothers and sisters...
This is the way to save us.

Learn from history: never violence!

There is violence ...
No people can boast of not having experienced violence in their life...
Pope Francis points out that even in the most mature realities, there is always something wrong when there are “people who take a path against the community, against democracy against the common good”.
“We must reflect and understand well, so as not to repeat; we must learn from history”.

Faith, a gift to ask from the Lord

Pope Francis explains with conviction that “faith is a GIFT.

Nobody can have faith on their own. It is a gift that the Lord gives you. It is a free gift. Faith cannot be bought.

Our only attitude is to open up and receive this gift.

Sometimes there are people who close themselves and do not receive this gift..

If faith does not come as a gift, it is not faith. We must ask for the gift of Faith because God is close to us. In the book of Deuteronomy, it is written: *Listen. Which people on the earth have their gods as close as you have Me?* God presents himself as NEAR. In Jesus Christ, God came closer ... because he shared our life, our work, problems, passion, and death. The closeness of God is the closeness that we must have and that, in faith, we must ask for.

THE POPE’S DAILY LIFE WITH THE PANDEMIC

To this question, Pope Francis replied as follows: “I am caged... then I calmed down... to pray more, talk more, pick up the phone more, meet and discuss problems.

The pandemic also colored the Pope’s life.

I did some public prayers ... visit to the Crucifix, prayer on March 27 at St. Peter’s, the Via Crucis ...

These things were expressions of the pain that one felt ... of love for all people ...

They are ways of showing new ways to help us.

BEST WISHES

The interview ended with the wishes of Pope Francis.

“Get out of the crisis better.

Each of you must take courage, think of others.

The hope that there is no culture of waste and indifference, but FRATERNITY, CLOSENESS: How can I get close to others to help them?

That there are no “waste” ... selfish attitudes..

But let there be the “ WE” ...

Unity is greater than conflict.

And pray.... Pray more. Thank you!”



LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

IN

TIME

OF



FMSC ... missionaries on a journey with humanity

The Covid 19 virus continues to affect humanity, to instill fear and uncertainty, to cause pain and death.

It is now a year since the virus first began to infect people and change the lifestyle of entire nations. We FMSC are part of this humanity, living with it the same pains, the same fears and uncertainties. The heart is full of feelings, emotions, accept suffering, and shares every difficulty with empathy. As the days follow, we live moment by moment without being able to organize the future with certainty but always waiting, with hope that everything can improve.

In the history of our Congregation, our daily rhythm of life, the already established programming had to “follow” the course of events and modify the scheduled itineraries.

The life of the Congregation in this time of the pandemic is and must be a strong missionary journey that we undertake together with humanity in the various parts of the world, giving everywhere the Love of Jesus Crucified who takes on every suffering, every tear and inculcates hope and consolation. However, the Virus did not remain at the door of our homes, of our communities, but entered without making noise and without “knocking”, entering us and among us causing, as in the world, suffering, anguish and death.

Many sisters have been affected by the virus; for some it became the “path” that led them to the embrace of God the Father, for others it was and is an experience of human frailty and sharing with all those who suffer.

For all of them it was and is a reason to feel deeply united as a religious Family within the Church and as part of humanity.

Prayer, the invocation that confidently rises to God every day makes us feel stronger in the certainty that God loves his children and is experiencing this hard trial with us.

Because of the virus, the ability to show the fraternal love that unites us as sisters of a single charismatic Family has strengthened in us.

In fact, there are many demonstrations of affection that among the sisters, the Provinces and the communities express closeness, profound sharing, sincere and concrete fraternal help.

FROM THE MOTHER HOUSE

In search of the light in the dark of the night

*O Father, history, time and life are in your hands.
We ask You to help us to recognize your Presence
that precedes us and accompanies us in the happy
and painful episodes of our existence.
You always give us the light of the Holy Spirit
through your Son Jesus
so that hope always remains flaming in the heart
and we can thank you forever.*

For some time there has been talk of the Coronavirus pandemic that has already flourished in China and quickly spreading up in the world including in Italy.

Even in the motherhouse and in our communities there was talk of it, and we began to be careful in how to protect ourselves from the virus of which we certainly did not know the possible consequences. However, in November we felt the first symptoms of this terrible disease.

In fact, having performed the first tests ordered by the doctor, a good group of sisters in the motherhouse tested positive for COVID 19. The sisters were isolated in the individual rooms to avoid the contagion that gradually, indeed rapidly, spread.

We began to discover the negative and unimaginable effects that an epidemic and worse still a pandemic can cause: Isolated Mother House, closed gates and doors, no exits, no entrances.

Personally, I was locked in my room for 20 days.

A generous sister came to bring me the necessary things by placing it by the door of the room and then, once she was away, I could put out my hands to collect everything.

From the bedroom window, I could see the closed balconies of the convent while from the large windows of the corridors I saw the nurses and their helpers, dressed in personal protective equipment (PPE), gloves, waterproof gown, cap and filter mask and the protective face shield on the eyes pass in a continuous coming and going.

Four sisters came from Rome: the General Councilor Sr. Rose Palamthattel, Sr. Maribel Yabora, Sr. Mini Parathinal, Sr. Pascaline Yenmole.

Sr Barbara Pandolfi, obtained a permission from the institute where she works, came to help us and guide the others with the skills already she acquired regarding this virus, in her generosity and passion.

Sr. Elka Staneva from Bulgaria, who also had an experience of the pandemic later joined the group for some days.

This initiative made our gratitude flow from the heart for the Superiors who sent them and I thought of the generosity of these young people who were not afraid to put their lives at the service of the sick sisters even at the risk of being infected, as happened for Sr. Rose and Sr. Mini.



Sr Rose, Sr Mini, Sr Maribel



Sr Barbara



Sr Pascaline and Sr Adelina Comin

They showed so much generosity and love, always serene in their daily and interminable service: truly, in this way they showed us the love and sense of belongingness of the religious Family, especially in difficult and trying moments.

For me it was an unforgettable experience.

Day after day (what long days!!!) many questions arose from my heart: why does this happen? Why me and all the sisters of the motherhouse? Is our life coming to an end or is it a call that the Lord wants to make us? Why why?

Then I said to myself, No, it is not God who sends these things, if ever God allows them so that they can also be useful to reflect on our lives today and allow us to ask ourselves: “What really matters in life”? Certainly, the Lord asks us not to live on the surface, but to return to the heart, stopping our race and asking ourselves about the meaning of our journey, what are we really looking for? What does our heart desire? What is the thirst that we carry within? What are our passion all about? What moves us? Consumerism, selfishness, success.

Are we following the current society or does the experience push us to a conversion to be true Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart who wants to witness with her life, Jesus and His Gospel, the center of everything and everyone?

When, always from the window, my eyes so often turned towards the church, then I felt intensely the lack of the daily Eucharistic celebration for us sisters.

It really seemed to me that I could no longer live like this, without the sacramental life, which is the closeness to Jesus. Then, just thinking about Him, I said to myself, Jesus too is suffering the pandemic, he too is alone, closed in the tabernacle and without the physical presence of the sisters.

Once it was said “Jesus is a prisoner of love” in his tabernacle.

He in his tabernacle and we in our rooms, but certainly in a continuous reciprocal exchange of love and giving.

Moreover, what about our community life for us who belong to a religious family? Even this experience of solitude was hard ... but it certainly brought out the conviction that if the community were not ‘fraternal communion’ it would be a ‘death’ not only in the time of the pandemic but always....

Again, 'counting the daily deaths' of several sisters, the question came back to me; will the end of the motherhouse have come? ... This thought spontaneously brought me back to the beginnings of our religious Family which, as Fr. Gregory said, "*flourished so quickly with so many young people and everything went on with such harmony that one wondered if the work was really of the Lord ...*



But it passed a short time, when tribulations, travails and pains arrived, harsh trials with which it pleased and pleases God to try the Institute.

The diversity of serious diseases from which the Sisters were struck (real epidemics: etisia, typhoid, complicated smallpox, measles, hunger, as well as mental alienation...), to the extraordinary mortality of the Sisters, to the miseries and economic hardships that sometimes endangered the whole new foundation". (M. S. Chap. XV - pg. 72).

The situation was so serious that "... we were about to decide to send all those young women to their families, but they replied, *Die, but do not leave the little paradise of S. Maria degli Angeli!*". (M.S.pg 83)



We keep the deepest gratitude to our Founder for his testimony of charity, knowing how he accompanied and helped the first sisters who, like us, suffered and died infected by such strong "viruses".

The Venerable Founder reassured them and guarantees us also today by telling, "*God tries, but He does not abandon*".

Then, with this trial, an "OPPORTUNITY" not to be missed has come to us, which can commit us to welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Father. He will help us on a true journey of conversion for a sincere and loving following in the footsteps of Jesus who chose us so that we can make him the center of our life and bear witness to him to our brothers and sisters.

Epiphany = Manifestation of the Lord!

We have reached this day and the Holy Magi show us what it means to walk following the Star to reach Jesus. The light of faith, hope, and concrete love teaches us the way.

But there are also dark streets where the star hides behind our wrong choices, behind the selfishness that does not make us

look ahead, leaving behind the self-interest that does not see the needs of our brothers and sisters... If we too want to be 'Epiphany', we must be able to manifest self-sacrifice, generosity, self-denial, charity.

Here, now we know what meaning to give to current history, the Magi teach us not to be afraid of the Pandemic, they make us understand that any obstacle will not be an impediment, but a push to search knowing that the presence of Jesus will be felt, seen in the brothers and sisters to serve and love.

Sr. Luisangela Severin fmsc

PANDEMIC IN THE MOTHER HOUSE

From the first days of March 2020, the beginning of Lent, all the staff and the sisters who are most at the risk in the mother house were given covid 19 test every week and this was the case throughout the summer. Each time we rejoiced because the outcome was negative ... But the first positive case began on November 17 and that virus, so strong and powerful, has infected the whole community, 78 sisters of the mother house.

From 5 December an alarm went off, the need for help, because the negative ones were only about ten and all the infected were in bed including the nurses, but solidarity was not lacking, it was immediately felt.



*Sr Giordana, Sr Barbara,
Sr Mini, Sr Maribel*

Sr. Paola, the Superior General, from Rome sent four sisters to help including the General Councilor Sr. Rose Palamthattel, Sr. Mini Parathinal, Sr. Maribel Yabora, Sr. Pascaline Yenmole.

They arrived on 7th December accompanied by the Vicar General Sr. Tiziana Tonini and immediately dressed as required by the health provisions of Covid 19.

They went from one room to another to meet the needs of everyone ... a running race with oxygen cylinders, fluids, tablets, injections, etc.

Entering the room they asked: Who are you? Because with the facemasks and face shields and in uniforms they could not recognize them.

The superior general, Sr. Paola phoned several times a day to be present for the fatigue and suffering of those who looked after the sisters during the pandemic...

Yet, there is no escape from God's plan and in a few days, those who already had fragile health flew to their home in heaven.

Those who survived this tragic experience would like to thank all the Provinces of the Congregation and the Sisters who with so much affection, sensitivity and prayer expressed their closeness to all of us at the motherhouse.





Special thanks also to those who showed us Divine Providence by providing us with the food to meet our physical needs at the moment.

Sr. Paola also gave the news to Pope Francis who sent us, through Mons L. Roberto Cona from the Secretariat of State, a letter of participation in suffering with prayer.



Sr Luisangela, Sr Rosanna

Our Archbishop of Udine Mons Andrea Bruno Mazzocato showed a great sign of closeness to us through his phone calls and also coming in person to celebrate the Holy Mass on December 27th during the Christmas festive, to be close to us in our trying times, giving us the rays of hope.

He gave us the gift of the Sunday Eucharist for the whole month of January by sending a new priest Don Christian Marchica, since the Franciscan friars of the Shrine of St. Antony, were also affected by the pandemic and could not be present for the daily celebrations.

They too kept themselves informed about our situation.



The priests of Gemona and other parishes around, as well as the religious of various Congregations, telephoned us assuring us of their prayers and closeness to us in the moment of sufferings especially for the loss of so many sisters who are known and appreciated for their gift of services in different ways.

The people of Gemona has shown beautiful signs of closeness through parents, children and grandparents with letters, drawings, mementos of thoughts and small gifts left at the gate or hung on the Christmas tree which they themselves prepared at our entrance.

Their messages were of encouragement:

*“We don't leave you alone, we are here too!
You have been here for many years for the education of young people, children and families through school, catechesis and pastoral service and you always have a good word for those who are alone and sick ...
With prayer and affection we want to reciprocate and support you in this tragic moment ”*



To all we express our gratitude, our prayers, friendship and affection!

Sr Ornella Parisotto

Da Gemona in cielo

Suor
M. Matilde



Suor
M. Angelicarosa



Suor
M. Raffaella



Suor
M. Dina



Suor
M. Emiliana



Suor
MariaBruna



Suor
M. Anna



Suor
M. Carla



Suor
M. Pierantonio



Suor
M. Eleonora



Suor
M. Chiardamiana



Suor
M. Giannina



Suor
M. Andreana



Suor
Anna Maria Visentin



Suor
M. Teresina



Suor
M. Carmelisa



Suor
M. Linajoseph



*“En las verdes praderas
me lleva a reposar el Señor”*

The Experience in Gemona during Covid.... a Moment of Grace

Motherhouse in Gemona, always a place of joy for all ... the refreshing air there...recalling the life breath of our heroic founders and early sisters. The majestic mountains around silently narrating stories of joys and sorrows... The whole atmosphere gives a mystical experience for a Franciscan Missionary sister of the sacred Heart...

During the last two months' time we have, a different story emerged from this much-loved place, stories of fear, anxiety and death. The reason is an attack of an enemy band covid 19 that much devoured the world, sneaked into the "Little Paradise" all of a sudden. This invisible enemy took a very intelligent move ... began its attack right from the provincial superior to others, taking victory easily over the aged, defenseless and frail sisters and one after the other they left for heaven. The news spread all over the entire congregation and sisters began to be close to the situation in their own possible way..

In the general house in Rome, the update was given every day by the superior general sr. Paola. The fear, the panic ... visible on the faces of the sisters spoke much, especially the sisters who shared their lives with many of them

What a tragic victory the enemy made!

Hearing all these I felt a strong feeling within and I offered myself to go and help. Sr Paola asked for help from other sisters and so with Sr. Maribel Yabora, Sr. Mini Alex and Sr. Pascaline we were the "chosen ones" to go to Gemona. I was so happy about the two nurse sisters in our battalion to combat the enemy as I have little experience in the field of sickness and caring the sick. However, the Lord gave me the determination to go and the confidence to be useful in any way in this needed situation.

In the next morning, 7th of December I wished the sisters in the community and left for Gemona with Sr. Tiziana. Our journey was pleasant. In reality, none of us had a clear picture of the battle we were going to begin so there was no fear or tension. Reaching Gemona in the evening, we felt a heart sinking experience... an atmosphere of silence

and sadness. Sr. Stefania who is in quarantine came down to greet us. Sr. Dinamaria, the only one on foot at that time, beside Sr Luciana Cividini, felt the burden of everything and broke into tears ...



we started to sense the heaviness of the situation. In the next morning, the day of the immaculate we wore our uniform for the battle, the PPE with much care and went to the field. I went with the nurses in the infirmary and Sr. Pascaline in the section of the kitchen to help the women.

We started our battle right on the day of the Immaculate Conception, with Jesus love in our heart and His power in our bodies in the company of Mother Mary. We tried to reach and help everywhere possible. The enemy, the pandemic made a very cunning move here also by attacking all the nurse sisters, thereby closing the defense. So sr Maribel and sr Mini began to work out their support in the therapy side in the possible way. I joined the sisters who were already there running around in helping, in cleaning the sisters, feeding who are bed ridden in the infirmary, serving food in the rooms for who are in isolation etc...

It seems the arrival of the Roman army could not create an effective impact in the enemy virus; rather it became even more violent devouring more and more lives of the sisters...The situation was terrifying... daily two deaths....The Lord is great, "He hears the cries of His people in time of need".

At this critical moment, He sent us Sr. Barbara Pandolfi, who took special permission from the institute where she was working. Indeed she is a captain who has much experience in fighting with this enemy pandemic.

She took the lead and we started our counter attack with more courage, trusting in the Lord.

My God, what an experience!

More and more sisters got worse; some were shifted to the hospitals others we supported with oxygen... running from room to room, floor to floor indeed it was a battle.

During these days of the true race, Sr. Mini got infected and remained four days in bed .Certainly, it did not discourage us.

Sr. Barbara and sr. Maribel gave an intensive care to her and Sr. Mini returned to the field. In spite of her tiredness, she started the same running.

Sr. Maribel was the most resistant, the virus got frightened of her will power and spared her... she fought until the end.

I noticed, the sisters suffered more from fear and insecurity than from the sickness. Fear drains out their mental and physical strength and the loss of their dear companion's one after the other put them all the more weak.

It was painful to see them while hearing the funeral prayers said for one sister through the microphone, with fear and agony, make a deep sigh and utter trembling "*she also left us.*"!

Then it was our turn to say some consoling words and change their moods.

We usually spend some time with the sisters who are bedridden. Sometimes they are reluctant to eat because losing the sense of taste and smell is a symptom of Covid. We forced them to eat to keep them stronger to defend the virus by making them speak or by giving some special attention.

We enjoyed seeing their brighter faces.

We deeply admire their sense of gratitude even for any little service done; we heard so many times the blessing, "thank you, the Lord will pay for you".

The most traumatic experience for me was seeing the men placing the dead bodies of the sisters in the coffin....

It still remains in my mind with the feeling..... after all we are only this much !

Right after 15 days of our battle in the motherhouse, I was down with fever and tested covid positive.

I was forced to surrender, but the situation in the house with other sisters was getting better. Considering my condition going worse, they decided to shift me to the hospital.

I never had a hospital experience before it was indeed a struggle.

Suffered from a feeling of solitude and anxiety in the first few days, but gradually there came a light, a deep serenity, hope and God's love.

It opened my heart to see and experience, everyone around me are very kind and gentle. I consider the 15 days in the hospital, as a time of grace, where I found the true sense of my life, a life with God and myself alone...

Thank God, I got my test negative and left the hospital

While in the hospital, I heard the situation in Centocelle and the rushing of sr. Maribel to continue her mission there and later sr. Mini Alex. Their non-stop services for our sisters in both the places in the last two months are to be appreciated.

Then at last, Sr. Maribel for the first time and Sr. Mini for the second time got tested positive, but thank God by then, the situation in both the houses were better .

I thank the Almighty, who reveals His merciful love in ways different from our planning and thinking. I consider all these experiences we lived are moments of grace He granted us.

I thank Sr. Paola our Superior general, for giving us an opportunity to have this precious experience and support all through especially when I was in the hospital My profound gratitude to Sr. Stefania, the provincial Superior, Sr. Giordana the local Superior and all other sisters in all the Provinces for their concern and care and above all for the prayers.

*"God tries,
but never abandons".*

Sr Rose Thomas



The Pandemic Experience in our Home for the aged in Treviso

Our experience of Covid 19 began in February 2020, when one of our nurses, participating in a Master in coordination of health professionals in the hospital of Schiavonia (Monselice), received the communication that a patient had been affected by coronavirus at the said hospital.

She informed her employer and the director of our nursing home, who immediately took action against both her and the facility.

In fact, even before receiving instructions from the Ulss and the Region in this regard, the Director, having perceived that he was facing an already very serious epidemic, in agreement with the doctor and other professionals, decided to close, immediately, the entrance to everyone (family members, private assistants of the Guests, ordinary maintenance workers, companies, etc.) This decision aroused a strong reaction in some family members and also in several guests, because they still did not understand the gravity of the moment.

This required, on our part, more closeness and listening, more communication and dialogue with everyone to help understand that every decision and choice was for the good and safety of each person.

Love and affection, taking care of each one personally, contributed to living this long period quite serenely. There have been ups and downs, but at the end, with the contribution of all, we have survived unharmed the first wave of the pandemic.

It seemed that the summer had freed us from the danger of contagion and, instead, unfortunately, in November there was a second wave ...: this time the virus also broke into our home. Prudence, vigilance, distancing and constant disinfection were not enough. Several ladies were affected by the virus and some, already carriers of other pathologies, died... Their death saddened everyone, because the loss of each inmate made others poorer and more fragile too. Despite this situation of fatigue, tension and alarming responsibility, we have continued our service assistance uninterrupted being always



very caring with the ladies.

Throughout the month of December, our institute was considered a red zone so, in order to carry out the service to infected people, staff had to wear the devices sent by the Ulss.

At times, there was a sense of tiredness, of non-acceptance of isolation, of loneliness, in other moments of closure and acceptance, for which they tried to instill courage, trust and hope.

Finally, towards the end of the month, all the operators and guests tested negative and so it was possible to start the new year with greater serenity and strength. Therefore, there was talk of a vaccine, for which, after various requests, the date of administration was established on 12th January. A new horizon opened before us and gradually we returned to normal.

The second dose of the vaccine was made on February 4th and therefore now we hope to be able to resume our mission with the hope and desire to live everyday life with generosity and in communion with everyone.

We thank the Lord for everything and for everyone and we solemnly want to do so on 11th February, World Day of the Sick, through the intercession of the Virgin of Lourdes.

... And I too have been infected

On the morning of 7th December 2020, while I was busy preparing to bring the breakfast to the women in their room, which is given with all biodegradable disposable material, I was called by the nurse to the special room to get tested.

When done, I immediately went back to the kitchen to complete the preparation and serving of breakfast to the few people I had not yet served, but, alas, I was immediately called back to repeat the test, because there was some suspicion. I went with sadness and suffering, even though I did not really feel well.

The situation of the ladies required availability, help, presence, service and I found myself in that situation!

The second test also showed positivity, so I was immediately sent to the room, isolated. The meeting with the director and with the sisters made me feel even more the weight of my contagion.

What to do? How to react and live this moment?

The first day was quite difficult and tiring, I did not accept my fragility. Then the sickness took me over, so I gave up, I entrusted myself to the Lord and abandoned myself to Him.

To ease my isolation, the television was brought to my room so that I could spiritually participate in the Holy Mass, the Holy Rosary and other useful programs.

As the days passed, I tried to look at and live my isolation with serenity and strength. The words of Jesus came to mind: *“The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few! Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest!”*. (Mt 9, 37)

“The strong time had come, the favorable time for me, to live fully that day given to me by the Lord to be together with Him in prayer and offering”.



In fact, I spent a lot of time in prayer and reflection, in the recitation of the Holy Rosary and in listening to Him and His word.

In the evening, after having dinner, I called the sisters on the phone to share the progress of the day with them, then we said goodbye, wishing each other good night.

In those days, the communication of the death of sisters in the Mother House arrived daily. This pained me a lot and required me to intensify my prayer, offering and solidarity.

Therefore, every day, until day 17, until that day when a nurse came to my room to get me the molecular test again. However I was asked to remain in the room until the getting the result of the test, which, thank God, was, informed negative on day 18, and so I was able to go out of the room and resume my service.

Blessed be the Lord who takes care of us, in every situation of life!

Sr Annamaria Volpato



From the Community "Presentation of Mary in the Temple" RAUSCEDO

Covid-19 like everywhere did not knock on the door of our house, but it did abruptly and unexpectedly imposed without knowing where it came from!

A bit of news

Let us go in order: We do not know where the covid came from because we three sisters of Rauscedo carry out different activities in two Pastoral Units with catechesis, liturgical animation, visits with the Eucharist to the sick in the various parishes, as well as direct activities in the two Nursery Schools of Rauscedo and Vivaro. We therefore meet many people and it was impossible for us to trace the source of the infection.

The proposal of the priest of Arzene and our willingness to join the clergy for a quick test of prevention in the Seminary, immediately gave a positive response for the writer Sister Lina Maria!



It was December 16 when we had the test; in the meantime in the Mother House the infection curve was very high, we were all fully involved and participating in the sad and scary moment for our dear elderly sisters ... and we were entering a situation open to everything! Immediately those infected, closed in her room and from that moment, the whole community closed its doors! Those were the days of preparation for Christmas but the Covid has upset the plans!
Stop everything right away.

The Pordenone Prevention Department intervened with,

- the closure of the Rauscedo Kindergarten where Sister Lina Maria, being a teacher of the IRC, was working with the children with physical approaches to dramatize the stories of the Waiting for Jesus;
- an appointment for the covid test for all children and school staff at the kindergarten set for 23 December, which later revealed themselves by the grace of God with all negative results;
- appointment on December 24th (Christmas Eve) for the molecular swab test to the two sisters who are currently negative. Unfortunately, the results that arrived the next day revealed Sister Giannantonio's positivity while Sister Renza was negative.

On Christmas morning, therefore, we all found each other isolated in their own space and closed at home. A Christmas that will remain in our hearts forever; a situation in full compliance with all the hygienic-sanitary regulations related to the coronavirus emergency.

We remember the Celebration of the Holy Christmas Mass and of the following holidays and weekdays; we lived them individually, following them from the mobile each on their own.

We exchanged Christmas greetings, on video call !!!

Sister Renza generously put on a "large apron of service" preparing for us always varied food and juice to recover the necessary energy in order to fight the virus. These are all visible signs of fraternal love. Not to mention her constant intervention for the super-sanitation of the premises for her and our protection.

Thank God, now, after a long period of isolation, we are gradually recovering our strength and the community has regained its rhythm.

What has this unique and strong experience left in our hearts?

- Further personal recognition of the great gift of Eucharistic Celebrations lived in presence and the lacking of community prayer. This experience of “fasting” shoots us up more to give thanks to the Lord for His breaking for us with Love and without hesitation; Holy Mass is a time of daily grace that must always be revitalized with our involvement without descending into habit or ritual, as well the community prayer.
- The need to be helped by the sisters in material things made us rediscover and renew the beauty of fraternity, of loving each other and supporting ourselves with our limitations and qualities, convinced that everything can be overcome if everyone is there and with the desire to grow in fraternity.
- We rediscover ourselves more as sisters, thanks to the Lord!
- The inability to relate as usual with people of all conditions, especially with the elderly who are alone and sick, or with the sisters of the Mother House that have been closed for a long time, has pushed us to resort more to the use of the telephone. Listening is very important to encourage and support, as if to say “we are in the same boat”, “let us give each other courage in trusting the Lord and ... let us proceed together ...”
- In this particular moment of the covid, we notice how much people love us, both the people who live around the parishes, and the families of the children of the two preschools. We have touched the positive signs, many people were present by telephone, assuring prayer, the wish to see each other soon ... or bringing us various food and placed outside the door.
- At the end of the isolation, when we returned to the parish communities, the people expressed so much joy! A lady said: “Finally the light has returned to the church!”. We constantly repeat to ourselves that consecrated life is truly appreciated in its ‘being’.



Sr Giannantonio, Sr Renza and Sr Lina Maria

A personal testimony

What impressed me in the 35 days of isolation?

I came out of the closure being renewed from within.

Never in my life have I had such a long time of solitude. Yes, this distancing from everything could have caused me depression, despair, long waiting, negative thoughts... I thank the Lord because I perceived that He was waiting for me there, in the desert. In the first days, perhaps because the symptoms of the covid were present, the situation caused me anxiety and desolation for not seeing the sisters or hearing them only on the phone or for the activities stopped. Even prayer seemed soulless to me.

As the days went by, the Lord had mercy on me. I can attest that being “out of the game” has become for me a strong time of special encounter with the Lord. Now that I have resumed normal life, I confirm with frankness that, remembering the experience of isolation, it helps me to live more serene, in the certainty that the Lord is with me and does not abandon His own. He has his own Project of Love for each of us which is “revealed” over time.

Thank you Lord and the sisters who have lovingly looked after me!!!

Sr Lina Maria Cavašin

COVID 19 HAS REACHED ALSO PRAQUE

We all lived with great trepidation and anguish, the tragedy that, from the first days of December, was taking place in the Mother House. And we prayed a lot, a lot, not only for the sisters affected by the virus but also for the “healthy” ones who saw their commitments augmented to replace those who were positive and could not leave their room.

From a distance, one suffers even more because one would like to share hardships and sufferings. Not only. It was not possible for us to shake hands and look into the eyes of the sisters who were leaving us.... A great pain.



The three of us, here in Prague, felt almost calm as far as Covid is concerned, despite having always been so cautious. We had passed the test of the first wave brilliantly, so we thought that everything was going well. Nevertheless, the Covid has visited us. On 10 December, sr. Emanuela did not feel well, for two days she had a high fever. It was clear. From the test she was positive and after a few days also sr. Anna Rosa. Sr. Chiaralberta, although not positive at first, soon began to slow down and feel “strange”. The symptoms were those. There was no need for any tests. It was clear.

They phoned us from the health department that absolutely not to go out and to remain isolated among us. No problem with that. We also dusted off the third floor of the house and took possession of it. More isolation than that !!!!

However, as in all things, the pandemic has also shown us the other side of the medal.

As soon as the rumor spread that the sisters were no longer seen on the train with bags for the homeless,

they did not see us in the parish at Holy Mass, they no longer distributed food or clothing for needy families, such a race began of solidarity. Both among the Italians and among the Czechs of the area, which has enormously surprised us. We had to be alert to hear and answer the bell that has rang so many and many times in recent weeks. They even brought us ready-made lunches and bags full of everything their heart inspired.

One morning around 8.30, a gentleman arrived with the van and placed 4 large bags on the entrance steps! We asked him if he was sure they were all for us. In fact, many nowadays shop online. He said, “yes! But that is not all. Wait, I will bring you the others! “And he still unloaded 9. So 13 overloaded bags, of what? Of everything, lots of cheese, meat, oil, fish, boxes of oranges and mandarins, bananas, ham, milk etc. etc . We do not want to repeat but almost every day of our illness (about 3 weeks) we have received a lot of providence that we, on time, have also distributed to “our” families in need.

Thus, providence entered through the central door and left through the garage.

The poor people and we, were happy, but happy were all those who had the opportunity to do good. To conclude, it should be added that some Italian friends also wanted to help us by “enriching” our bank account. Of course, we must not thank the pandemic, but recognize once again that the Lord does not abandon us and the little we can do for others returns a hundredfold in time of need.

We thank the Lord for our healing and for the many graces that, once again, have shown us that He cares for us.

The community of Prague



From Peekskill - US

As the world continues to face the challenges of COVID 19, we in the St. Francis Province are doing our best to stay safe and virus-free.

Many times, we feel that we are experiencing the life of the Cloister, but knowing that we are healthy strengthens us and inspires us to keep wearing masks, washing hands, and taking all precautions to protect ourselves and each other.

On November 13th our Infirmary cleaning lady Maria tested positive for the virus.



By the end of that day, we put in place all the quarantine procedures that were required, with the help of our local doctor.

Everyone on the Infirmary floor had to remain there for 14 days, along with the two Sisters who work there.

Everyone remained healthy and left quarantine on Thanksgiving Day, with much to be thankful for.

We are grateful to the women of The Villa, who all agreed to remain here at Mt. St. Francis for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

It was a great sacrifice for them not to be with their families, but the greatest gift given to everyone was to keep us and our loved ones healthy.



We would like to reserve a special and grateful remembrance for Fr. Charles Reinbold, who has been our Motherhouse chaplain in Peekskill for 27 years. In 2019 we celebrated his silver jubilee as our resident priest and this past November we gathered in honor of his 90th birthday.

Last March, Father was diagnosed with the virus, and after three weeks in the hospital he spent three months in a local rehab center. His only wish was that he be able to reside in the Sisters' Infirmiry, which we gladly prepared for him. Father Charlie had many side effects from the virus which left him very dependent on others. He knew what was ahead of him and chose to live out his last days praying, enjoying short visits with friends and Sisters, and remained peaceful as he prepared to journey home to God.



On his last day on earth, he was very aware of everything, was anointed, and expressed his thanks for all that the Sisters have done for him.

We reminded him of the last line from the Gospel of that day: *"You are my beloved in whom I am well pleased"*; he smiled and knew that he was ready for God to call him home.

Father loved trains. I don't think it was a coincidence that as he took his last breath, the train passed by the Motherhouse and sounded its whistle... maybe there is a train to heaven, and he peacefully jumped on board on Sunday, January 10th to a destination he prepared for very well for over 90 years.

Fr. Reinbold has touched the lives of many, many people over the years.

We know that from his new home in God's eternal kingdom he will continue to intercede for all of us and be there to welcome us when we reach our final station on our journey.

As I write this, I have spent most of the day trying to obtain the vaccine for the Sisters and Ladies of the Villa. This is no easy task, but please God we will be able to receive it soon and be a little safer as this virus continues to threaten our world. Since March, we have all gathered together each day to pray the Rosary for God's protection for all of us throughout the world. Our hearts and prayers are united with all our Sisters who have suffered the loss of so many in our FMSC family.

Sister Laura Morgan

Peace and Good from the Sisters of Bulgaria!

This is how we accepted and experienced the quarantine that knocked on our door. He brought with him time for silence and time to reflect, but also to smile!

The great silence in which we immersed ourselves for 15 days reminded us of the things that are necessary and unnecessary in our life as consecrated women.

A few days before the feast of St. Elizabeth, it was discovered that our community of Rakovski had been infected by covid 19; we were positive Sister

Elka Staneva and Sister Jyothi Kodomagundla.

On the other hand, for Sister Gracy Puthiadath and Sister Lorenza Giroto, a few days after having analyzed them, they too turned out to be positive.

Sister Elka and Sister Jyothi had a high fever, strong cough; we lost the senses of taste and smell. We felt much weak, without strength. Thanks to Sister Gracy Puthiyadath who was with us all the time. She came on a Saturday evening only to visit us, but seeing the situation, she remained. She herself said that the Lord gave her strength to help us and stay close to us in these difficult times. Even though she was close to us all the time, she had no symptoms.

How have we been through these days? People cared so much about us every day. Some of them went to the shop and brought us the fruit, the medicines we needed here. We felt all the affection of the people around us. In these days, Sister Svetla Zekova from the Ginitza Community remained alone in solitary confinement. One day she felt unwell and she too came to us, thereby joined the two communities into one. The time of Advent was approaching, we felt a little better and we were able to prepare the Liturgy and Advent wreaths for the chapel and for the parish. Simple things, but after two weeks' isolation, they had a different value.

During these days marked by a great, silence that let in only the sound of the door opening and closing. The first few days it seemed to us that time had stopped. No activity, no movement, just silence.

The disease has given us a new look, to rethink and re-evaluate the value of relationships with sisters, with others, to feel the lack of the normality of life, to wake up in the morning and leave the room to welcome the new day with joy.

At the same time, Sister Lorenza Giroto appeared near the rooms with a worrying voice, repeating with certainty that she was always "positive in life", not only in these days of isolation!

Her spontaneity also gave us a lot of serenity and the possibility of smiling.

We want to thank the sisters of the entire Congregation for their prayers, sacrifices, messages and closeness in this time of trial and physical weakness. Thank you dear sisters.

The Sisters of Bulgaria



Covid in Switzerland and Lithuania

A unique experience

It is December 1st and despite all the precautions taken to the letter, the announcement that I am positive falls on me like a bolt from the blue.

What to do? Where and when did I “get it”? Who could I have passed it on to? I think back to the people with whom I had the last contacts, I think above all of the sisters in my community. However, I do not linger on the question “Why me?”

One thing is certain, I will be isolated in my room for at least twelve days ... Sister Deepthi Govada and Sister Lucy Gandamm, my two sisters will go into quarantine, the nursery school will be closed and all apostolic activities suspended. What a surprise!!! A real shock!!!

An unprecedented way to experience the Advent period and prepare for the Christmas holidays. I accept the disease as a test and I let myself be carried by the prayers of all the sisters and the Church. In the depths of myself, I have the certainty that I will make it.

After a first moment of dismay and disorientation, here I am ready to react and organize myself, I am lucky that my bedroom window opens onto a wonderful landscape and in those days, the mountains are enchanting with snow.

My room becomes my chapel and my community, my desert and my apostolate, the place of my spiritual retreat and communion with the congregation.

During these twelve days my sisters are like “the crow of Elijah” mentioned in 1 book of Kings 17, 1-16. They place; hot meals and whatever could be useful to me, at the door of my room with care and so much delicacy.

The precious, daily support from Sister Elisabetta, the provincial superior reassures me; in particular, I feel the prayer of the Sisters of the Province and of the Congregation alive and also the support of my sister Sr. Marialuigia (Sister Loredana and Sister Annamaria are not aware of the situation).



Then there is the unspeakable pain of the drama that is unfolding in the Mother House, the announcement of new deaths visibly disheartens us, even though we are certain that our sisters are now with the Father.

With faith, I turn to our venerable Father Gregory confidently asking him to intervene, he who had already experienced a similar drama.

An experience of isolation that touched me deeply both physically (I had all the symptoms of the disease) and spiritually.

During the first days of isolation, I was dazed then little by little, I became aware that, it is a special gift, which the Lord has reserved for me.

His presence is real within me; he offers me an opportunity to have a unique experience of communion with him, even if I cannot receive it sacramentally.

Here I am on the last day of isolation, surprise!!!

Sister Deepthy Govada and Sister Lucy Gandam, my sisters are positive in the test!!!

Well, confidently, let us start all over again; but with the difference that this time I will take care of them and as far as possible, we could still have moments of community life. A unique opportunity to experience trusting abandonment in the Lord. An original way to prepare for the feast of the Nativity of the Lord Jesus.

At every moment, we felt the support and prayers of the Sisters of the Province, of the whole Congregation and in particular the loving and maternal support of Sister Elizabeth, our provincial superior.

With deep pain and immense affliction, we participate in the drama that is consumed daily in the Mother House where several of our sisters in unspeakable suffering entrust their lives into the merciful hands of God the Father.

For all of us it is an immense pain and our modest experience of “infected with the Coronavirus 19 is nothing but a humble, but sincere participation in the suffering of the entire Congregation.

Moreover, it is not over ... in Kretinga Sister Danutė Ancerytė ... is “in solidarity” with us.

Positive for Coronavirus, she is forced to be isolated, while her sisters,

Sister Inès Portugal and Sister Julija Lukauskaitė, are undergoing quarantine, a great way to start the Christmas Novena!!!

The community is therefore preparing to live the Christmas holidays in an unprecedented atmosphere. An unprecedented Christmas, isolated from everyone and everything, although the media give the opportunity to participate, virtually, in religious services and be in contact with the sisters of the Congregation.

A Christmas lived in intimate and profound communion with the “ONE WHO IS CELEBRATED”.

A unique opportunity to savor the immeasurable mystery of the Incarnation.

Certainly, the first days are difficult for the whole community and in particular for Sister Danutė, isolated within four walls, but the Lord does not fail to make Himself present in the most varied forms. The support and caring care of the sisters of her community, the daily and competent support of Sister Elisabetta as well as the prayers of the sisters of the Province and the Congregation help her to live this trial with serenity.

It indeed turns into a precious time of spiritual renewal, of revision of life, of personal verification and thanksgiving grâce.

This experience transformed us all. It is as if the Lord had offered us a new life, a stronger spirit of communion unites us all.

We are grateful to our superiors who supported us with patience and love and we raise the hymn of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord:

*“Most High, almighty, good Lord,
Yours are Praise, glory and honor and all Blessing”*

Sr Beniamina Borsato



The Covid experience in Albania

As every year, we, the sisters of the two communities of Shkoder (Sr Lirie, Sr Nida) and Dushaj (Sr Vangie, Sr Lia, Sr Dila, Sr Toline) in Albania, go on a summer mission to the Tropoja area, since we are the only sisters in that area.

Bishop Simon Kulli wished that this year too, even in the time of a pandemic, the mission be carried out in order not to leave our faithful alone without spiritual care, without the Sacraments. Thank God, the harvest was abundant, more than even the missionaries thought. In fact, many have received the sacraments. After the mission, we sisters also wanted to do a summer camp with the children. The day after starting the summer camp, Sr. Lirie began to feel a certain uneasiness; not knowing if they were symptoms of Covid, it was decided to suspend the camp and other activities. After more than a week and having no other symptoms, except fever, we called Dr. Blerta and requested to make a visit to her. The same doctor had already experienced and overcome the Covid infection. Sr Lirie and Sr Lia were visited and she was beginning to have very worrying symptoms. In fact, the doctor gave Sister Lia the cure of Covid and advised Sr Lirie to take paracetamol and vitamins.

Sr Lia, however, continued to worsen, arousing much concern in everyone and continually asking to each other what could be done. We also took her to Kosovo to visit but her situation was getting worse and worse. We then informed Sr Cristiana the provincial superior, expressing our great concern over the condition of sr. Lia and our the impossibility of help even by doing a proper test and get the clarity of her positivity to Covid. Then Sr Lia herself had asked, if it was possible, to be taken to Italy. We immediately got the

ticket ready and on the next day, she left for Rome and, at the Spallanzani hospital, she was tested Covid positive. So all of us sisters from the two communities who were still in Dushaj in the mountains moved to the community in Shkodra. We hoped to get tested there and to make sure if we had been infected. Unfortunately, it was very difficult because we were always told that the state had no test facilities. They explained to us that there were only 10 testing facility for the whole city of Shkodra and they were reserved only for seriously ill people. We managed to call 127 and so finally, almost a month later with fever, Sr. Lirie was able to test and later also Sr Dila, who had some symptoms. Sr Lirie was positive, while Sr Dila was negative. However, in the uncertainty of the situation, we tried to take care of ourselves in a possible way. The other sisters who had no symptoms returned to their community in Dushaj. Unfortunately, the problem of testing remains a major concern. Even Sr. Nida, who was infected in October, was able to do a test only when she developed symptoms evidently. We had to do the second test in the private clinic.

We thank God that despite many the difficulties and concerns, we have not had very serious symptoms and we have all overcome the virus. We thank our doctor who followed us, Doctor Gianfranco who from Italy was very much interested in us gave us advice in every way possible. We thank all those who have been close to us during this time of trial (our sacristan, the Stigmatine sisters and our neighbors). In particular, we thank all the sisters who prayed for us and all the people who gave us courage and showed so much affection towards us.

Sisters in Albania



SR. LIA NARRATES...

*You made me feel a lot of anguish,
you gave me life and you will come back to console me.*

I was asked to write something about my experience as a person affected by Covid 19, that I was infected in Albania in mid-July, but no one was able to diagnose the disease and I was sick, more and more sick.

I said to myself but what should I tell. The symptoms are more or less the same and everyone knows them by now, but the worst thing is when there is no diagnosis, there are no treatments and everyone prescribes medicines that have no effect.

There are no effective measures exist here that can cure you, you feel alone, helpless. I had this trial in Albania and I felt like I was dying, I was calling for death. A sister told me: “The Lord loves you!” and it is true. In fact, with her help, I arrived in Rome at 6.30 pm on August 3rd and I was accompanied directly to the hospital by Sister Cristiana and Sr. Cristina.

Everything was very fast, the same night they subjected me to many tests, samples, tests, CT scans with the clear diagnosis of interstitial pneumonia. That night was an experience that I will never be able to forget so much I was desperate for the lack of water which I was very much in need. I remembered the words of the Psalm ... “*Stick my tongue to my palate ...*” I could not buy water, I could not communicate. Finally, they brought me a glass of water, but it was nothing for my thirst, I tried to sip it with the illusion that it was increasing in volume, then a patient who understood what situation I was in, offered me a bottle of water.

The next day, after completing all the tests and with a serious diagnosis, I was transferred to Spallanzani in Rome, alone with myself in a room in the high-contagion ward, where some well-protected nurses came from time to time to continue the blood test.

I had all the time to think about myself, how I lived my consecrated and missionary life, the mistakes I made came back to my mind, I thought of the times when I did not give the best of myself and I said to myself: “The Lord will have pity on me “.

I thought of so many people who have given me a good example and who are no longer here, I thought about how I could prepare for the meeting with the Bridegroom.

After a few days, I got worse and then they transferred me to the intensive care unit.

First, they presented me with a mask and said, “*You will hate this mask, but it is necessary, the more you can keep it, the more certain the recovery is!*”

The first few days I had to resist up to 24 hours, then slowly I enjoyed some breaks. What a relief!

My head was full of bruises due to the strips that tightened the mask to prevent oxygen from escaping. Certainly, medicine has done its part, but I consider myself lucky because I have had the comfort of my sisters and of many acquaintances who have prayed for me.

Knowing that everyone is praying for you and are close to you with their affection gives you a lot of comfort, you no longer feel alone and you feel the intercession of everyone who is asking for healing.



I owe great gratitude to all the medical and nursing staff, for me they were a revelation of humanity, serenity, professional competence and availability.

But my special thanks go to the Lord whom I want to continue to love and serve, to my superiors and to all the sisters of the Congregation who have prayed and suffered for me.

I thank you Lord!

I thank you, Lord

you did great things:

who is like you, oh God?

You have made me feel many anguishes and misfortunes:

you still give me life,

increase my greatness

and come back to console me.

Then I'll give you thanks on the harp,

for your faithfulness, my God;

I will sing to you on the lyre, O Holy one of Israel.

Singing your praises, my lips will rejoice

and my life, which you healed.

Even my tongue all day will proclaim your greatness!

(See Psalm 30)

Sr Lia Vascon

18.09.2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

All of you who will receive the message, I would like to name you, one by one, but you are many, really many and you would get tired and bored reading them all. I strongly feel the duty to be the first to thank the Lord for having given me the healing, but I also want to express to you the joy full of gratitude because I know that you have prayed for me and have been close to me with your affection. During my illness you have been of great comfort and help for me, I felt the strength that you have transmitted to me through prayer, messages, telephone calls, perhaps even just your thoughts and the concern you have shared with me.

I used to say: "Even if I am isolated and I don't see anyone, I have many friends and I feel them here close to me!" I cannot find words to express my gratitude and I entrust the task to the Lord, may He bless you and reward you as He alone knows to do!

With all my heart, Sr. Lia

Together with Sr. Lia, we of the community of Dushaj and Scutari too:
We thank you for your support and comfort.
Especially for your prayers.

With affection and gratitude,
Sr. Vangie, Sr. Lirie, Sr. Dila
Sr. Nida and Sr. Toline

A great test at the beginning of the New Year 2021

LIGHT is not extinguished by darkness

The suffering caused by the virus, Covid 19, and that humanity is experiencing in this time, has also deeply touched our community, while living in an attitude of defense with prudence and many precautions. The virus continues to undermine humanity and sow death and fear. The reality we live seems strange, but those who have been infected and suffered the consequences know how real the suffering is.



During the time of Advent we were always united with our closeness and affection, prayers and thoughts, to the sisters of the Mother House, in Gemona. We know and feel in our hearts how much suffering they have experienced from the contagion, the disease and the loss of so many sisters, caused by this virus. However, in this time of pain, our whole religious family feels closer and united and we try to comfort each other. We feel united in prayer, trust and the certain hope that is found only in Jesus who was born for us and is with us.

The time of Advent in our community in Centocelle was lived with full trust and hope for us and for the betterment of the conditions of sisters affected by the virus in the Mother House.

Holy Christmas has arrived ... and we celebrated the light of the same hope that the world awaits, with joy in the heart of every man in the whole world. And it will be the light that shines in every heart, in the heart of those who with certainty and profound faith find in Jesus, the child God, such a light that does not go out in darkness.

Christmas Eve is lived all over the world with the joy of waiting: we too in community have waited for it to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The preparation was finished and by the grace of God, despite all the difficulties of the time in where we live, we had the gift of the Eucharistic celebration on Christmas Eve.

However, we were not calm! We entrusted ourselves to God, even if something was not right and we went ahead knowing that there is someone, who is greater than our fear.

It all started from here. While the preparations for Christmas Eve were being completed, we heard a rumor circulating and is now obvious by the "culture of suspicion", that we live in this time of uncertainty. Just on 24th December 2020 we began to talk about a single infection, one of our employees tested positive, so in the community we must be on guard to discover any manifestation of symptoms. Not everyone knows, the news had not been published so as not to spoil the joy of Christmas and always hoping that it was a false alarm.

The situation was approached with caution. Meanwhile, the superiors of the community and the entire provincial council, together with other sisters, were watching more carefully. They planned tighter measures, preparing themselves in case the situation suddenly changed.

The first possible day after the holidays, on December 28th, as a precaution, some sisters who had had more contact with our employee took the Covid test. They tested negative. Other sisters were tested on the next day and they also tested negative. We breathed a sigh of relief but the doubt remained because the days of the incubation have to be calculated and then because some sisters who were in bed already started to show symptoms.

One of the sisters who had a test on December 28th had a high fever a couple of days later, and a sister in the infirmary had to stay in bed due to a fever. The question remained whether it was normal flu or Covid; the treatments began and we reached the end of the year.

In the meantime, the community sang the thanksgiving “Te Deum laudamus te Domine confitemur” with joy at the end of the year at the end of the prayer of Vespers. The year 2020 was about to end and the New Year 2021 was opening up before us. It was a great joy to finish a year in God’s grace, with the hope in the heart that the new year will give us a better time as everyone hopes, now tired from the situation caused by the virus Covid 19.

What awaits us this year? Today’s Gospel says, “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it” (Jn 1, 1-18). Thank you, Lord, because your light always illuminates us even in the darkness that surrounds in the time in which we are living.

On this eve of the new year, however, the security alarm for the community was raised. The joy of the celebration continued in the refectory, but at the end it was interrupted with an unwelcome announcement that aroused fear in all. The Provincial Superior, Sr. Cristiana Basso, waited with great care and concern for all of us to be present in the refectory to communicate the news, Covid has entered the community, a sister is positive! This announcement is followed by the recommendations and precautions of the doctor and the request to retire in isolation in their rooms waiting for the new year. Thus, the community entered quarantine on the eve of the first day of the year, the feast of the Mother of God. After the prayer of thanks, each one did her job quickly while in the refectory there is no one left to prepare for breakfast, only the lights of the Christmas painting shine and move where the colors change and a nice play is created.

Meanwhile, all those who gave their willingness to serve the sick sisters and the sisters in isolation, together with the entire Provincial Council, began to think about what must be done for the coming days, the kitchen, the various services, the sanitation etc. Even in organizing all this, we touched the divine Providence with our hands. In fact, there were sisters from the Philippines and Albania who had come for the Provincial Chapter, which was then suspended. Their presence was and is truly providential.



*Sr Teresita and Sr Annabel,
sanitize the place*



*Sr Vangie gives the Eucharist
to the sisters in isolation*



*Sr Marta Lucatelli
distributes the meals*

On January 2nd, another sister with a fever went to repeat the test which she did on December 28th and the result was confirmed positive. On the same day, the whole community was subjected to a rapid Covid test. Unfortunately five other sisters tested positive, and we already had seven positive ones in total.

Finally on January 5th, after the holidays, the ASL responded to our request for help with a new molecular test for all. Unfortunately, the number of infections has doubled, 14 sisters are infected. Among them are the three nurses who are in charge of the elderly and the sick. At this point the situation becomes difficult, who will be able to fulfill the duties of the nurses?

Providence, however, that never leaves us alone. On the afternoon of January 5th, she arrives from Gemona in the community of Centocelle Sr. Maribel, who has already had experience in the Mother House, where she went to help a month back, in their critical times. She returned to Rome

to come to the rescue of the emergency that arose in the Provincial House, as suggested by the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto and the Provincial Superior Sr Stefania Bandiera. Sr Cristiana, the Provincial Superior, though a little saddened as not being able to leave Sr Maribel some more time in the Mother House, welcomed the proposal with gratitude and emotion.

With great trust in the Lord, our hope is never extinguished, we always go forward pleading to the Lord for the betterment of the situation and we try to help each other even in services that are not within our competence. The alarm goes up, there are sisters who feel bad and need oxygen. The days become heavy for everyone, because in addition to the illness, the pain, there is also fear, anxiety, uncertainty, one doesn't know and one does not say, but one feels, perceives and moves forward with courage trusting in the Lord who enlightens us in the darkness of this insidious evil. It seems that the days never end, even if they do pass quickly. Another sister became positive on day 11.

From the ASL we receive a good monitoring and service assistance. Doctors and nurses come every day to check the positive sisters; for us it is a great relief because we feel reassured.

We are also supported by the sisters of the communities of the Province, who generously provide what is urgently

needed for us because no sister of the community can leave the structure. We feel the strong support of prayer and affection from all the sisters of the Province and of the Congregation.

Sr. Agnesina, already very tried, tried to fight, but she did not make it up and on 13 January in the morning she left us to return to the Father's house.



Sr Maribel, Sr Theresa

On January 14th, after the early afternoon, we have the new Covid test from the ASL. We always hope for improvement and we trust in a good outcome. We are all in prayer for Sr. Odilia; she is serious.

What to do and think in this moment, with the doctors and nurses running around the house, the sister who is dying, another who is sick, we can do nothing but offer the look, the silence, the thoughts and the prayers.

We “embrace” together with our gazes to be close to those who suffer, to those who struggle, with the consolation and strength that the Lord of life gives us. In this situation, just at the moment when the body of Sr. Agnesina was going through the gate to be taken to the cemetery, Sr. Odilia left us to meet her Spouse.

Immediately after that, Sr. Elena was prepared to be admitted to the hospital. She too, could not overcome the complications and left us on January 24th. It is a very painful time, to see the sisters we have loved so much, to go like this, without the comfort of the prayer of the whole community, but we entrust them to the mercy of the Lord with much affection as sisters.

A great consolation for all was the presence of the Superior General Sr. Paola Dotto and the sisters of the Council, who accompanied the deceased sisters to the cemetery, giving them the blessing and praying in front of their coffin for all of us too.



The result of the test on January 14 added three more cases that are new and the Director of the Department of Infectious Diseases concluded that this could not be continued; to solve the problem it was necessary to think of a different organization.

After these latest results, the positive and almost asymptomatic sisters are in fact transferred to a hotel, a Covid facility in the Lazio Region. Unfortunately, it did not end there! The fight continues and another sister has joined the group of infected.

In the meantime, we are witnessing a great act of love and generosity. Our Superior General Sr. Paola and the Provincial Superior of Gemona, decided to bring Sr Mini Alex, who also was gone to Gemona along with Sr. Maribel in the critical time there. It was indeed a support to Sr. Maribel in her services in Gemona, the situation was almost stabilized and came under control.

On January 15th she arrives, she immediately puts herself in service together with Sr. Maribel in the infirmary where the positive sisters are kept together. She has been a great example of donation, serenity and competence. We are happy to have known and appreciated her.



Sr Mini Alex

When will it end?

This is the question that the whole world is asking. We are with all humanity and all in the same boat. We have only one certainty: we are in the hands of God. We repeat the same words of Fr. Gregory, our Founder: *“God tries, but He does not abandon”*. This is for sure! Darkness will not win, on the contrary, God fights with us against the snares of the devil.

And our suffering? Pope, St. John Paul II comforts us: *“Man becomes the way of the Church in a special way, when suffering enters his life. It is the way of redemption; we are united to Jesus Christ, because the redemption was accomplished through the Cross of Christ, that is, through his suffering”*. (Salvifici Doloris 3)



From India experiences of contagions

In Mumbai

My heart is filled with Thanksgiving, to Him Who bore my pain. Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace and gave me Life again ...

We praise and thank God Almighty, for giving us a new life, to continue our faithful service to Him for some more time.

When we daily followed the news of a new virus, we never imagined it would knock at our door so fast. Mumbai was a city badly affected and we had the experience of lock down longer.

Some responsibilities related to the school, at times forced Sr. Ann Baby go to the school following all the protocol of covid 19.

Unfortunately, she was found infected on 30th of July. The symptoms developed were fever, cough, and cold, loss of smell and change of taste.

The test proved her virus positive and admitted in the Holy Spirit hospital in Andheri east far from our community, on 3rd of August.

The next day Sr. Daisy George also was admitted in the same hospital and found the test positive.

Since the two are affected, we were certain that, Sr. Elsy and Sr. Bindhu, the other members of the community also are contacted the pandemic and asked to have the covid test.

In fact, we too had the symptoms, but trusting in the healing touch of Jesus we remained at home, praying for all the people affected with covid 19.

After two days one of our parishioners offered us ayurvedic medicine for a month. During these days, we specially experienced the loving care and protection of God our Father in our life.

After a week Sr. Daisy George got discharged from the hospital but Sr. Ann Baby continued to be in the hospital for 15 days until her oxygen level reached normal.

Both of them continued to in home quarantine for more than 15 days, and we all remained in doors for the whole month of August.

The provisions, vegetables and other necessary items were provided within the premises by our good neighbors.

All our sisters were praying for us continuously. We all had a covid anti body test and the result was positive.

We are greatly indebted to all our sisters and many others who supported in different ways and remained closer to us in this moment of great difficulty.

We thank all personally and thank the Lord for this experience that made us know His love in a particular way.

*Sisters from Infant Jesus convent Mumbai
(Sr. Elsy, Sr. Daisy, Sr. Ann Baby, Sr Bindhu)*



In Manjeri

MY Experience of Covid 19

"Every one who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved" (Romans: 10,13)

I would like to begin My Covid 19 experience by expressing my gratitude to God the Almighty for His tender love and compassion. In this year marked by the suffering and challenges created by the Covid 19 pandemic, I personally have experienced God's presence during my sickness...

On November 23rd five of us had our Covid test and after five days, 28th November we got the result as Covid positive.

It was really a time of tension and worry not about me but for all our inmates, who are so weak and prompt to get any kind of disease.

During my isolation time, I prayed God for the protection of all who came to contact with me..., and it was a miracle that after my time of illness no one else got Covid 19.

Along with me there were Sr. Geetha, and the three girls (staff) who work with us also tested positive remained in isolation.

On December 8th we got the result as Covid negative.

The Lord heard our cries, none of our inmates mostly mentally out got affected..

We really made a sigh of relief and expressed

gratitude to the Lord. During this critical time, we had special novena to our Venerable Fr. Gregory. We prayed to St. Sebastian decided to offer 9 days Holy Mass and Novena and also to visit the pilgrim Center at Kanjur(Kerala).

There is a deep belief and devotion exists among the people in Kerala that St. Sebastian saves people from contagious diseases.

In this period, we all took serious precautions by wearing mask even in the house and keeping distance from one another . I tried to be away from our inmates but I continued to be on duty due to the lack of enough staff to work with.

During this Covid 19 I the presence of God in a closer way and I realized our total dependence on Him alone rather than any power, wealth or science of this world. Our trust should be only in God.

Looking back on those days, today I really understand that God's great protection was over us to save all our inmates without any problem of Covid 19.

We consider this fact as a great miracle in our life, especially to our inmates, the poor, mentally tried women, who are His special children. I thank especially my community sisters who collaborated with me to overcome all my difficulties.

I thank all our sisters who supported us morally and spiritually with their constant prayers and making us feel the closeness of them. May God bless you all.



Sr Shaiji Palatty. (Shalom Matha Bhavan Majeri Kerala)

RELIGIOUS PROFESSIONS



IN TIME OF PANDEMIC



FIRST PROFESSION OF THE NOVICES, ANIMA AND HILARIYA

*"I know, O Lord, that man's life is not within his control,
and it is not for him to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).*

True, it is a fact that all the celebrations, auspicious occasions of the 2020 are in a way restricted worldwide due to the precarious spread of the pandemic, covid 19. We, the Franciscan Missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart too bowed before this reality in celebrating the first profession of our dear novices, Anima Samad and Hilariya Burh.



The profession was held in a simple but beautiful and very meaningful way in the novitiate chapel at Carmelnagar, on 11th August, the feast day of our seraphic Mother Saint Clare. Rev. Fr. Mesapam Gabriel celebrated the Holy Mass together with Rev. Fr. Peyyala Mariadas, the parish priest of Carmelnagar.

Sisters in very limited number participated in the celebration respecting the regulations of the pandemic.

Fr. Gabriel gave a beautiful homily quoting the words of the Scripture readings of the day.

He said, *“there are no restrictions for God in calling whomever He wants and setting them apart for His own purpose.*

The power and courage needed to answer His call, come from Him along with the message when He calls and sends a messenger. So today God has chosen Anima and Hilariya in this family of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart to accomplish His work. In the reading, we heard the boy Jeremiah was taken by God to speak to the grown up people in spite of his feeling incapable.

We are all called to be prophets by our baptism but in answering His special call, we are rewarded even more with the assurance of His presence and protection on your journey.

He expects us to be holy as He is. So dear sisters today as you say your “Yes” to the Lord, strive to grow in the path of holiness”.

He continued saying that the unbreakable relation of the branch with the wine bear much fruit likewise abiding in Jesus we bear fruit and apart from Him we are fruit less. If we are intimately related to God and constantly searching for His will, our life will be fruitful.



After the homily, the sisters pronounced their Religious Profession, leaving their bridal dress they received the habit of the Franciscan Missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart thereby expressed their dedication to offer themselves totally to the Lord in this religious Family. Sr. Mini Joseph, the provincial Superior received their Profession.



At the end of the Eucharist, the newly professed sisters expressed their heartfelt thanks to the Almighty God and to the superior General and councilors, the provincial superior and councilors for their Blessings and guidance that helped them to make a generous response to God's call.

They also expressed thanks to everyone present and absent for their prayerful support. It is also a joy for us to see that both of them belong to the same parish at Bhitbuna in the mission at Jharkhand.

They also expressed thanks to everyone present and absent for their prayerful support.

It is also a joy for us to see that both of them belong to the same parish at Bhitbuna in the mission at Jharkhand.

We thank the Lord and pray that our presence and evangelizing mission in various parts of the country bring more vocations to our religious family.

After the Holy Mass the assembly congratulated the sisters and joyfully welcomed everyone for the fellowship meal.



FIRST RELIGIOUS PROFESSIONS in the HOLY MARTYRS OF UGANDA VICE PROVINCE OF AFRICA.

The 29th of September 2020, feast of the Archangels has become for us: Atamba Joseline, lisasi Odiane, Wirsy Berenice and Momindo Rachael, a significant and unforgettable day in our vocational journey.

As there was joy in heaven for the feast of the Angels, there was joy in our hearts as we said “yes” to God through the emission of our vows.

The beautiful ceremony of our first religious profession started with Holy Mass at 9AM, in the Sts Ann and Joachim’s parish church of Nkoabang -Yaounde.

The Isidor Bakanja classic choir with their Angelic voices, joined the choir of Angels to sing as we entered the church in procession and lifted our souls and spirits in profound meditation and prayer throughout the Holy Mass.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by the Parish priest of Nkoabang, Rev Father Nkangu Dieudonne of the Carmelite Order. He welcomed everyone, those who were near e those who follow the Eucharistic celebration from afar.



During his homely, he encouraged us to give God the first place in our lives, he said that our joy should only come from the love of God and that in time of difficulties, we should always run to the Virgin Mary, our mother and model of consecrated people.

After pronouncing our vows of obedience, poverty and chastity, we joyfully received the names of our consecration :

Sr Mary Joseline of the Good Shepherd

**Sr Mary Odiane of the love
of Jesus and Mary**

**Sr Mary Berenice of the Sacred Heart
of Jesus and Mary**

**Sr Mary Rachael of the Grace and
Mercy of God**

The wearing of our Franciscan habit of penance and bearing new names marks a new beginning in our lives, the beginning of a beautiful journey in the Lord, the one in which we will have to renew our eyes to the Lord every day of our lives.

We implore from the Lord, the grace of perseverance and fidelity and we trust in his unfailing love.



With hearts full of joy, we want to thank our general Superior Most Rev Sister Paola Dotto, our Vice Provincial vicar Sister Bertha Mange and the councils for accepting and welcoming us in our religious Family.

We equally thank all our formators from the postulancy to the Noviciat: Sister Marie Pierre Obama and Sister Jeanne Craighero, for their love and patience and for all they sacrificed for our good.

We heartily thanks all our Sisters who contributed in one way or the other in our formation and who worked so hard for this day to be beautiful.

Our gratitude to our Parish priest and all the priests who concelebrated with him, for all they sacrificed to be with us as witnesses of our consecration to God.

We are very grateful to the choir for helping us to pray twice during the Eucharistic celebration.

In a special way we thank our families for being there always to accompany and encourage us in every step we take in our lives.

From the depth of our hearts, we say a big thank to our parents who gave us life, brought us up in the Christian faith, encouraged us in our choice of life and were there to joyfully offer us to God.

May the name of the Lord be honoured now and forever. Thanks, Merci , Beri.



Here I am Lord!... I am yours!

Today, all Saints' Day, I thank the Lord Jesus with great joy for calling me to follow Him and saying my "Yes", He called me to a spousal love, and I answered. I lived this experience in its fullness, and it was truly a day of grace.

In the celebration of the Holy Mass were present: the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto and the sisters of the General Council, Sr Cristiana Basso Provincial Superior with her Council and the Sisters of the Community "Maria Immacolata", whom I felt particularly present, both physically and spiritually.

I felt the support of the other sisters who, unable to be physically present, joined in prayer in a profound spiritual participation.

The moment my name was called, after reading the Gospel, I felt ready and enthusiastic in going to pronounce my "Here I am Lord", a sign of my profession and my "Yes" in front of the Church, in this family of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart with a firm resolution in my heart, saying "Lord, I am yours"!

During the homily delivered by the celebrant Don Antonio Panfili, I was truly touched by the words he addressed to me, quoting the Gospel of the Beatitudes! "Blessed are the pure in heart ..." and he continued saying: "This means that blessed are those who are simple, without egoism; not turning back is the secret to always being happy in following Christ in poverty, chastity and obedience". The celebrant continued: "... the Evangelical Councils are not just vows, but they are a person: you give your Yes to a person who is Jesus Christ. May your life always be happy and holy!"

When taking my vows before the Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto, I remembered the words that Don Antonio addressed to me a moment earlier in his homily, reminding me that vows are a person: Jesus.



And I felt safe and happy in entrusting my life to Jesus, and in wearing the religious habit, with the spirit of humility, according to the lifestyle of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.



All these moments have given me many emotions of happiness and which at the same time invited me to be aware of the greatness of the gift received as a grace and the responsibility to put into practice what I asked for and received as grace, in order to be able to conform every day more to Jesus Crucified and to serve Him in fidelity.



Throughout the celebration I felt an atmosphere of prayer, joy and active participation on the part of all, and the voices of the sisters who sang, felt like a beautiful and sweet harmony: an expression of praise and thanksgiving to God; reason for the celebration and for the “Here I am” that I said to Jesus.

With gratitude I turn to God the Father on this day when he consecrated me, and I sincerely thank my parents who were the first to say their “Yes” to God’s plan for me, and I thank Sr. Paola Dotto for her presence and her affection.

My thanks go to all the sisters who shared with me the joy of saying my “Yes” to Jesus, in particular I thank my formator Sr Lilibeth Labian because, under the action of the Holy Spirit, she guided me in this journey of following Jesus with love, affection, responsibility and always with availability.

Thanks to all of you Sisters

Sr Rina of Jesus Crucified

**FOREVER,
FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART**

PERPETUAL PROFESSION

OF

SR. TARA BARA

&

SR. ASHA RAJANI KULLU

*“What shall I render to the LORD
for all his bounty to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD,
I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people. ”*
[Ps 116: 12-14]

It was a great day of rejoicing for the Family of Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart very particularly for the Laverna fraternity Thellakom as we, Sr. Tara Bara and Sr. Asha Rajani Kullu made our perpetual profession to the Lord on 29th June 2020.

This function was scheduled to celebrate on 20th April 2020 along with our companions Sr. Nilmani, Sr. Veronica and Sr. Prasanthi in Assisi Bhavan Malom Noatoli, Gumla in Jharkhand with great pomp and gaiety in the presence of all the sisters, parents and the villagers.

Everything was well arranged too. Man proposes but God disposes.

The Corona Pandemic, which broke out as a boom and within no time, disrupted the routine life of the whole world and we too were not spared. We too had to change our whole program.

“Marvelous are the ways of the Lord and no one has the right to ask why in this way and not otherwise,” says our venerable Fr. Gregory. These words came to us as a reality today.

The three of our companions Sr. Nilmani, Sr. Veronica and Sr. Prasanthi who had gone to Vijayawada for stitching there habits were not able to come back due to the sudden Lock Down.

At this point, there was so much uncertainty regarding the celebration of the perpetual profession. Finally, the Rev. Superior General with the consent of her council granted permission to the provincial Council to organize the celebration in a convenient way possible.

So the provincial council decided to do the profession on the same day in the places where the sisters were.

Accordingly, our companions who were in Vijayawada had done their perpetual Profession in Vijayawada and we had done our perpetual Profession at Thellakom, in the church of the Capuchin Vidyabhavan close to the community of Laverna.



It was very painful for us to accept it because we had high expectation to have it in a very grand way in the presence of all our sisters, parents, family members and the faithful in our own native place and now here not even with our companions....

Here we would like to quote the very words of our beloved Mother foundress Laura Leroux which she had told to our first sisters, *“Take courage my dearest daughters, courage! Throw yourselves wholly in the deep sea of your faith not a faith of the senses nor a faith that is full of the images that are more, the fruits of our fantasy than of virtue but an obscure faith”*.

We felt that these words were re-echoing in our ears today. We accept this painful situation in obscure faith as the will and plan of God for us. *“The most precious thought of the sister must be to believe that Jesus chose her among the best, to be His bride”* says our venerable Fr. Gregory. Today our joy is beyond words, because the Lord has fixed His gaze on us, has chosen us and has planted us solidly in the garden of FMSC to become His witnesses.

We consider this is the most important thing and not the function whether it is big or small or the place where we make it. This is our comfort and consolation.

It was a very simple celebration but the very presence of all the fathers and brothers of Capuchin Vidhyabhavan and our community sisters made it very grand. On this gracious day really we could experience the fraternal love and care of all the fathers, the deacons and brothers of Capuchin Vidhyabhavan.

Their presence made us forget the pain of not having the presence of our beloved ones.

All the arrangements for the Solemn Eucharistic celebration especially singing, decorations and other liturgical preparations were done by them with help of our community sisters.

The Holy Mass was begun at 6.PM. The rector of the Capuchin Vidhyabhavan Rev. Fr. Sebastian Chundakattil OFM Cap was the main celebrant con celebrated with our Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Thomas Kampiyil, and the vice rector Rev. Fr. Sibychen Puthiyidam OFM Cap.

The homily given by the parish priest was a very enlightening and encouraging message, presented in a simple way.

Father highlighted, the offering of lives, as a sacrifice for the service of the Lord’s poor. By the virtues of the three evangelical counsels, Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, which we profess we are called to be intimately united to Christ by living the charismatic life of the congregation of the Franciscan Missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart.

He also exhorted us that religious life in the past was considered as a way of perfection and more insistence was given to renunciation but today religious life calls each of us for a deeper immersion into the world as a radical disciple of Jesus.

He told us to become the conscience of the society as the society has lost its conscience. He gave the example of St. Theresa of Calcutta, St. Catherine of Sienna and Sr. Rani Maria etc. who became the conscience of the Society of their time.

He quoted Pope Francis who challenged the priests and religious to go to the periphery, to have the smell of the sheep. He challenged the gathering, especially to both of us to take a ‘U’ turn in life not as efficient administrators but as spiritual guides.

His inspiring and thought-provoking message enables us to proceed with enthusiasm and courage in our religious life without losing focus and direction.





After the conclusion of the Holy Mass, a short felicitation was arranged for us in our community. The program was concluded with a delicious meal. We are indeed grateful to all our fathers and brothers of Capuchin Vidhyabhavan and all our community sisters for all the efforts they had made to arrange this function in a very colorful and meaningful way.

With immense joy and gratitude to God, we also thank our parents who have offered us generously for the service of the Lord. May the Good Lord reward them for their great sacrifice. We also express our deep sentiments of gratitude to our Superior General and her Councilors, our Provincial Superior and her councilors for accepting us into our Religious family and for their constant support and guidance. We remember with deep gratitude all our formators who have patiently accompanied us, moulded us and formed us through out our journey. We raise our hearts in thanksgiving to the Lord for all their sacrifices, love, care, support, and guidance that made us what we are today. We also thank all the superiors and the sisters of our whole religious family for accompanying us through their valuable prayers. Thanks to one and all for everything.

Sr. Tara e Sr. Asha Rajani Kullu



Perpetual Profession of Sr. Neelmani, Sr. Veronica & Sr. Prasanti

“May your life be a continuous thanksgiving to the LORD.”(Venerable Fr. Gregory ofm)

These words of our beloved founder Venerable Fr. Gregory, we gladly lift our hearts to the most high God, who called us out of nothingness and loved us with an everlasting love. 29th June 2020, the solemnity of Sts .Peter & Paul will be an ever memorable day in our lives.

The day that touched our hearts with emotional joy and gratitude which can't be expressed in words or deeds. With all that we have and with all that we are going to possess, we have said YES forever to the LORD, by putting our confidence in an ever flowing grace of our divine master.

“Marvelous are the ways of the LORD, and no one has the right to ask ,why in this way and not otherwise.....” says our venerable Fr. Gregory. These words came to a reality for us.

It is very hard to celebrate this joyful day, with the presence of few people, without our parents and near ones, not even our own companions with us, but we joyfully accept it as the loving will of our Beloved Spouse JESUS CHRIST, who tested us the genuineness of our promise at the very first moment of it. Joining together, we experienced a great joy indeed to have the privilege to become member in this Franciscan family forever.

The Most Solemn Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Rev. Fr. Valle Joji Babu, the Chancellor and Procurator of the diocese of Vijayawada, who delivered a very inspiring and heart felt messages which encouraged us to be faithful to our call and to go ahead courageously serving the LORD and HIS people here on earth. *"Your gratitude is not limited to the words, but make it stand out with your zeal..."*

With these words of our venerable Fr. Gregory we heart fully thank all our sisters for their love and concern for each one of us.

We express our deep sentiments of love and gratitude to our mother general Most Rev. Sr. Paola Dotto and the general councilors for accepting us as members of our congregation to serve the LORD GOD and His Holy Catholic Church.

We are very much indebted to Rev. Sr. Mini Joseph and her team for all their help and concern for us. We also gratefully remembered our ex-Provincials, formators and all others who helped us to reach this day.

“When I pray Hail Mary the Heavens smile, the Angels rejoice and the earth is happy”, said our Seraphic Fr. Saint Francis.

With this sentiment we implore the blessings of our beloved Mother Mary, St. Joseph, St. Francis and all the Angels and Saints upon each one of us.



May St. Peter and Paul intercede for each of us to witness Christ in our lives.

May our lives burn as a thanksgiving sacrifice before God and His love and Mercy flow through us on His people on this earth.

Trusting in his infinite goodness we place our hands in to His hands and joyously walk along with Him.

May God bless us and keep us in His loving care.

Sr. Neelmani, Sr. Prasanthi and Sr. Veronica

“Do not be afraid, I have called you by name: you are Mine”
(cf. Is 43, 1)

Perpetual Profession of Sr. Annabel Alera and Sr. Aileen Flores

“Do not be afraid, I called you by name, you are mine”. We were ready for the Perpetual Profession which would be celebrated on March 14th. It was not so!

We have placed all our trust in the hands of God the Father, in the certainty that despite everything He cares for us. In the first moments, we felt a little sorry because everything was already planned, and then the date was suspended due to the global pandemic, Covid 19, which caused worries, anxiety and fear that still surround us.

We welcomed with the eyes of faith illuminated by Fr. Gregory who always heartens us with his paternal word “*God tries but never abandons*”, we lived the journey with so much hope, and we welcomed this expectation as a grace, letting us purify in total abandonment to the holy will of the Father, because “*God does not inspire without completing the project he has begun*”, as Saint Therese of Lisieux says.

November 14th, 2020 is the date chosen for the celebration, certainly not by coincidence but by a providential plan of God; in fact it is also the day on which we celebrate the 160th year of the approval of the founding decree of our Congregation. Providential because it made our vocational history much more meaningful within the marvelous history of our religious Family of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

The Bridegroom who sought us, chose us, elected us, called us, grabbed us and drew us to Himself, make His dwelling in our life, on this very day that we will never be able to forget even in the not always straight paths of our journey of life.

Finally! Just today, the long-awaited moment has arrived: we, Sister Annabel and Sister Aileen have definitively pronounced our “Yes” forever among the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

The Eucharistic celebration took place in our Maria Immacolata Church, Provincial House in Centocelle, Rome, at 8 am, presided over by the Most Reverend Father Massimo Fusarelli, ofm Minister Provincial and concelebrated by our parish priest Father Mario Fucà ofmcap of the parish of San Felice da Cantalice.

The weather was gray (it was raining) we all rigorously wore masks, really strange on a day of great celebration not only for us but for the whole Church because Perpetual Profession is an ecclesial event.

Only some sisters of our religious Family were present, and yet, as Father Massimo urged us in his homily, we truly welcomed the cry of the Prophet Zacharias: REJOICE! EXULT! Because the Lord is the reason for our joy.



The celebration has been intimate, solemn in its simplicity, but so rich because we know that the Lord is among us, it is He who has made himself present through our Yes, He is a witness of our life offered in a gift of love, a life that we want to spend with the poor by sharing our own poverty.

The celebrant exhorted us to live the Franciscan religious life as the first mission, first of all being a simple presence among people, especially the poor, for whom God Love has chosen to be among us, with his human flesh to show us the face of the Father who is mercy and fidelity, as the heart of Christ reveals to us. With Mary and like her, we too sing “*My soul magnifies the Lord!*” because our poor life was conquered by Jesus Christ and, as St. Paul told us, we can consider everything a loss, even garbage, because we have found the precious pearl.

“What journey begins for you sisters today?” Father Massimo asked us and opened the horizon for us. We will walk the path above all of gratitude for this great gift received and our life will always be a restitution of the good, as St. Francis teaches us. It is our task to guard the sentiment of gratitude in listening to the Word of God with Mary and like Mary, because we belong to her not by right, but by pure grace and love.

Father Massimo’s homily ended with these exhortations from the Franciscan sources and from our Congregation. “It is the Spirit of the Lord who dwells in us that makes us children, spouses, brothers, sisters and mothers of Jesus” as St. Francis reminds us in the Letter

to all the faithful and gives us the grace to be faithful as our beloved Fr. Gregory “*May our hearts open wide to the tender emotions of the deepest gratitude and may our life be a continuous thanksgiving, for the favor that God has given us by inspiring us the desire and giving us the will to consecrate ourselves to Him. The gratitude that is not limited to words alone, making us stand out with our zeal to consecrate ourselves every day to God, dedicating ourselves to what he asks of us*”.

During the celebration, we experienced the inexpressible emotion, the profound joy, the beauty of a life totally given, the strong mystery of our consecration. In the Litany of the Saints, sustained by their prayers and by the Mother Church who welcomes us, nourishes us and accompanies us, we have

received great interior strength. How great and merciful is the Lord who looked at our poverty, our littleness, calling us to be His favorites! The Lord has given us everything. Everything is a free gift and we have received everything from Him. For all of His gifts we thank him and with our lives we give Him back everything in the commitment of love to remain faithful to our consecration.

We place ourselves under the guidance of the Spirit who is in the Church, because in our journey of responding to the call, we are not alone, our Yes is inserted into the spousal Yes of the Church to which we belong together with our sisters.



We want to express a simple act of gratitude to our entire religious Family, in the person of Sister Paola Dotto Superior General and the Sisters of the Council, of our Provincial Superior, Sister Cristiana Basso and of the Sisters of the Council: thank you for welcoming us to be FMSC sisters forever in this Family. Thanks to our Formators, for having believed in God's plan in us and with so much love, charity, patience and sacrifice, they accompanied us in the various stages of formation to discover the plan of God-Beauty and the great merciful love that is revealed every day in our life.



Thanks to the elderly and sick sisters, our "living Moses", who supported us in their offer of life and prayer. Thanks to the sisters of our respective communities, where we have been inserted after the formation of the systematic juniorate.

Our special thanks also go to the Sisters who, in heaven, celebrate together with our Founders and continue to pray for us.

Thanks also to all the people who in one way or another have been instruments of God's love, and have helped us to grow and mature in our vocation until we reach the definitive offering of our life.

A humble and sincere gratitude to our families, for their Yes to life, for the offer of prayer, and because with their joy for our choice, they encouraged and supported us along the way.

We are also pleased to thank all the sisters who, with their welcome participation and the most affectionate closeness, both those present and those at a distance, fraternally shared the wonderful and meaningful experience of our definitive offering and joined in praise and in Franciscan and fraternal joy. With you we give praise and glory to God, One and Three.

"Since from him, to him and for him are all things. To him be the glory for ever." Rm. 11:36

Sr. Annabel Alera of the Divine Mercy and Sr. Aileen Flores of the Divine Mercy



From Africa ... to the Mother House.... A total missionary witness

We FMSC deeply feel the mission that characterizes our Charism.

Even in the motherhouse, despite the closures imposed by the pandemic, we lived 'the mission' in a profound way and not only on the World day of Mission, or for the entire October the month of mission, but throughout the year and with the joy of hearing that our whole life is a mission!



We certainly feel that being a missionary, does not mean knowing how to explain the meaning or realizing the word 'mission' with special, beautiful, striking and great adjectives...

Rather, when we say 'mission' we want to highlight the missionary experience of a call-response to a specific vocation given by the Lord and that engages one's life in various ways.

Sr. Carla Bettio, our sister who is now in the infirmary of the motherhouse, tells us about her experience as follows:

"The missionary vocation I have felt since I was a child and I have always carried it in my heart.



I was told that I was not made for the religious life, but at the age of 16, I participated in a course of retreat and there I decided to become a missionary sister.

Having entered the Franciscan missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, as postulant, in Gemona in 1952, I was immediately sent to France where I did my initial formation.

When the mission in Cameroon was opened in 1963, I was sent right there together with three other sisters, but I was the only one who knew the language, unfortunately, in our time there was a lack of specific preparation for the mission. T

herefore, the sisters had enormous difficulties at first in relating to the children and the local people.

However, with a lot of patience and love, I gave myself to teach my sisters French and so little by little, they too were well inserted in the mission.



A difficult moment for us was when the Bishops informed us about the difficulty of having vocations easily in that place, while we were immediately willing and available to form young Africans who would be more capable of approaching people in their apostolate. However, we can say that our community soon had precious vocational sprouts that bore abundant fruit and not just in number! From the earliest times, we have also dedicated ourselves to about seventy lepers. At that time, we certainly did not have the sanitary material needed to care the patients like band-aids, gauze, sanitizers, etc. So, faced with these needs, it came spontaneously to take our 'white dress' out of our suitcases and cut out the bandages for these poor and needy brothers ... How much joy to be able to feel Franciscan!

in the encounter with lepers.

I am reminded of many other facts that marked the beginning and the continuation of our mission, such as that of an elderly woman, whom we prepared and now ready to become a Christian came to ask us for a long white dress on her baptism.

Joyfully we gave her our long white nightgown and made her happy.

Unfortunately, on her return home, an accident happened.

On the wooden bridge that she had to cross, which had become slippery due to the torrential rain ... she was found lying dead on the ground after hours, but with her white dress in her arms tight to her chest, like a great treasure preserved. True 'baptism of desire!'

How many strong and beautiful experiences that the mission among the poor bring to life within us!

Now that I live here, in the infirmary of the motherhouse? Yes, I still strongly feel my missionary vocation.

I feel that I can still live it and make it bear fruit for the good of so many brothers and sisters throughout the world.

I do this through the offering of suffering and with prayer, asking the Lord for more vocations to take mine, our place in Cameroon".

Sr. Carla Bettio



BEGINNING THE SCHOLASTIC YEAR IN THE TIME OF COVID - LIMASSOL

The Coronavirus has confronted us with many limits and has made us understand well that we are so fragile and tiny on the face of Mother Earth. Moreover, to be even clearer, the virus has imposed on us a very tough regulation with very specific constraints: avoid contact, stay at home, use protective equipment, and keep a distance. As regards the educational process, the pandemic has forced us to get involved with completely innovative methodologies, forms and creativity.

Within our school, we have used the strategy of relating “remotely” through the digital means at our disposal.

The first day of school was long awaited despite the fact that uncertainty and the great fear of the invisible enemy invaded our hearts, prompting questions:

- How to educate in the midst of great feelings of loss?
- How to guarantee the safety of the pupils, their moral, spiritual and professional development?
- How to manage the events within our school so that they are not just an emotional impetus but help us question ourselves about the hope nurtured by faith?
- The current emergency has introduced all the energies and lay staff into the school.

The Sisters in charge have committed themselves to the organization as the rules of the Ministry of Education, day after day, became more and more demanding.

Obviously, the biggest problem was preparing the classes and the place for each pupil according to the rules. For the beginning of the school year, however, everything was adequately prepared thus ensuring safety and distance among pupils.

All the children have returned to school, this is a matter of great joy for us and a sign of the Father’s benevolence. Today, more than ever, we are asked to take care of them by re-proposing the values of optimism and goodwill, therefore an educational priority, not just a therapeutic one.

It seemed to us to return a little to normality through abnormal things but let us face it. We are faced with a special project, that is, a difficult but occasional time:

- to be reborn through special interventions,
- to learn new things and of great sensitivity and understanding,
- to use mercy and be good Samaritans.

All this is an extraordinary value because many unexpected things have really happened that we, first of all, must be able to appreciate.

Therefore, there is a new climate among teachers, families and in society with pedagogical values born from the very bottom. All this tells us how to be an “educational family”, how to create lasting relationships, how to safeguard the life of our students. So, let us embrace life with courage and live our mission with passion, using a lot of mercy.



Lessons begin with masks, gloves and disinfectants. It takes a lot of perseverance and good will because, returning after more than six months of suspension, is like starting over.

We try to make guidelines to improve the spaces, times and means necessary for good performance.

We are now living in new times and all this allows us to be closer to those entrusted to us.

Even within the kindergarten, sisters and teachers work with great patience towards the little ones and parents appreciate every effort and effort, knowing how delicate our educational mission is.



The courtyards are coloured with faces and smiles, in the classrooms resound the voices of the professors, on the bulletin boards the works and drawings of the students have reappeared.

Gradually we return to the normal even if this school year is different and difficult due to Covid-19. We notice the fatigue and problems of many families.

We are faced with people who are worried and frustrated by the lack of work and livelihood.

However, we cannot forget the poor. How much poverty around us...

In these days of great responsibility and not a little tension, due to uncertainties and fears, the elderly sisters of the infirmary do nothing but pray for the sisters involved in the school.

When bridges are built, everything becomes solid! The hardships are not lacking but the yoke is sweet when it is endured with love and for love.

In a post-lockdown time, we resumed catechesis at school for the preparation for the Sacraments.



We noted that the Covid-19 experience has aroused a great thirst for faith and a new perspective of the essential in both adults and young people.

The parents themselves are happy to accompany their children to school every Saturday, also because this remains the only way out and fun for the children.

The lights of Christmas are also turned on at the time of Covid. A Covid Christmas, certainly special. However, we do not want to give up the birth of the Savior, awaited by adults and children. Between the great desires for normality, with great simplicity, we wanted to express the true meaning of Christmas through the creation of the nativity scene in the internal courtyard and in the Chapel of the Sisters. The classes were coloured with Christmas decorations made by children. There was no lack of the tradition of decorating the Christmas tree, of writing a letter to Santa Claus and of the Advent Calendar with all its boxes. We noticed the adaptation of the kids even in this particular situation, but together with them we adults too were invaded by that feeling of empathy that opens the door to the heart.

The sisters have always supported the little ones so that they could create and bring home a message of joy and hope. Postcards, drawings, nativity scenes of various materials, spontaneous prayers to little Jesus, and why not a small concert for the elderly sisters in the infirmary with typical songs in Greek and English with wishes for a peaceful Christmas. In the hearts of the children, there is only one desire: that the Coronavirus disappear from the face of the Earth, so that there are no more infections and victims and so that all children can grow up in freedom and serenity.



Even the last day of school, before the holidays, was lived in a festive spirit and the pupils of the different sections celebrated Christmas with a lot of spontaneity and joy. The representatives of the Committees brought great joy to the school by distributing the gifts, pulling the bingo numbers and cheering everyone up with Christmas music and dances. It does not take much for children to be happy. The day was full of smiles and with the long-awaited surprise of Santa Claus with his protective mask for Covid and with the sack full of gifts. All this in our home, under our eyes!



Perhaps with the Covid-19 pandemic we had the great opportunity to discover the true meaning of Christmas, without the abundant dinners with the guests and the unbridled shopping with dazzling lights.

A simpler, more intimate and familiar Christmas. But a little creativity was enough because this Christmas was made special!

NEWS...FROM LEBANON

The economic crisis was not enough; the covid-19, that shocked the whole world was added to it and the terrible explosion here on August 4th that destroyed the entire port of Beirut, causing deaths, injuries and 30,000, homeless.

This nightmare has caused so much suffering to the Lebanese people especially the families who have been left without homes due to the strong explosion. Lebanon is truly dying out. Therefore, those who can leave the country take their way and others attempt suicide because they can no longer carry families. However, beyond the situation that always worsen day after day; we try to go forward with our mission with the greatest possibility and caution.

After so many months of “lockdown”, we have resumed our school activities as well as the parish one. This year we have a new pastor named Fr. Mario Damien. He takes care of the two villages: Menjez and Kfarnoun.

Despite the covid situation, it did not prevent us from holding liturgical meetings such as Holy Mass, First Communion, weddings, formation of young Franciscans.



BREVET CLASS

This year it was not possible to promote the “brevet”, so we gathered in a simple meeting in the convent, giving them the certificate and a Tau as a souvenir of our school.

To empower teachers and parents for the “online” lessons due to the pandemic we have organized training for teachers to be competent in carrying out this new teaching method.

Then we invited parents together with teachers to be able to collaborate in the education of their children. Two specialists explained and animated these meetings.

Here are our schoolchildren in virtual lessons. They are happy but always say that it is better in the normal class because there is real contact between them.

Wonderful! God is great! Economic support comes to us from various parts of the world!

Let us not forget the help that comes to us from Cyprus, Italy (including the Vatican), France, Germany, and Israel and from various Lebanese associations. This makes us believe that Providence does not abandon us! So our big thanks and prayers go to our dear benefactors who give with big hearts!

The sisters of Menjez

COMMUNITY OF LARNACA - FIGHT AGAINST COVID 19

Every day when we open our eyes to the new sunrise, we thank the Lord for the gift of life. When we turn our thoughts to our sisters of the Mother House, our hearts tighten and we ask, “Why Lord? Why do so many priests, men and women religious, doctors, nurses and fathers and mothers, grandmothers and grandparents, so many volunteers and now so many young people are losing their lives? You alone certainly know this and follow us with love and mercy”.

In the community, we live with so much worry and tension. Many nursing homes are infected and we too fear the worst. We strictly adhere to the provisions of the various ministries but that is not enough, there is always someone, who tries to evade the regulations. We work with every specialization, police officers, nurses, telephone operators, delivery girls for the delivery of packages that arrive to grandmothers from their children.



The most important thing, however, is to defend these fragile and so exposed creatures at all costs. We follow with trepidation any discomfort always with the fear of a positive test. Now we do it every week while a week ago we were injected with the first dose of the vaccine.

We must also say a word about all our collaborators who have worked along with us with great sense of responsibility, avoiding any risky behavior. We are very grateful to them. God bless them.

Our elderly people suffer from the lack of their loved ones and these in turn are anxious about not being able to hold them close to their hearts.

We were very upset by the news that reaches us from the Mother House and we feel particularly close and in communion with the whole congregation.

We ask the Holy Family to watch over the whole world and us so that we are freed as soon as possible from this terrible scourge.

The Sisters of the Community of Larnaca



Province of 'Saint Louis IX': Sisters in dialogue in the time of a pandemic

*"I myself will take care of them ...
Behold, I myself will seek my sheep and take care of them": (Ez 34:11)*

How encouraging and reassuring are the words of the prophet Ezekiel of the liturgy of the solemnity of Christ the King of the universe. The Lord watches over us, frees us from all anguish, protects us from all dangers and especially supports us in this time of uncertainty and general disorientation. Each of us can well affirm it and testify to it: the love and tenderness of the Lord have always supported us and made us experience his comforting presence throughout this period of pandemic. Yes, the Lord has placed a look of predilection on all of us sisters of the Province of Saint Louis IX, in fact, since the beginning of the pandemic; we have had the inestimable gift of the daily Eucharistic celebration in our chapel.

The Bishop of the diocese Mr. Yves Les Saux, with a gesture of great benevolence and a particular sensitivity, made sure that, in strict compliance with the rules of hygiene, we could have this great spiritual comfort. We express our gratitude to the Lord and to all who contributed in making this possible.

In this long period of confinement (none of us this year was able to go to the family) and post-confinement, however in the Province, we have experienced significant and strong moments of spirituality that have helped us and help us to sing to the One who is caring for his sheep. *"I will bring them in fine pastures and their fold will be in the high mountains of Israel; there they will rest in a good fold and have luxuriant pastures in the mountains of Israel"* (Ez 34, 14).

Great is the joy of meeting all together on 12 July in the provincial house to live the spiritual exercises led by Père Henri Laudrin ofm on the theme, "Discernment and obedience".

A real celebration ... after a long time of physical separation, we finally find ourselves all in fraternity joyful to be able to share our stories, the joyful experiences as the most challenging ones lived, the difficulties overcome, that evidences the loving intervention of the Lord in our lives and in those of our fraternities.

How nice to live these precious moments in simplicity and joy and communicate the richness of being a big family. Then for a week to make an intense journey of spirituality together.



A week dedicated to prayer, personal reflection; a time to review our personal relationship with God, with brothers and sisters in fraternity, a time to resume the journey with enthusiasm, placing Christ at the center of our whole life and of all our actions.

Intense moments of personal and community prayer alternate with the time of the morning and afternoon teachings and above all with silence in order to savour and make the Word resound in the depths of our hearts.



At the end of this rich experience of God, here we are all around Sister Mafalda Poratto to celebrate the jubilee of 70 years of religious life.

With her, we sang the hymn of thanksgiving and praise for the simple and generous gift she gave to God of her life.

What could be nicer than concluding the week of spiritual exercises with a pilgrimage?

Monday morning, July 20, we are all ready with a packed lunch for Notre Dame de Chartres. In the hands of the Virgin Mary, we want to place our ardent desire to follow her Son Jesus with generosity and enthusiasm.

We have prayed for our religious Family, for our brothers in humanity and asked for an end to the pandemic that is striking the world so hard.

This pilgrimage made us feel doubly sisters, all competing in preventing the desires or needs of one and the other. To the Virgin Mary we presented our dear sister, Sr. Teresa Bandiera in hospital because she was very ill and who after two months left us to reach the heavenly Father. It was an unprecedented day, also full of discoveries, of admiration for the beauty and grandeur of such a building that testifies to the fervor and faith of our ancestors. Unique cathedral in the world, registered in the UNESCO world artistic heritage.

5 October, the day after the solemnity of St. Francis... finally the sisters of the Saint Maurice community in Attichy can return to their headquarters after long months of absence. In fact, due to health restrictions linked to the pandemic, Sister Alice Karothu Narouthou, who was with her family for the holidays, forced to make an 'involuntary confinement' in India, unable to return to France and reach the province of 'Saint Louis', finally now she is back. It is only thanks to the intervention of Divine Providence and the 'diplomatic' skill of Sister Elisabetta Varikkakuzhyi, Provincial Superior, that Sister Alice was able to reach France towards the end of August. I leave it to you to imagine the joy of all. Then it was



still necessary to wait for the "OK" from the director of the retirement home Pillet Will, before the sisters could return to their home. A long wait and now, finally crowned by the joy of a reconstituted community. Certainly, the Lord does not fail to surprise us with his unexpected comings. Praise him!!

The year 2020 reserved another joyful moment for us: for the first time, in the province, we celebrated the HUNDRED YEARS of one of our sisters; yes, Sister Maria Vit, has reached this beautiful age. Surrounded by the affection of our provincial, Sister Elizabeth, and that of the sisters of the community of Le Mans, as well as the sisters of the other communities spiritually present, she blew out her 100 candles. To this milestone, is also added that of her 76 years of consecrated life at the service of the Good News as a Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart. Sister Maria is for all of us a witness of fidelity, of unconditional self-giving, of humble service rendered with joy and simplicity. Thank you Sister Maria Vit!



Other events that testify to the blessing and consolation of the Lord in this time of bewilderment and uncertainty come to us from the community of Father Gregory of Kretinga and from that of San Francesco in Carlepont. This is how Mme Laetitia Marcerou expresses herself: animator of missionary childhood.

About twenty children from 4 to 10 years old meet once a month on Saturday morning, an appointment they have not missed even in this time of pandemics.

Accompanied by Sister MariaLuigia and the animators, scrupulously respecting all the hygienic-sanitary rules of the moment, they sing, pray, discover Jesus, learn to love Him and experience a time of much-needed togetherness and friendship, especially in this period.

This year's program includes short films, games of friendship and mutual knowledge, followed by a precious time of exchange followed by singing, an important and highly appreciated moment by all! They are simple songs, easily catchy, accompanied by expressive movements of the body, songs that will animate the Sunday Eucharistic celebration.

The rich and joyful morning ends in the little chapel of the sisters before sharing a cup of hot chocolate and a sweet.

Such experiences, made in joy and simplicity, are an excellent opportunity to arouse love for Jesus and the desire to know him in the hearts of children; they are proposals that open to hope and trust.



Sister Inès Portugal of the community of Kretinga wants to share a precious experience lived with Franciscan youth in times of pandemics.

“Franciscan youth is a fraternity of young people called by the Holy Spirit to share the experience of Christian life according to the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi. Currently in Lithuania there are fraternities in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda and work is being done to establish one in our own Kretinga.

From 18th to 20th September, Friar Carlo Bertagnin ofm, YouFra spiritual assistant in Lithuania invited me to participate in the meeting held in Vilnius and accompany the young people during the meetings. The weekend was intense and rich with the sharing that the young people spontaneously did.

Strong moments: prayer, adoration of the Holy Sacrament, Eucharistic celebration, life of fraternity, sharing, formation, games.

Vilnius, the beating heart of Lithuania, is known as the city of Mercy, so we could not miss this opportunity. As true pilgrims, on a serene journey, we prayed at various shrines, particularly preferring that of the Virgin “Mother of Mercy” known above all with the title of “Virgin of the Dawn”.

There was no lack of prolonged prayer at the shrine of Merciful Jesus, a place impregnated with the presence of Sister Faustina Kowalska”. The young people of the Franciscan youth are not very numerous, but they are happy to have God as their wealth. With them we sing: Praised be you, my Lord !!!



Be blessed, Lord, for all that you allow us to live.



Fill us, Lord, with the love that flows from your pierced Heart, free us from all fear, make us witnesses of hope everywhere, always until the day you welcome us to the heavenly City. Amen.

*The sisters of
«Saint Louis IX»
Province.*

From the Philippines

“Go into all the world and make disciples of all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”. Mt. 28:19

Although the pandemic continues to claim victims especially among the poorest, even here in Boso Boso, slowly and with due caution, attempts are being made to return to some normality.

Schools continue to be closed and so the lack of catechism at all levels suffers.

Our service in this period is especially for the poor who are increasing due to the lack of work and the inability to leave the village.

The rules are very strict and government orders must be respected for the good of all.



We have resumed the preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism. There is no shortage of children here, God blesses us with the gift of life and parents take care to give their children the life of Grace as soon as possible.

So, Sr Carlota dedicates herself to this pastoral care by gathering parents and godparents every Thursday in a specially created environment, outdoors, to avoid infections. It is nice to see them come to catechesis on time, even bringing the little ones who cheer the lesson with their “songs”.

Baptisms are then celebrated every Saturday. This is a delicate and highly responsible task, because at times it can happen that we no longer see the adults after these meetings and therefore we must try to educate them in the faith as much as possible by exploiting this opportunity.



We too live the experience of poverty, but we live more often by the Divine Providence, which surprises us and does not make us lack what is necessary.

For example, it happened that, we gave a poor family the last portion of rice we had in the pantry and on the same day, a woman brought us five kilos of rice and a good supply of the delicious rambutan fruits.

It would be a great joy if we could also share with the other sisters, but we cannot travel and then we consumed them by ourselves.

Sr. Lucy and sr. Carlota

PROVIDENCE HELPS ... TO HELP

The service to the poor of our tireless missionaries continues in every mission.

In Quezon City, Philippines, the sisters are taking action to support the families of their children enrolled in after-school activities that they cannot attend at this time.

Thanks to the generosity of some benefactors, they try to stay close to their families in many ways, one of which is to provide them with food.

This is our alternative way of reaching children while they are not yet allowed to enter the convent for after-school classes due to the current pandemic crisis.

We ensure that we support the food of each child's family especially towards those most in need.



Children, in this 2020-2021 school year, continue to study through distance learning.

They are having classes through “blended learning”, which means they are enrolled using both online learning and lesson modules. We have constant communication with them.

We are evaluating their mobile numbers (or tablet numbers provided by the government) because we plan to assist them by paying a certain percentage of their consumption or data (Wi-Fi consumption).

Children have learned to send us messages telling us about their status on virtual classrooms and informing us what they need in terms of school supplies.

Remembering Mary, the Mother of all, in the month of the Rosary (October), we had the joy of being able to share the shopping with the families of our children in the “After-school program”.

The distribution took place on October 18, 2020.

It was a very significant day, because it was also World Mission Day; a concrete way of living our missionary spirit which has always paid particular attention to the poorest and most needy.



TIME OF CREATION 2020 BOLIVIA

Pope Francis, after having promulgated the encyclical *Laudato si*, in which he called for an “ecological conversion”, he has instituted the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on 1st September. This year, the Pope recalled that from 1st September to 4th October “we will celebrate with our brothers and sisters, Christians of various Churches and traditions, the” Jubilee of the Earth “, to commemorate the institution, 50 years ago, of “the Day of the Earth”, which will begin with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation”. The Franciscan Family of Bolivia, through the Justice and Peace movement, carried out various activities, one of which consisted in carrying out an action for creation every day. As FMSC sisters, we joined this initiative by sharing a video in which the sisters of the communities of Cochabamba, Sorata and Santa Cruz participated, where they show concrete actions in our communities, to take care of the common home. These actions are as follows:

- Re-use of water
- Separation of organic and inorganic waste
- Preparation of fertilizers
- Planting trees, plants and flowers
- Use of cloth bags for shopping

Furthermore, this activity has motivated us to continue to take care of creation following the example of our seraphic father St. Francis and to inspire other people to do the same.



NOVENA TO ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI ONLINE

This year, not having the lessons in presence at the school and not being able to do the Novena in honor of our Father St. Francis of Assisi, it was necessary to organize it using social networks. Therefore, we animated the novena with the participation of the director of the San Francisco Educational Unit Francis of Assisi “B”, some teachers and students representing each course and also the participation of Sister Carmen and some students of the “St. Francis of Assisi” School of Santa Cruz. In this way, we were able to pray the novena in honor of the patron saint of our school despite the health emergency due to covid 19. The broadcast took place via the Stream Yard program.



The themes on which we meditated during the novena were: “Francis of Assisi: a just man”, “The poverty of Francis of Assisi: an expression of solidarity”, “St. Francis and peace”, “Peace as an evangelical form”, “Saint Francis, a man reconciled with nature”, “The daily life of a Franciscan in an ecological key”, “St. Francis an ecumenical Christian “,” St. Francis, a man of dialogue “and we concluded the novena with the transit of St. Francis.

Each day, this novena was led by the administrative staff, the parallel courses and in the last 3 days of novena by each of the courses for the 2020 promotion.

The novena always began with prayer in front of the crucifix of San Damiano, followed by the presentation of the message of the day, a biblical reading, a reading from the writings of St. Francis, short reflection, invocations, hymn indicating to the theme of the day and ended with the simple prayer.

Many were the parents, teachers and students who joined the transmission of this novena. We felt united as an educational community that shares the rich and current spirituality that St. Francis of Assisi left us and that Pope Francis offered in the two encyclicals: Laudato Sii and Fratelli Tutti.



THE GIFT OF CONFIRMATION

A group of 46 young men and women received the sacrament of confirmation on Sunday 22 November, after a few months of delay due to the health emergency caused by Covid 19; in fact, the expected date for receiving this sacrament was May 31st.

Faced with the uncertainty and surprising quarantine we are experiencing, we resumed catechesis after Pentecost and we did it virtually using the meet and zoom application.

We try to carry out catechesis in a creative way, so that young people can participate with enthusiasm and commitment. During

the month of June, the catechists held the programmed themes, in the month of July we invited some Catholics committed to give a personal experience of faith on the themes presented. In August, we began to deepen the faith of young people by letting them know the beginnings of their faith with the reception of the sacraments of Baptism and First Communion and explaining to them the commitment they were taking on, in receiving this sacrament of confirmation.



This experience of virtual catechesis was very useful, especially when it came to listening to and welcoming the faith experiences of young people and being able to guide them on this journey of faith so that they could be courageous and committed to the Church.

The ceremony was very solemn and significant, especially for the message that the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Cochabamba, Mgr Oscar Aparicio. He said in the homily given to the young people, *“Young people must not be lost, be courageous in giving all your gifts and skills at the service of the Church, of this Catholic Christian Church where you are confirming your faith”*.



After the ceremony, Monsignor Oscar shared lunch with the sisters; we also had the presence of Sr. Gregoria Suarez, general councilor, the two directors of the educational unit of San Francisco and Santa Clara de Asís, in addition to the secretary.

COMMUNITY OF SAINT ELISABETH OF HUNGARY CUSCO - PERU

VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES - 2nd HALF 2020 MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD

During this year, the children of the Missionary Childhood of our Parish “Nuestra Señora del Carmen” participated monthly in the virtual meetings that were held in our Deanery of San Antonio Abad.

The children enjoyed participating in the different themes and in the monthly lessons prepared to keep alive in them the desire to be good friends of Jesus and little missionaries within the environments where they live.

This year of the pandemic, activities were focused on the family environment.



In the month of July, the month of our Patroness “Señora del Carmen”, the children actively participated, making a daily “Gesture of love to the Virgin”, which was circulated through the WhatsApp group and the Facebook of the Parish and the Deanery.



They also participated in the activities of the family month, in which Monsignor Richard Daniel Alarcon, Archbishop of Cusco, accompanied them. He invited them to appreciate the wonderful gift of the family and to see, how Jesus lived his being a son of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

The children participated from each parish was rewarded with food baskets.

During the Advent period, the missionary childhood groups of each parish participated in the Christmas contest: “My gift for Jesus”, which consists of Christmas songs and recitals, poems or dances. As far as possible, each Parish will celebrate the birth of Jesus with their children.

*Sr. Gladys Rodríguez
Responsible for Missionary Childhood*

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2020

VIRTUAL CELEBRATION OF 50 AND 60 YEARS OF CONSECRATED LIFE

As a community and with great emotion we share the joy of the anniversaries of the 50 and 60 years of religious life of our sisters: Sisters Nancy Valenti and Enrica Bordignon, Sister Isabel Oyarzun, Sister Mirella Venturin.

“Jesus gave us the precept to love everyone as he loved us. So ... equal love for all the sisters.” (F. 3 page 205)

Our sisters who celebrate their anniversaries give us an example of fidelity and perseverance in the life of consecrated women and teach us young women that, it is possible to follow the Lord in fidelity with effort and commitment, it is giving and spending our life for love to He to whom we have freely said yes.

Among the jubilant sisters in our community is Sister Enrica Bordignon; with great affection we have prepared moments of prayer, also sharing the joy of the day with some pastoral workers of our mission in Cusco.

In the afternoon from 13:00 in Peru, all the communities of our “Latin American Province of San Antonio de Padova” connected to share and celebrate in a virtual way the perseverance and fidelity of our dear sisters, who are witness and encouragement for all of us to continue to be faithful to this call of love.

For this occasion, the communities of the Province expressed their greetings in a virtual way through various expressions to the celebrants who are in various countries, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia.



It was a very beautiful moment because despite the situation that exists throughout the world, we were willing to share virtually and to recognize that to celebrate the joy of the anniversary of our sisters. We know you do not need many things, but it just the desire to share the manifestations of affection expressed by the communities.

To conclude this celebration, after this beautiful sharing, we thanked God for the gift of the vocation of our sisters.

“TO FEED THE HUNGRY”

This year has been very special for the whole world due to the situation we are experiencing, however, despite this, we have tried to collaborate and help the aged of the parish community Virgen del Carmen de la Margen Derecha, where our community is on a mission. .

Pope Francis tells us that: *“The works of mercy awaken in us the need and the capacity to make faith alive and active with charity. I am convinced that through these simple daily gestures a true cultural revolution can be achieved, as it has been in the past”*. (Wednesday General Audience)

Thanks to the help and generous collaboration of some benefactors, every month a package of food was delivered to the elderly; some have come to the parish to receive it and others who cannot come due to the impossibility of walking have been delivered to their homes.



We tried to give them a little support in solidarity as a gesture of one of the works of mercy *“to feed the hungry”* because Christ is present in the brother who suffers and needs, in the weakest and most forgotten of society.

With home visits to the elderly, we were able to learn more about their life situation and their needs.

Sr. Esther M. Quinde C.



CHRISTMAS WITH THE ELDERLY

This year Christmas for our aged of the parish of Our Lady of Carmen was different, but full of love from so many people who in one way or another collaborated to have their Christmas basket, their food and their gift.

Despite the pandemic situation that is being experienced in the world, the Lord has been benevolent because he has solicited benefactors who with commitment and generosity have collaborated to ensure that these poorer brothers do not lack concrete help.

It is a great joy to share with them, because they need it much. On 19th December, taking into account of the health protocols for the good of all, they participated in the Eucharist, received their gift. Then they were given food and finally received their Christmas basket full of much affection and love, which had been prepared for them by the community.

We can only thank God for putting generous people who open their hearts to share the necessities, with those in need without expecting anything in return.



Time of Creation 2020 - “Year of Laudato sii”

Guayaquil – Ecuador

“Mother of God” Elementary School - FMSC lay associates

“What kind of world do we want to leave to those who succeed us? At the stake is our own dignity. We are the first interested in leaving a habitable planet for the humanity that will succeed us”. LS n ° 34

The health and economic crisis we are going through cannot leave us indifferent or insensitive; without putting our grain of sand, to make our world a better place for everyone.

With this in mind, as a community we have decided to join the initiative that we live as a church that is the “Time of Creation” from 1st September to 4th October, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology loved by many Christian confessions.

The time of creation is a time to renew our relationship with the Creator and all of creation through celebration, conversion and commitment together.

Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I proclaimed September 1st as a day of prayer for creation for the Orthodox in 1989.

Indeed, the year of the Orthodox Church begins that day with a commemoration of how God created the world.

The Ecumenical Council of Churches (WCC) was instrumental in making it a special moment.

Pope Francis made the Time of Creation official in the Roman Catholic Church in 2015, in this way Christians all over the world welcome this moment as part of our celebrations.

Throughout the month that is being celebrated, the 2.2 billion Christians of the world gathered to take care of our common home.

In his message for this year’s World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, Pope Francis tells us that:

“Particularly during this time of creation, we feel the heartbeat of all that is created.

In fact, it was given to manifest and communicate the glory of God, to help us find the Lord in his beauty of all things and return to him (cf. S. Bonaventure, In II Sent., I, 2, 2, q. 1, concluded; Brevil., II, 5.11) “



With these motivations, as a community, through virtual platforms, we participated in the ecumenical prayer for the care of our common home, motivated by the “World Catholic Climate Movement” with which we began the “Time of Creation”.

We motivate our lay collaborators and teachers to be part of this initiative and to walk together on this path of ecological conversion, making small changes to our lifestyles, but above all by motivating our parents, students and parishioners. .

Thus, our entire institution and parish, during the novena to St. Francis of Assisi, reflected on topics such as, taking care of water, what we do with waste, how we use energy, food, what we do for nature conservation, reuse, what we know about our local biodiversity and what attitude do we have towards consumption and consumerism.

In addition, all our students have created small personal projects for the care of the common home. They organized moments of family prayer, they shared something with people who are poor and they did separate waste collection, small home gardens and even dedicated themselves to cleaning common areas such as streets or parks.

It was a moment of great grace and blessing, since the sensitivity of children knows how to do unimaginable things, since it is they who in the end motivated us to take concrete actions that have allowed us to feel and think that it is possible to live an ecological conversion, with new lifestyles.

Our lay associates also participated in this initiative, motivating our parish in this initiative to live “The time of creation” and also doing concrete actions, such as cleaning common spaces.



We thank God for allowing us to sow concrete feelings and actions for a better world in the hearts of our children and of the people who share our mission with us.

Thanks to our entire educational community, teachers, parents and students, for their commitment and support in this project, which never ends; rather, it is the beginning of living aware that we are all responsible for our common home.

**VISIT OF THE CARDINAL
PIETRO PAROLIN,
SECRETARY
OF STATE
OF THE VATICAN CITY
TO CAMEROON.**



The harmonious and solemn sounds of the bells of peace and joy could be heard ringing on Thursday 28th January 2021 as His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, secretary of State for the Holy See and emissary of His Holiness, Pope Francis arrived Cameroon. The distinguished august guest and Prelate accompanied by a High-level delegation, brought with him a message of peace and reconciliation for Cameroon during this hard moment of the Corona pandemic in the midst of an ongoing socio-political crises. The National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon, consecrated men and women, and the Lay faithful in Yaoundé, came out in huge numbers to welcome him in to our Land. He later on celebrated a Holy Mass with them at the Our Lady Queen of Peace Minor Basilica at Mvolye-Yaounde. During this occasion, Bishop Abraham Kome, chief shepherd of the Diocese of Bafang, greeted Cardinal Pietro Parolin in his capacity as the President of the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon while presenting the following issues to him. Inter alia, he underlined the two most prominent fatal crises plaguing Cameroon viz; The case of an Islamist sect Boko Haram from Nigeria that has been sowing terror in the North of our country. As for the North West and South West Regions, he stated the fratricidal war that has been going on for four years now, causing the loss of many human lives. He went to add that over 600.000

have fled to neighboring Nigeria, not to talk of the internally displaced, and that whole villages and schools have been completely burnt down. He further explained that the insurgency began in the Country's English speaking regions in 2016. The national Episcopal Conference has tried several times, he intimated, through messages, to cause the belligerent parties in the Anglophone crises to show restraint and to propose reconciliation as the only pathway to peace. Bishop Kome praised the Bishops of the two Regions for continually working for peace even risking their lives in the process. *The Bishops of Cameroon believe that only an inclusive dialogue that brings together all the stake holders, seeking the Truth, regretting the errors of the past, and preserving what brings unity could, with the prayers of the faithful, return peace in the two regions and the entire territory,* the Bishop added. On the 29th January 2021, the Cardinal was highly welcomed at the unity Palace of Cameroon in an Audience with the Head of State, President Paul Biya. He discussed a wide range of issues with the President including the socio-political situation in the English-speaking regions of the national territory of Cameroon. The Cardinal reassured the Head of State of the willingness of the Catholic Church and the Bishops of the English-speaking Regions of Cameroon to contribute towards achieving a lasting solution.



The cardinal's visit is a concrete sign of a common, supportive and inclusive commitment to protecting and promoting the dignity and good of all, a willingness to show care and compassion, to advance mutual respect and acceptance.

The cardinal, after meeting with the Head of state and the Prime Minister his Excellency Joseph Dion Ngute, visited 'the Household of Hope' in Yaoundé, to see and spend some time with street children. This center was founded 40 years ago by a Jesuit priest Fr Yves Lescanne to provide assistance to street children and youths in prison systems. Children sang and danced.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin asked the children this question *"there is one word that speaks to what this place represents, do you know the word?"* as hands shot up to respond to the question, the Cardinal smiled as he asked the children to answer. *"it is love"* said one child, *"it is fraternity"* said another.

The Cardinal obviously satisfied, summed up the answers in one phrase *"it is fraternity that comes from love."*

So dear children, continue to grow in love of one another and in love of God, he said. I sincerely thank your benefactors and all who train you and give you hope, who give you the opportunity to realize a beautiful future".

A child from the center said to the Cardinal, *"since I came to this center, I have learned the value of love and how to live in the society, it's helping us to reunite with our families"*, he added, *"the center has given me a future I would have lost while living in the streets, that I am now studying in the university is a miracle"*. The visit of the Vatican Secretary of State is also a sign of God's love for the poor and the hopeless.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin visited the Capital of the North West Region of Cameroon, Bamenda from the 29th to the 30th January 2021, to bestow the Pallium, sign of office for the metropolitan Archbishop Andrew Fuanya Nkea of the Archdiocese of Bamenda. A large crowd of the Christian faithful turned out full of joy and hope to welcome him, despite the lockdowns and ghost towns that obliged the people to stay indoors for the safety of their lives. During his homily, the Cardinal spoke in the following words;

"I am well aware of the difficulties which you have experienced in recent years and are still experiencing, in the difficult situation in which you find yourselves living, you are experiencing very closely the power of evil that acts in the world. Unfortunately, there is more news of violence, division and fratricidal struggles that afflict this beloved land".

The Cardinal prayed that the Lord should console the suffering Anglophone population of Cameroon, in particular those who have been victims of violence or who have lost friends and loved ones in the crises. *“We are all responsible for peace. No one can be exonerated from the struggle against evil”*. The Cardinal continued, *“this is a challenge that faces you today, that finally, violence may be put down and that peace and reconciliation may reign in our hearts and around us. Violence never solves a problem; it only creates more problems. Peace is a journey of Hope, dialogue and reconciliation, dialogue is the best way to solve conflict and misunderstanding”*. Archbishop Andrew Nkea said that the Cardinal’s visit was a comforting presence for a traumatized people, noting that the Vatican envoy had stepped his legs in the soil of Bamenda that drunk the blood of many of her children. *“We in Bamenda can address ourselves in the Messianic words of the prophet Isaiah, a people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. For those who live in the land of deep darkness, a light has shone. You have made their joy increase...”*. He went on expressing his sentiments and those of the faithful; *“We are happy because in this time of crises, we see you as a messenger of peace, as an ambassador of reconciliation, as a promoter of justice. We see in you the presence of the Holy Father, Pope Francis himself among us.*



Even when the Holy Father says nothing, his presence is a consoling presence. His blessings bring peace and his words come with anointing on the wounds of those who are bleeding” Archbishop Nkea concluded with a great note of Hope in the following words.

“We are convinced that your coming to Bamenda will be like the rain that never falls without watering the ground. So too you will leave us as a people who will start loving one another”.

Before the imposition of the Pallium on Archbishop Andrew Fuanya Nkea, the cardinal said that the Pallium which is worn by the Pope symbolizes the plenitude of the Pontifical Office. The same insignia worn by Archbishops symbolizes their participation in the supreme pastoral power of the Pope.

It also gives the Archbishop official power over the entire territory of the Archdiocese and he shall wear it within his the Ecclesiastical province.



The Ecclesiastical province of Bamenda comprises the Diocese of Bamenda, the diocese of Buea, the diocese of Kumbo, the diocese of Mamfe and the diocese of Kumba.

During this celebration, our sisters participated actively by their physical presence.

They were chosen to represent the Queen of Peace Parish of Njimafor by carrying and presenting symbolic gifts to the Cardinal.

After the visit to Bamenda, the Cardinal returned to Yaoundé.

On the 2nd of February, world day of Consecrated Life, consecrated people filled Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Yaoundé to celebrate this day with the secretary of State of the Holy See, who was ending his visit to Cameroon. During this celebration, Mgr. Faustin Ambassa Ndjodo, Archbishop of Garoua and president of the National Commission for Consecrated people in Cameroon expressed himself in these words; *“Consecrated people of the whole world today, are grateful to God for the institution of the world day of consecrated Life by Pope John Paul II. This day is an occasion for consecrated people to gather as a family to meditate on the richness that they constitute in the Universal Church, to share and to encourage one another for a better accomplishment of their various and proper missions.*

In this year 2021, this feast has gotten a special taste because of the presence of his eminence.

His presence at this particular moment shows the importance of consecrated Life in the Church.

It reminds us of the solicitude of Pope Francis for this way of life for which not long ago, he dedicated a whole Church year.

Kindly transmit, your eminence, the gratitude of all the sons and daughters engaged in the SEQUELA CHRISTI in Cameroon here represented in all forms”.

Cardinal Parolin rendered homage to the first Missionaries who evangelized Cameroon and to the long list of Religious Congregations who enriched the Cameroonian Land with their Missionary activities, and most especially by their witness of life.

He encouraged those who today can still abandon their comfort zones in order to take care of the vulnerable and the poor, caring for the sick, the old and the education of poor children, prisoners, the homeless, orphans, and the abandoned etc. *“the efforts of your labor to construct the Kingdom of God in this land are a precious treasure that the Church supports and encourages and is thanking you for”* said the Cardinal.

Our sisters from all the Communities in Yaoundé also marked this special day by their presence.

We thank the Almighty for his unfailing love and continue to pray for peace to return in our hearts and in our land.



CELEBRATIONS in INDIA

Celebration of the Anniversary of the Pope's Encyclical Laudato Sii

'Laudato Sii' week marking the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis's land mark encyclical on environment was celebrated in our Province (Holy Family) India despite the ongoing lock down imposed to stop the spread of Corona virus.

This pandemic and the subsequent lock down have also been a time to see and marvel and many ways the nature is in the process of being healed. Pollution levels are at an all-time low, could hear the chirping of beautiful and rare birds in the trees. These all bring amazement, and joy among the people during this time of Pandemic.



Following the example of St. Francis of Assisi, the Holy Father reminds us of the inseparable connection among concern to the nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace.

The sisters of Holy Family Province India held a month program for the preparation for the celebration of this anniversary; each community organized a prayer service on the eve of the feast day of the Saint Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of ecology.

Each sister collected a special gift from the nature and reflected on the importance of these gifts from the nature home. During the adoration we meditated on how inseparable the bond is between concern for the nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society and interior peace.

“.... As Franciscans ,we must not remain on the sidelines, but rather be active , creative and courageous participants”.



Keeping this in mind we organized a shared meditation on nature, and arranged various competitions like Sand Art, Leaf Art etc... and planting of saplings in different villages..





As Franciscans we are called to read the Signs of the times, in continues contemplation and action for the values of the Kingdom ie. Justice and Peace.

So, Let us try to bring peace and justice among us.





On 7th October the **Feast of Our Lady of Rosary** is celebrated in each community with devotional recitation of rosary making processions along with Mother Mary in the communities with the inmates and in many parishes along with the parishioners.





Every year we used to visit every family of the parish and recite rosary and special prayers all throughout the month along with the Legion of Mary members.



This year we could not do it so we remained in the communities and concentrated on devotional recitation of rosaries for various intentions.

All the faithful also were instructed to do the same remaining in their own residence.



As part of the nature care we had some other activities in the month of November like poem writing on Nature, collection of seeds, memory test and distribution of seeds and saplings to the villages.

Formees of the different levels had a miming performance to show the care of the nature.





*Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom
prepared for you!*

Mt.25:34



**Sr Teresa Bandiera
of Jesus Crucified**

*Born in Cavasagra (TV)
on 14 February 1933
Died in Le Mans
on 9 September 2020*

Sr Teresa Bandiera (Marcellina) was born on February 14, 1933 in Cavasagra (TV-Italy) in a very believing and committed family. She learned from her parents the prayers, the Christian virtues and in particular the love that the Lord showed her from her childhood. She is the eldest of ten children. Little by little, the call to consecrate herself to the God of tenderness makes room in her heart. Later, thanks to her testimony, some members of the family consecrated

themselves to the Lord: a priest and religious brother, a sister and a religious niece.

At the age of 17 she left her family and went to Gemona, in the mother house "S. Mary of the Angels". In her aspiration to become a Franciscan missionary of the Sacred Heart, a surprise awaits her! In fact, on May 13, 1950 she was sent, with other candidates, to France, to Le Mans where she began her formation. She made her religious Profession on 29 July 1952 and perpetual vows on 17 September 1957.

After Profession, she was sent on a mission. Animated by joy and enthusiasm, Sr. Teresa generously dedicated herself to the students of the "Our Lady" school in Flers, Normandy, where she discovered her talents as an educator. She was very remarkable in this first apostolate that later helped her to put her services in various missions in the Province with children and young people.

Wherever she passed, she gave witness of the gift of herself to the Lord and to others in the various missions entrusted to her! She excelled in the

transmission of the faith as a catechist and animator of groups that announced the Good News!

Appointed in charge of the communities, she showed herself to be human and welcoming towards the sisters for whom she was responsible. She accepted the appointment as provincial and local councilor, where she provided humble and fraternal services with availability and simplicity. There are many people, who benefitted from her knowledge as a nursery school teacher in Tavannes in Switzerland, as a catechist in the parish and in the "St Aldric" school in Le Mans and as a home nurse for many years in Soulligné, Ballon and Attichy! Her benevolent presence with the sick and elderly priests of the "St. Aldric" retirement home. All recognize her service there as tailor and sacristan. In July 2017, when she was in Tavannes her health deteriorated; thus, she definitively returned to the provincial house in Le Mans, making herself available to the sisters within the sphere of her responsibilities.

In June 2020, she was struck by a strange illness: after a few days, she was hospitalized at the ICU of Le Mans. She did not miss the daily visit of the provincial superior and the sisters though, due to Covid 19, everything was planned and visits were limited. She offered her loneliness and sufferings in the gift of herself for the Church and the Congregation. She had the spiritual comfort of the presence of the sisters and, in this time of pandemic, she had the grace to receive the Sacrament of the sick in serenity. Her sisters, Sr. Carla Maria, Graziosa from Italy and Bruna from the Paris region, gave her the ultimate joy and showed her the fraternal affection that united them through this visit. A very moving encounter experienced by both sides. Sr. Teresa, very suffering, abandoned herself to the God of tenderness to whom she had offered her life since her youth. She lived her Easter, left for her Home on 9 September 2020, the day after the visit of her sisters.

Her funeral was celebrated on Saturday, September 12, in the parish of "St Aldric"! Her family members, very moved, attended the celebration.

Numerous parishioners participated in it, thus bearing witness to their thanks to Sr. Teresa and praying for the repose of her soul. The Sisters of the Province, those of the "St. Antonio" "represented due to Covid 19.

Accompanying her to the last abode, we continue to pray for her and ask her to intercede for us with the God of tenderness.



**Sr Mercedes de Maso
of Mary, Queen of hearts**

*Born in San Severo (Foggia)
on 24 April 1931*

*Died in Roma
on 19 October 2020*

Sr. Mercedes was born in San Severo (Foggia) on 24.04.1931 in a simple, hardworking, God-fearing family, fully open to the gift of life. Her parents Nicola and Caterina Perilli immediately wanted to thank the Lord for the gift of their fifth daughter by bringing her to the baptismal font the day after her birth, imposing on her the name of the great St. Anthony, to whose protection they entrusted her.

She spent her childhood years in a serene atmosphere of a large family, in fact after her 4 other brothers were born who cheered the house with a crown 9 children and Antonietta soon learned the art of managing the house and looking after her little brothers and helping the mother. The tranquility and industriousness of the poor family, but rich in values, was interrupted by the sudden death of her father who, while working transporting with his cart, was knockdown by an American military vehicle. For everyone, they were difficult

years everywhere, but this family where the father died, had to face the problem of sustenance without having access to resources. Antonietta was 12 years old at the time and it was she who left the house to go to work for a wealthy lady from San Severo, who rewarded her with the bread, which she often reserved for her brothers and sisters. She often remembered this lady to whom she raised five children and still spoke of her with great gratitude. Therefore, she spent her adolescence, working, sacrificing and praying a lot. In fact, she approached the parish priest and confided to him her great desire to be a sister. The wise priest waited, guided her, advised her and, when he understood, seriously evaluated the good intentions of the young woman, he promised her to be interested himself in finding a Congregation where to begin formation. We do not know why he came to Rome to look for and how he chose our Congregation, but we are certain that the Lord had his plans and had guided the priest to the Generalate that at the time was in Piazza Pitagora. Antonietta was then 23 years old and was immediately accompanied to Centocelle where the opening of the Novitiate of Mary Immaculate was near. Antonietta was, therefore part of the first group of 5 sisters who on April 22, 1956 wore the habit of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Then on June 29, 1957, makes her religious Profession, during which she was given the name of Sister Mercedes of Mary Queen of hearts.

A true program of life evidenced by her special devotion to the Blessed Mother whom she loved, venerated and imitated with her silent life, recollected in God, entirely dedicated to service of the sisters.

After Profession she was immediately sent “on mission” to Colonnata (Florence) where she was assigned the task of cooking until 1961 when obedience called her to Lido dei Pini as assistant to the children received in the Mater Amabilis house where she generously lavished her love, enriched and motivated by the personal painful experience of her childhood. In 1967, however, she was sent as a missionary to France where she resumed her service as an attentive, caring and tireless cook until 1986. Then at the generalate and in Piazza Pitagora until 2003 when she returned to the provincial house continuing her precious service to the sisters until 2007, when precarious health and the age limits forced her to a well-deserved rest. Here began the precious time for herself and for the community.

Even in the period of rest, where the encounter with the Lord in prayer and silence became more and more intimate, she participated in fraternal life bearing witness to the value of suffering, the joyful serenity of her consecration and industriousness because she always devoted herself to some simple routine.

The accidental fall that took place in the spring of 2018, the fracture of the femur, the surgery on an already severely

tried physique, marked her definitive retirement.

Sr. Mercedes welcomed the visit of the Lord in her new conditions of life with a generous offer, a model of silent consecrated woman who had given everything and prepared herself for the encounter with the bridegroom already living in intimacy with her.

Her presence was a consolation for all of us and visiting her was a joy that she gave us with her testimony, she continued to worry about us, in fact, she asked us if we had eaten, if everything had gone well, if something was not missing. Thus, she had always served us, with the affectionate concern of a sister who desired our good so that we could also have the physical strength for the mission.

In the last days, she was no longer able to express her thoughts, but in the very last hours of her life, the lucid and clear word returned to her and she said, “Here, I see it, yes, it is He, and it is Jesus!”



**Sr Mericlelia Nuzzo
of Our Lady of Mount Carmel**

*Born in Coo – Egeo (Grecia)
on 11 August 1931
Died in Limassol
on 10 November 2020*

Sr Mericlelia was born on the island of Kos - Aegean (Greece) on 11 August 1931. Her father was Alfonso Nuzzo, of Italian nationality, and her mother Chariklia Dorizza, of Greek nationality. She was baptized in Kos on December 26, 1932.

On January 30, 1938, Maria Carmen was orphaned by her father. Having eight children, the mother found herself in great difficulty in bringing them up and for this reason, she sent the girls to our “Vittorio Emmanuele III” orphanage in Rhodes and the boys to a male orphanage.

On May 5, 1940, in the Cathedral of San Giovanni, Maria Carmen together with four other girls received the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation, from the hands of Archbishop Mgr. Acciari.

Together with Mother Sofia Pavan and other sisters, Maria Carmen she learned to serve the poor and suffering, both during

the distribution of meals, (the sisters offered food to all the poor of Rhodes), and in the prisons where they worked, with piety, mercy and charity in favour of all prisoners, regardless of religion, race or social class.

On 19 August 1950, Maria Carmen was sent by our sisters from Rhodes to Rome where she made her aspirantate. A month later, September 22, 1950, she began her pre-novitiate in Gemona and on July 16, 1951, she entered the Novitiate. Also in Gemona she made her first Profession on 21 July 1952 and in August of the same year, a month after her Profession she began her missionary life in Cyprus and precisely in Kormakiti. Sr Mericlelia served all the communities of Cyprus: Kormakiti, Nicosia, Famagusta and Limassol first as a cook and then as a helper in the kindergarten.

In 1977, she was sent to Rome where she obtained a diploma as a kindergarten teacher.

On her return to Cyprus, she not only taught kindergarten children, but she loved them like a real mother. With her delicacy, patience, charity, generosity and educational tact, Sr Mericlelia attracted everyone to herself.

When her age did not allow her to teach, Sr. Mericlelia served the Lord from the post of receptionist. There with her friendly smile she accompanied everyone with a good word. She listened and patiently advised all the people she met. One of her former students at the funeral said: *“You will always have a special place*

in my heart because you were always a humble, smiling sister who emanated only love!”

During the last two years of her earthly life, Sr Mericlelia was sick. On January 16, 2019, she underwent a very delicate operation on her abdomen. The convalescence was long, and while she wanted to help the sisters of the community, it was she who needed fraternal gestures of service and attention. The disease made her like a candle that melted slowly, until November 10, 2020 in the early hours of the morning (3.30) when the candle went out forever.

Her funeral took place in the chapel of the convent on 12 November 2020 at 11.00. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, four Franciscan friars and two Maronite priests were present, all the sisters from the community of Limassol, three from the community of Larnaca, several friends of Sr. Clelia, and almost all the teaching and service staff as it was given a day off from school.

Thank you Sr Clelia for your 68 years of generous service in the Province!

Thank you for your example of simplicity and humility.

The Lord rewards you by giving you a special place in heaven!



**Sr Enrichetta Grossi
of the Divine Redeemer**

Born in Ripe (Ancona)

on 22 August 1920

Died in Roma

on 25 November 2020

Sister Enrichetta, secular name Delia Grossi, was born in Ripe, a charming and peaceful village in the Marche, on 22 August 1920 into a simple, hard-working family with sound and profound moral and religious principles. A few days after her birth she was taken to the baptismal font and received the name of Delia.

She grew serene under the gaze of her mother who instructed her in the faith and above all referred to her as an example to imitate Saint Maria Goretti, the martyr of her land whose memory is still very much alive among the people.

Delia received the sacrament of Confirmation in Corinaldo, in the town of the Saint who had been her model to imitate throughout her life. In her long life as a missionary educator, Sister Enrichetta showed the example of St. Maria Goretti to the children; she spoke to them of the martyr who had loved Jesus so much to the point of offering her blood and life to Him.

At the age of 29, Sr. Enrichetta responded to the call of the Lord who wanted her to be entirely His. She started the pre-novitiate in Gemona where she received formation in religious life and where she made her Profession two years later, on 10 September 1951. In her simplicity and serenity, she immediately declared herself ready for the mission, in fact she was sent to Centocelle, a suburb of Rome that was teeming with youth for the education of which the Institute of Mary Immaculate was being built. The Kindergarten was already in operation, attended by hundreds of children and Sr. Enrichetta was destined for them as aide to the sister educator. She stayed there for six years and immediately distinguished herself with strong dedication and skills for caring the children. At the time, the Lido dei Pini, a facility for the reception, care and education of children in difficulty, had also started. Sr. Enrichetta was called there and put herself at the service of the little ones to whom she gave her love with exemplary generosity and as a true missionary, she led them to Jesus. Many of them, as adults, still have witnessed the greatness of a simple but authentic sister, who gave them the orientation of life through a sound human and Christian education. After her educational mission in Lido dei Pini for 26 years she was sent to Borgo Faiti and Borgo Carso holding various duties, always available to serve the Lord where and how obedience called her. In 2006 at the beautiful age of 86 she was

withdrawn from the activities and joined the community of Viale Saffi, where she remained for 14 years, silent but always happy, continuing the mission of FMSC in the precious time of old age and disease. We have admired her fervent missionary spirit in action. In recent years, we have experienced her presence, fragile in the body, but a strong witness who announces the Lord whom she loved as the whole of her life. On 22 August, she celebrated her 100th birthday in the authentic and simple joy of being able to say that she was well, that she was happy and that she was waiting for the Bridegroom.

And the Bridegroom arrived on the morning of November 25th. She greeted us saying, “I am so sleepy” ... the “sleep of peace” that led her to the eternal embrace of the One who always loved her.



**Sr Emiliana Guerretta
of the Eucharist**

*Born in Monastier (TV)
on 11 January 1941
Died in Pordenone
on 28 November 2020*

Born in Monastier (TV) on 11 January 1941, her parents

Emilio and Ester Barbinato accompanied her to the Holy Baptism in the parish abbey church of their village on 23 January 1941, choosing for her the name of Regina Anna.

Growing up quickly in her family, she soon found herself working in the rest home of Menegazzi (TV) where she met the Franciscan missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart who served in the same structure. This contact was decisive for the choice of religious life.

In fact, she entered the Mother House in Gemona at the age of 19, on the day of the Annunciation, on 25 March 1960.

After the period of initial formation, on 5 May 1962 she made her first Profession by choosing to be called Sister Emiliana, a name that remembered her father. On 1 October 1967, again in Gemona, with Perpetual Vows, she totally and forever consecrated her life to the Lord.

From this moment on Sr. Emiliana moved to various communities, as well as to the mother house, to the Convitto of Udine, to the community of the Oasis, to Stretti di Eraclea, to Paese, to Solagna, to Castagnole, to Buia and then in 1999 until 2007 she worked in the community of the Generalate and in that of S. Maria degli Angeli-Assisi where everyone still remembers her.

“The service of cooking” was her commitment throughout her life and she lived and witnessed it with her special

‘simplicity and generosity’, always joyful in her expressing herself with her sisters and people, speaking as she used to in the ‘Venetian’ dialect... But everyone understood!

An unexpected surprise awaited her just this year with the sudden advance of Covid19 even in the motherhouse. She was the first to need hospitalization: on November 28, 2020, accompanied by urgency to the hospital of S. Daniele (UD) and subsequently transferred to the hospital “S. Maria degli Angeli” of Pordenone in intensive care, death left her no way out. The Lord called her to heaven where with her familiar language she said: *Jesus feed me on You, You are the living Bread to which I have given myself up in my consecrated life.*

Lord, now let the good sown by Sr. Emiliana bear fruit with joy and simplicity of heart among the brothers and sisters in your name.

Bless all of us who have experienced her simple and fraternal joy.

Donate to her family and to those who have known her, to keep her memory simple and good.



**Suor Angelicarosa De Monte
of Mary Help of Christians**

*Born in Artegna (UD)
on 11 September 1921
Died in Gemona
on 1 December 2020*

Sr. Angelicarosa went through a long journey of life reaching the age of 99, but her death was sudden: she passed away at the motherhouse in Gemona on December 1, 2020.

She did not need to live Advent in waiting for the Lord; the Lord Himself invited her to Himself to enjoy His presence in glory.

Sr. Angelicarosa was born in Artegna (UD) on 11 September 1921. Her parents Domenico and Angelica Francile, accompanied her to Holy Baptism, in the following week 18 September 1921, had called her ‘Domenica’.

Responding to her religious vocation, she entered the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona on 6 April 1941, at the beautiful age of 20, a youth to given to the Lord.

She reached her First Profession on June 4, 1944 and her Perpetual Profession on July 15, 1949.

In the same year, she obtained the ‘School of Cutting and Sewing’ license. In her life, Sr. Angelicarosa has shown a great aptitude in this art, expert and precise in this activity, lending herself to teaching sewing to girls in the parishes of Comeglians, Vigo Cavedine, Codroipo.

In Rome, then, and in the motherhouse, who could make the dresses for the sisters as perfectly as she did?

As long as she could, she was really always available and active.

Above all, she was ready to accept the call of the Lord to take part in the glory of His Kingdom.

Today 1 December, the Holy Gospel presents the words of Jesus, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!” (Lk 10, 23) We are certain that Sr. Angelicarosa with the eyes of the soul already tastes the glory of God.

*Sr. Angelicarosa,
from heaven,
where you are forever reunited
with your loved ones,
pray for all your
family members
who treasure the memories of
you and for all of us,
your sisters,
who will continue
to carry you in our hearts
with sisterly love.*





**Sr Mariabruna Severin
of the Sorrowful Mother**

*Born in Paese (TV)
on 1 May 1939
Died in Gemona
on 7 December 2020*

Sr. Mariabruna certainly joined the Sorrowful Mother especially on this unforeseen occasion of Covid 19 with which she lived an experience, although brief, but of intense suffering.

Already in November, she felt weakness and physical pain, but she continued to show her serene acceptance without ever complaining. Certainly in company with the Sorrowful Mother who taught her how suffering also becomes fruitful by offering it spiritually to the Lord.

Sr. Mariabruna was born in Paese (TV) at the beginning of the Marian month: May 1, 1939. Her parents, Amedeo and Serafina Severin, accompanied her to baptism and gave the name, Irma. In the years of her youth, she expressed her desire to become a sister to her loved ones and on 8 September, another day that commemorates Our Lady, she entered Gemona where she did her formation

until she reached religious profession on 14 September 1960.

In the motherhouse in Gemona, where the aspirants were also, when she saw a young girl with a few tears she used to console her by saying, “Do not be afraid, the plant needs water to grow and flourish!”

After her Profession, she worked as a cook in various communities: in Treviso, Solagna, Paese, Fontane Alberoni, Udine Convitto and Vedelago and above all in the rest home in Buja with the elderly.

Since 2004 she has served in the mother house as a cook’s assistant. Then the last months she has been enticed and, in the end, with serenity and peace she left the earth directly towards the heaven.

In the last moments, she said, “If the Lord calls me, I am ready!” Yes, she was ready for December 7, 2020, the eve of the Immaculate Conception, when Our Lady came to take her to lead her to Jesus. At the end of life, what greater joy can there be than letting ourselves be carried to heaven by Mary?

“Who has met the Lord and follows him faithfully is a messenger of the joy of the Spirit” (Rejoice 6)

Sr. Mariabruna, from heaven where you have reached, continue the witness you left us, that of serenity and full availability in every circumstance of life to what the Will of God proposes.

From heaven, pray for your loved ones and for us your

sisters who accompanied you in the last passage of life.

Intercede for the gift of other vocations that they know how to transmit to our world sick with sadness the joy of being all brothers, children of the same heavenly Father.



**Sr Dina Antonello
of the Martyr of Love**

*Born in Castelfranco Veneto (TV)
on 22 June 1941
Died in Gemona
on 7 December 2020*

Sr. Dina was born in Castelfranco Veneto on 22.06.1941. Her parents, Romano and Luigia Marcon, had called her Dina Elsa in baptism (29 June 1941). From a very young age she frequented the Carmelite Sisters of Castelfranco thinking of becoming a Carmelite sister. It was one of them, Sr. Emma, who introduced her to music. Then, changing her mind, at the age of 20 she entered the convent in Gemona and already as a postulant, she continued the study of music, a commitment that accompanied her throughout

the three years of initial formation and also after her religious profession which took place on 14.09. 1963, until reaching the Piano diploma (X Year) in 1970.

In 1972 she began teaching music in the school, 'S. Maria degli Angeli' in Gemona, but later also thought in the State schools. In 2004 it was granted the permission from the Ministry of Education, to start again the elementary school of the past in our school, and Sr Dina was assigned as Directress.

In 1997, she was also present in Rome, in the Generalate, with the same teaching service in the school.

Especially in the last few years, she guided singing in the celebrations of the motherhouse with the sisters of the community who keep a grateful memory.

The last year of her life Sr. Dina had a strong spiritual experience in prayer and in the acceptance of her illness.

Her whole existence lived in 'musical joy', until the eve of the Immaculate Conception, the day on which she accepted the call to heaven. She was certainly ready and prepared, as she affirmed with her last words, to celebrate along with the Lord and with her two sisters, the sisters of the Congregation of "S. Maria di Leuca" Sr. Luciana and Sr. Luisa who preceded her to heaven.

Sr. Emanuela, her other sister was missing at her side; she, due to the Covid '19 emergency, had to give up seeing her again, but who from the community

of Prague where she lives, was always ready to inquire about the situation and accompanied her until the end. The day she was taken to the cemetery, a happy surprise was presented: her niece, Chiara, (with her family) who, before the final blessing given by Fr. Matteo Salvadori ofm, played the *Ave Maria* to her dear aunt on her violin.

The hymn that spontaneously rises from the heart even at this moment in greeting Sr. Dina, expresses the certainty that the feast will continue in the Kingdom of God.

*"Jubilate Deo
omnis terra,
laudate omnes gentes,
laudate Dominum."*



**Sr Carla Cavasin
of the Immaculate**

*Born in Vedelago(TV)
on 3 May 1938
Died in Gemona
on 13 December 2020*

*Immaculate,
beautiful Virgin
of our life you are the star.*

*Amidst the storms,
please guide the heart
of those who call you
mother of love.*

A real sudden storm fell on Sr. Carla Cavasin when on 11 December she was seized by Covid 19 and rushed to the hospital in S. Daniele (UD).

Two days in intensive care and then she let herself be guided 'in the other life' by Mary Immaculate; it was 13 December 2020.

Sr. Carla was born in Vedelago on May 3, 1938.

Her parents, Riccardo and Franco Pasqua Maria, had chosen to call her 'Angela' in baptism. In this Christian family environment, Angela discovered and responded to the Lord's call by entering, at the young age of 16, among the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona Del Friuli: it was December 8, 1954, the day of the Immaculate Conception. For this reason, she chose to call herself Sr. Carla of the Immaculate.

After the religious Profession, on June 22, 1957, she graduated in cutting and sewing showing good natural skills in this field. In 1971, she began her service as a teacher in various nursery schools in Vittorio Veneto, Paese, Fontane Ospedaletto di Gemona, Solagna, Castagnole, Savorgnano, Rauscedo, also giving her-self to the parish ministry. She served as local Superior in various communities,

in Ospedaletto d'Istrana (1986-92), in Camino (1994-2000), in Stretti 2014-17). In 2017, she returned to the motherhouse and worked on small services, especially sewing. She was still in good health, but Covid reached her and in a few days, on the third Sunday of Advent, Sr. Carla flew to heaven.

Without prolonging the waiting, she can already sing with the entire humanity, "God has made flesh like us to make us like Him.

He comes from the womb of a woman, the Virgin Mary. All through the history was waiting for our Savior." She too was waiting for him and now she can already contemplate him in heaven.



**Sr Chiardamiana Tommasini
of the Infant Jesus**

*Born in Vedelago (TV)
on 03 March 1946
Died in Gemona
on 14 December 2020*

Sr. Chiardamiana Tommasini was born in Vedelago (TV) on 3 March 1946 and was baptized with the name of Teresa on 17 March 1946. She was still a young teenager when she left

her family, father Ausonio, mother Pasqualotto Ida and her other family members, entering Gemona as an aspirant under the guidance of Mother Liduina Tasser, immediately demonstrating the ability to help the younger aspirants. On August 15, 1962, at just 16, she began the pre-novitiate and continued the novitiate where she took on the habit of the FMSC on September 16, 1964, receiving the new Franciscan name of Sr. Chiardamiana. On 18 September 1965, she celebrated her religious Profession always in the motherhouse. As a student, she was immediately sent to Centocelle where she obtained the 'Qualification for School Teaching Grade Preparatory' diploma.

Back to the Province, she dedicated herself to children in the nursery schools of Vittorio Veneto, Cercivento, Udine, Treviso, Castagnole and Lancenigo where she also exercised the service of local Superior (1983-86).

Over the years, she prepared and achieved the 'Academic Diploma of Magisterium in Religious Sciences'. So in 1990 she taught Religion in the school, 'S. Maria degli Angeli' and in the State middle school of Gemona.

In 1998, she was sent to France to Le Mans, Carlepont and Attichy where she offered herself as catechesis and, for a period, also as Provincial Secretary (2006-09).

Returning to Italy in 2010, she carried out pastoral services in the parish for three years

in Salzano. In 2013 she began to feel physical tiredness and needed to be accepted in the motherhouse in Gemona.

In recent days, Sr. Chiardamiana, was affected by the contagious disease covid'19, and soon surrendered herself to sister death (December 14, 2020), to be present in heaven on the birth of Jesus.



**Suor Giannina Ferracin
of the Infant Mary**

*Born in Solagna (VI)
on 07 September 1927
Died in Gemona
on 15 December 2020*

In a style of simplicity, Sr. Giannina Ferracin let herself be led in her life by the thought of Mary, the Mother totally belonging to the Lord from her conception.

She too followed the path of the religious vocation in the joy of consecrating herself to God among the Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Gemona. Sr. Giannina was born on 09.09.1927 and was baptized on 18.09.1927, in the name Idalia, in Solagna (VI), the town where the first community of the Congregation in Italy arose.

Here, in contact with the sisters, her decision to become a religious blossomed. Her parents, Leone and Bianchin Giovanna, were very happy with this choice and encouraged their daughter to respond to God's call. The three-year formative path saw her engaged in the pre-novitiate (27.10.1945), in the Novitiate. (5.10.1946) and therefore in the religious Profession reached on 6.10.1947. Then she went in mission in Treviso, Raveo, in Limassol-Cyprus and in many other communities where until 1971 she carried out the after-School service. Later, while having attained the diploma of 'Qualification for Teaching in Preparatory Schools', she dedicated to children in preschools in Lancenigo, Vittorio Veneto, Cavaso Artegna and Buttrio. When she reached a certain age, she dedicated herself to small community services at the Oasis-Gemona. Finally, she joined the community of the motherhouse in 2007: here the most beautiful and anticipated work was 'prayer'; for a long time bedridden in the infirmary, she offered the Lord the hardships of the last period of her life. Affected by the pandemic, she too soon left the earth for heaven on 15. 12. 2020

*Dearest sister Sr. Giannina,
now that you are
before the Lord,
we wish you full happiness
with Mary and all the Saints.
obtain graces and holy vocations
for the Congregation you loved
and every blessing for your
loved ones.*



**Sr Anna Lissia
of the Immaculate Heart of Mary**

*Born in Calangianus (SS)
on 21 September 1937
Died in Gemona
on 15 December 2020*

*"Hail O full of grace"
The Angel Gabriel greets
Mary at the Annunciation..*

The full of grace has an immaculate heart, without blemish, a heart also invoked by Sr. Anna Lissia, how many times especially in the recitation of the daily rosary. For some years she had been seen in the room of Sr. Dina Antonello to help and keep her company. In the meantime, she held the rosary in her hands engaged for the recitation of the Holy Rosary. Once the commitment was concluded with the death of Sr. Dina, her service of charity also ended and she too could reach heaven to continue praising Mary for her: *Hail o Full of grace!* In fact, the following week, on December 15th, she suddenly left this earth. Sr. Anna Lissia was born in Calangianus (Sassari) on 21 September 1937 to her parents Stefano and Isoni Giovanna.

In Baptism on 26.09.1937, she was given the name of her mother 'Giovanna'. Precisely at that time, the Franciscan Missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart with the missionary desire made their presence in that Sardinian area and so some young people felt attracted like Sr. Anna who at the age of 19 entered in Gemona on 20 July 1956. She went through her years of formation. She took her habit on 1 May 1958, where she was called Sr. Anna and made her Profession on 3 May 1959. After the years of preparation as a student, she obtained the 'Qualification for Teaching in Preparatory Grade Schools' Diploma and began her engagement with children in Paese, Vittorio Veneto, Artegna, Treviso, Lancenigo, Ospedaletto d'Istrana. Her poor health forced her to retire to the motherhouse; in fact already in 1983 she was transferred to Udine for treatment and finally, in 1985 to the motherhouse where she remained carrying out small services. She was passionate about making images and beautifully decorating the surroundings on community feast days.

*Sr. Anna, we entrust to you
our prayers, to be presented
to the Lord.
Still help the sisters, most in need
for obtaining courage,
strength and willpower
to face every suffering in life.
Do not forget your distant
loved ones who could not
be close to you
especially during this period.*



**Sr Raffaella Poratto
of the Visitation of Mary**

*Born in Paese (TV)
on 9 September 1934
Died in Gemona
on 16 December 2020*

Here is what the Psalm announced in response to the first reading on this day of Advent:

*“Of course, the Lord
will give His good.
His steps
will trace the path!” (Sl. 84)*

Mary too, after having received the supreme ‘Good-Jesus’ at the Annunciation in a hurry moved along the path that led to her cousin Elisabeth and there to sing the Magnificat. Today Mary also visited Sr. Raffaella Poratto of the ‘Visitation of Mary’ and after many days of agony caused by Covid ‘19, led her on that path that Divine Providence had traced for her towards eternity. It was December 16, 2020 Sr. Raffaella also was able to sing her Magnificat before the Lord. Sr. Raffaella Poratto was born in Paese on September 9, 1934 into a large family of 9

brothers and sisters. Her parents, Ettore and Gemma Pozzebon, brought their baby to baptism after seven days, on September 16, choosing to call her Teresa. She grew up in the family until the age of 17 and then chose to enter in the convent in Gemona on 3 July 1951. After a year, on 21 July 1952, she took the habit and received the name of Sr. Raffaella and on 29.11.1953; she made her religious Profession. Like every sister in those years, she immediately began her mission as an aid in preschools in various communities, Cavaso Del Tomba, Treviso, Ripe. Returning to Gemona she sealed her selfgiving to the Lord with Perpetual Profession on October 29, 1958. She continued her mission again, in Rome Piazza Pitagora and in Asisium and then in Udine, Vittorio Veneto, Pasian di Prato, Gemona, Savorgnano, Castagnole. In 2006, she donated her help to the elderly of Borgo Cavour until 2011. Then at the age of 77 she came to Gemona, in the motherhouse, where she could still carry out small services for the community. Always and everywhere, she communicated her serene and smiling character. When Covid’19 reached her this year, she was already in the infirmary and showed patience, strength and abandonment to God. Lovingly assisted day and night by the sisters of the

motherhouse, on December 16 she left this world for heaven. *Sr. Raffaella, from heaven where you are now, continue to transmit what you have lived with joy in our religious Family. Remember your loved ones who have always been close to you and of us your sisters in the same vocation. Intercede the gift of other vocations that they know how to transmit to our world today, so sick with unhappiness, the joy you conveyed when you were among us.*



**Sr Matilde Tomietto
of Jesus**

*Born in Sesto Al Reghena (PN)
on 5 November 1927
Died in Gemona
on 16 December 2020*

Today, December 16, Sr. Matilde Tomietto, alert and conscious, accepted the call of Jesus to whom she had entrusted her whole life. At that moment, she shook the hand of a sister who was next to her as if to greet her. *“You called me? Here I am Jesus!”* And Sr. Matilde left this earth accompanied by Jesus to heaven!

Antonia Tomietto (Sr. Matilde) was born in Sesto Al Reghena (PN) on 5.11.1927, in one of those large families of eight siblings where the vocation to consecrated life finds its natural environment. In fact, having become an adult on May 1, 1948, at the age of 21, she entered the convent “S. Maria degli Angeli” in Gemona to become a sister and make herself available to Jesus and His plan of love.

On 10.5.1950, she pronounced her “yes” in the Religious Profession, which became ‘forever’ in the Perpetual Profession on 14.05.1955 and then repeated daily to her Jesus for 72 years giving testimony of generosity and faithful love. Her mission has developed in the form of simplicity and humility. Her precarious health already forced her in 1957, to be treated in the Forlanini hospital and in the infirmary of the motherhouse for two years. She recovered in health and carried out various services as a tailor (expert in sewing) receptionist and giving assistance to the elderly sisters. Several times, she carried out the mission of local Superior in Basaldella in Treppo grande, at the Convitto di Udine. She, as a true missionary, was sent to the general community in Rome in 1985 and 1996, to Viole di Assisi in 1994. In 1997, she reached Turkey at the service in the Nunciature. No qualifications, but only the book of the Gospel that she read and meditated on with love. Perhaps Sr. Matilde would never have thought of receiving such a

beautiful gift, preparing herself in this last week of Advent to celebrate Holy Christmas in Paradise. Holy Christmas, the great gift that Jesus wanted to give her with the invitation, Come, faithful spouse, come to my Kingdom to contemplate this mystery. The time has come when you can see with your eyes and touch with your hands “the Word of life”. Now that, once the curtain of this world has been lifted, Eternal Life becomes visible to your gaze and envelops you forever in the eternal embrace of love and peace ... I, Jesus, was born to the earth so that you could be born to heaven!

Sr. Matilde, you responded to the last evangelical invitation: “Come, good and faithful servant” and Jesus will be yours forever. Now we think of you like this, totally present to Love: before the Lord Jesus, continue to remember us and all your loved ones.



**Sr Anna Maria Visentin
of the Eucharist**

*Born in Postioma (TV)
on 19 April 1939
Died in Gemona
on 18 December 2020*

Sr Anna Maria Visentin is welcomed into the life of the saints on 18 December 2020, after having spent a long period of rest in the Mother House of Gemona, edifying each sister and those who looked after her with her serenity, simplicity and faith nourished by the love for the Eucharist.

Her vocation bloomed, like many others, in the loving family atmosphere of Giuseppe and Guglielmina Condotta and in the ecclesial spirit lived in the Parish of Postioma (TV) where she was born on April 19, 1939. It was Easter time, which recalled the gift to everyone, of Jesus, who becomes Eucharist to remain among us. She lived her childhood in the warmth of a good, Christian family, so much so that three vocations to consecrated life emerged, Sr. Anna Maria fmsc, Sr. Silvana and Sr. Antonietta, Salesians. She joined in Gemona among the FMSC at the age of 16, on 24 May 1955.

She made her first Profession on 5 October 1957. In her mature a missionary heart, in fact, after the Perpetual Vows on 5 October 1962, she was sent to France to Soulligné and Tracy, then to the Missionary Center in Asisium, Rome. In 1987 she was sent to Turkey-Ankara to serve in the Nunciature. Returning to France in Le Mans she took care of various tasks and then in 1989 she was sent to Switzerland-Fribourg there she dedicated herself to pastoral care. In Rome-Centocelle in 1992, she obtained the teaching qualification for kindergarten so then, returning to Switzerland in Tavannes, she took care of the children in the school. She also assumed the responsibility of local Superior in Fribourg 1989-92 and in Tavannes 2004-2010 and Provincial Councilor for several years 1996-2003. In 2014 she returned back to Gemona in the mother house from where once she left as a generous young woman open to the world.

Feelings of gratitude rise from the hearts for the life witness and affection which Sr Annamaria, brought to the religious Family. Now the fruits of her selfgiving and the suffering endured in this last period of pandemic were ripe and the Lord called her to heaven on the night of 18 December.

*Sr. Anna Maria, we ask you:
from heaven where you are,
to give us the grace to live the
Eucharistic mystery of Jesus in
our life.*

*Obtain for us the gift
of new Missionaries
for the Church of God.*



**Sr Pierantonia Favaro
of Saint Francis**

*Born in Spineda di Riese (TV)
on 21 February 1931
Died in Gemona
on 18 December 2020*

Sister Pierantonia, this morning, December 18, 2020 you woke up in the arms of God and you were able to join the song that St. Francis and all the Franciscans continue to raise to the Lord:

*Praised be 'my' Lord
for our sister bodily death,
from which
no living man can escape!
Praise and bless my Lord ...*

Sr. Pierantonia was born in Spineda di Riese (TV) on February 21, 1931, into a family of seven children whom her parents Giovanni and Trivellin Maria raised in their simple and domestic environment. She was baptized on February 26, 1931 with the name of Aldina.

At the age of 18 she responded to Religious Life by joining the FMSC in Gemona on 18. 01. 1949. She made her first Profession on 07.05.1951 in

Gemona. Then transferred to Centocelle-Rome, where she celebrated her Perpetual Profession on 7 May 1956.

Returning to Gemona in 1958, she dedicated herself to the children of the nursery school in Artegna and Pradamano as an aid.

In 1970, she had to drop out of school due to her poor health.

Later, she dedicated herself to small services in the communities of Gemona-Oasi, Udine-Convitto, Ampezzo, Fontane, Buja, Paese.

In 2002, she was sent to Vedelago to provide her pastoral service among the elderly in the nursing home.

Finally, having reached her 82 years, in 2013 she returned to Gemona.

After a life spent for the Lord, the last days of suffering caused due to the coronavirus, now Sr. Pierantonia can continue to praise God who always responds to the expectations of His creatures.

*Sr. Pierantonia,
pray for us
that we too can live
our daily mission
with courage
where the Lord
calls us.*





**Sr Linajoseph Sartoretto
of the Immaculate Heart
of Mary**

*Born in Cavasagra (TV)
on 18 December 1923
Died in Gemona
on 19 December 2020*

Sr. Linajoseph was born in Cavasagra (TV) on December 18, 1923 in a family of 8 siblings that her parents Giuseppe and Martini Emilia brought up in their simple rural environment. She received her baptism on 23.12.1923, two days before Christmas.

Sr. Linajoseph entered Gemona and celebrated her Religious Profession on 04.06.1944, Perpetual Profession on 16.07.1949, the Feast of the Mother of Mount Carmel.

Graduated in cutting and sewing, her talent as a tailor made her become an expert and able to promote a small sewing school in the motherhouse, in Treppo Grande, in Savorgnano del Torre. Important was also the service in the wardrobe in the large rest home of Menegazzi with its 400 elderly people (from 1968-1995) and in Borgo Cavour (1995-2015). On the eve of the fourth Sunday

of Advent, at the venerable age of 97, Sr. Linajoseph flew to heaven. She died at 8.00 pm on December 19, 2020, the thirteenth sister who left for heaven in the motherhouse due to the vicious pandemic. With her, we spontaneously repeat the prayer of Pope Pius XII in this great moment of trial, a prayer that Sr. Linajoseph will surely be addressing to the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

“To you, O Immaculate Heart we entrust and consecrate ourselves, in this tragic hour of human history. Not only in union with the Holy Church, the mystical body of your Jesus, who suffers and bleeds in so many parts and in so many ways, but also with the whole world torn by ferocious discord, parched in a fire of hatred, victim of its own iniquity... You, O Mother of mercy, implore us from God for peace”.

*Sr. Linajoseph,
ask the Immaculate Heart
of Mary also that
this terrible epidemic pass
and the world
may find again
peace of soul
and body.*



**Sr Maria Vit
of the Holy Spirit**

*Born in Povoletto (UD)
on 29 October 1920
Died in Le Mans
on 20 December 2020*

Sr Maria Vit was born on 9 October 1920, in Povoletto (UD) in northern Italy into a very believing and committed family.

She is the eldest of the children. Her family emigrated to the south of France, where she grew up and did her studies. Feeling in her heart the call to religious life, she returned to Italy.

In the middle of the war, in 1942, she could fulfill her most ardent desire, to consecrate herself to God in the religious life. She consciously chose a missionary Congregation, because she felt she was called to serve outside her homeland. She did her initial formation in the Motherhouse of our Congregation of Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Gemona. In 1944, she pronounced her religious vows and began her apostolate in two communities in Italy.

When the war ended, in 1946, she was sent to France, in Flers de l'Orne, for the apostolate with the young people preparing themselves for the priesthood, in the school of Notre-Dame. There she gave her best service in silence and in a spirit of sacrifice.

In the different communities where she had been, she showed the ability to adapt to many tasks and activities that are required of her. She put her qualities as a musician at the service of the Church, formed and conducted choirs in several parishes and at the same time, served as a highly trained catechist, gave Christian formation to the children without forgetting to evangelize the parents. She put herself to the formation of young people, thanks to the art, theater and dance and this from 1947 to 1968 (Parigné l'Eveque, Soulligné / Ballon) in the diocese of Le Mans. Later, she placed her talents as an evangelizer at the service of the parish of Attichy in the Oise, diocese of Beauvais.

In the Province, she competently exercised the duties required of her, in a spirit of obedience, as provincial councilor and secretary, local superior (Parigné l'Eveque, Attichy, Paris) and local treasurer. (Le Mans). She was constant and meticulous in what she did with justice and honesty.

She was much appreciated by the Sisters for her spirit of prayer and silence, for her fraternal presence, always the first in community activities

and as a good liturgist, she advised the community with competence. She was transferred to Le Mans for health reasons, and there she continued to render service to the sisters.

Contemplative soul, she lived the last years of her life in the provincial community in silence, offering the Lord her suffering for the Church, the Congregation and the coming of the Kingdom. She left us peacefully on the fourth Sunday of Advent, a time she loved, in anticipation to the Lord's coming.

May she rest in peace!



**Sr Andreana Verona
of the Sacred Hearts**

*Born in Annone (VE)
on 1 November 1938
Died in Gemona
on 22 December 2020*

Sr. Andreana Verona was born in Annone Veneto (VE) on 01.11.1938.

Her parents gave birth to

nine children, a large family where she too grew up with the baptismal name of 'Santa' (08.11.1938).

At the age of 16 she decided to join the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona where she lived the formative journey and reached to the religious Profession on 22.06.1957.

Sewing expert, she was sent to the communities of Solagna, Rauscedo and Savorgnano, Treviso-Menegazzi, Udine-Convitto, Paluzza for the services in the wardrobe.

In 1962, after a year of study and an internship, she reached the Diploma of 'Qualification for School Teaching Grade Preparatory' and then dedicated herself to children in the schools of Pradamano, S. Gottardo and Cristo (UD), Rauscedo, Paese, Solagna and she exercised the service of local Superior of Vedelago (1989-95). Returning to the mother house in Gemona in 2013 for serious health reasons, she passed a difficult and risky 'kidney transplant' surgery, that she survived with her willpower.

She was so devoted to the Venerable Fr Gregory. To him she attributed the grace of having managed to face and overcome the disease so that, in recent years, in addition to sewing and embroidery, she took care of the sacristan service of the church in the mother house.

Unfortunately, already physically compromised by her cancer, she was unable to overcome the coronavirus attack that brought her to an end.

Sr



**Eleonora Fontana
of the Hearts of Jesus
and Mary**

*Born in Sevegliano (UD)
on 18 October 1948
Died in Trieste
on 27 December 2020*

*O Divine Providence
we trust in You!*

It is the invocation that the sisters raised to God in their morning prayer from the beginning of the Congregation and it is the spirit with which our first sisters, especially experiencing the lack of food so as to die of hardship, confidently turned to the Lord the request for the necessary sustenance through the intercession of St. Joseph. He, who was able to protect the Holy Family in so many adversities, also provided for ours.

Sr. Eleonora, throughout her life, helped the religious Family with the numerous sisters of the mother house, and so many poor people, to provide the necessities through friends and acquaintances with whom she knew how to establish cordial and fraternal relationships. She was the sister of Providence!

Another characteristic was the willingness to take the car with any sister who needed it (once the sisters did not have a driving license) to go to the doctor, to the hospital, to the family, to the communities. Yes, she was passionate about cars, but above all generous and always available for the religious Family.

This year 27 December 2020, is the feast of the 'Holy Family of Nazareth': it is certainly no coincidence that Sr. Eleonora, who has served and loved the religious Family so much, has entered heaven and found herself in the embrace of the Holy Family!

Sr. Eleonora was born in Sevegliano (UD) on October 18, 1948. Her parents Riccardo and Rosa Sclauzero took her to her baptism on 24. 10. 1948.

At the age of 20, on April 18, 1968, in the midst of her decisions, she joined the FMSC in Gemona; 24.09.1970; she made her first Profession and on 06.01.1977 in Udine she celebrated her Perpetual Vows. The mother house was her permanent home even when, due to the earthquake, the community moved to the boarding House in Udine. Her life was always among people, families, communities, as a true missionary. She had the joy of visiting our Central African mission in 1993. Struck several years ago by a cancer disease, Sr. Eleonora experienced deep sufferings

*Sr. Andreana
your testimony of selfgiving
even in your suffering
teaches us
how to place
our trust in God,
and also through the
intercession of His saints,
like Venerable Fr Gregory,
to come to meet us.
Now that you are next
to our Venerable Founder
pray to him so that our religious
Family may
obtain new and holy vocations
from the Lord
and the fmsc charism
may continue
to bear fruit in the world.*



that she was always endured with patience and ended this year, but without expecting it. The virus Covid'19 reached her and forced her to intensive care in the Trieste hospital. Right there the door of heaven has opened for her!

Her funeral, which was held on 4 January 2021, bearing in mind all the sisters who died due to the pandemic, was like a feast at the Cathedral of Gemona with the participation of authorities such as the Mayor of Gemona Roberto Revelant, the sisters with the Provincial Superior Sr. Stefania Bandiera, her brother Mario and other family members and many people.

The Concelebration, presided over by Mons. Valentino Costante, with her cousin Don Livio Martin and Mons. Emidio Goi, was solemnized by the parish choir.

Archbishop Valentino stated: *“Christmas reminds us of the mystery of Jesus being born. It is called: Dies Natalis: day of birth in heaven!”*

This also came true for Sr. Eleonora: today December 27, it was her Christmas - Birth in heaven!



**Sr Carmelisa Vendrame
of Jesus Crucified**

*Born in Padernello (TV)
on 17 September 1934
Died in Gemona
on 2 January 2021*

“A Holy day has dawned for us: God has visited us!”

We heard this announcement today, January 2 in the liturgy of the Church and this message at 3.30 pm heard and welcomed Sr. Carmelisa Vendrame, after several days of agony! Yes, for her it was a holy day, indeed a holy year that has just begun, but for her it will last forever: God visited her and took her with Him to His Kingdom.

Sr. Carmelisa was born on September 17, 1934 into a large family in Padernello (TV).

Her father Fiorino and her mother Piva Caterina already took her to her Baptism the following day, choosing for her the biblical name of ‘Esther’.

In this Christian environment she grew up to the age of 20 when she, perceiving the call of the Lord to consecrated life, she entered the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona on

February 27, 1954 where she could consecrate her youth to the Lord.

The time of her formation passed one year after another, arriving the entrance into novitiate on June 2, 1955 where she received the name Sr. Carmelisa. She made her religious Profession on June 4, 1956 and the perpetual Profession on October 4, 1961, the day of St. Francis.

She was aware and happy with God’s choice and she wrote in her notes: *“I have chosen God forever and God has chosen me forever, because we could not be without each other!”*

Sent to various communities and passionate about children, she was able to achieve her desire by obtaining the ‘Qualification Diploma for Teaching in Preparatory Grade Schools’ on 24 July 1979 after the year of master’s study in the “Bambino Gesù” school in Gualdo Tadino (PG).

In the communities where she carried out her mission (Sedegliano Camino, Badoere Salzan, Ospedaletto d’Istrana Udine, Ospedaletto di Gemona Paularo Stretti, Ampezzo), families and children appreciated her simplicity and goodness in dealing with everyone.

Even in the parish and with a lot of passion, she carried out her pastoral and catechetical commitment with zeal. In 1977 she attended a three-year Theological Formation in the Archdiocese of Udine in order to carry out this mission with greater awareness and competence.

In 2011, due to her compromised health, she was withdrawn to the mother house where she was always calm even in moments of suffering.

In December, Sr. Carmelisa too was infected with Covid'19 which brought her to an end on January 2.

*Sr. Carmelisa, from heaven,
where you are forever gathered
to your loved ones,
pray for family members
that remember you
and for all of us,
your sisters,
who we will continue
to carry you in the heart
with fraternal gratitude
for the good testimony
that you made us experience.*



**Sr Fulvia Stefanato
of the Crowning of Thorns**

*Born in Latina
on 16 July 1939
Died in Roma
on 5 January 2021*

Sr Fulvia Stefanato was born on July 16, 1939 in Borgo Carso di Latina. Her parents Giovanni and Stella Maggiolo brought her to receive the gift of her Baptism on August 13,

1939 with the name of Rosa. Rosetta, as she was nicknamed by her family, had always shown a strong, enthusiastic and decisive character.

She often went to the sisters of the Borgo and this closeness helped her to discern the voice of the Lord who wanted her for himself, completely dedicated to her mission. She entered Centocelle as a postulant on 8.10.1959.

She made her first religious Profession, as FMSC, on September 17, 1961 and her Perpetual Profession on September 17, 1966. Then she gave her service in the Generalate house, first in Piazza Pitagora and then at the Asisium. In 1971 Sister Fulvia was sent on a mission to Chile, in the "Mother Cecilia Lazzeri" school in Santiago.

In 1978, she was transferred to Rancagua as director of the Casa "Santa Rosa", to collaborate in the delicate care of girls and young people at social risk, coming from destroyed families, marked by trauma and personal suffering that each of them brought.

God continued to weave her story, and in 1988 Sr Fulvia was sent to a new mission land: in Bolivia - Cochabamba, in the "San Francisco" Community, as community leader and as a nurse.

Here she dedicated herself to the hard service in the Loreto Dispensary, where she took on, at the rhythm of exhausting days, the assistance of the most needy, reaching them everywhere with her motorcycle and with

the strength of the Spirit. In her solicitous attention to those in need, she knew how to involve and unite the forces and solidarity of many sensitive people, generous and tireless volunteers, social and ecclesial bodies, supported by a convinced trust in Providence. The gifts multiply and when they are given, God gives more! This conviction and her trust made sister Fulvia develop her artistic talent, which she spread with her usual generosity as it was her habit.

From her hand and artistic sensitivity came: faces of the Virgin, the Child birth, Christ crucified, Saint Francis, Saint Clare and more than a few murals that are still painted today in the chapels or missionary communities where she passed.

In 1992, Archbishop Rene Fernández of Cochabamba asked Sister Fulvia to join the board of directors of the Cuschieri hospital, headed by Monsignor Ángel Gelmi.

Sr Fulvia was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Bolivian Conference of Religious and, at the request of Mgr Tito Solari, of the Board of Directors of the "Saint Luis" Seminary and also assumed the Presidency of the Council of the FAPIZ Foundation, (Fundación Arquidiocesana Padre Ignacio Zalles) which deals with blind people. In 1991, she began what she herself called a "Sweet Via Crucis" by visiting the community of Challa Grande, in the Altiplano.

Here she began a pilgrimage that did not end,... because it was not only to cure these sick brothers and sisters but also those who came from the surrounding communities. This led her to make the Altiplano her meeting point with Christ Crucified, allowed her to travel, driving her motorcycle, through unimaginable and impracticable roads facing all kinds of difficulties, winds, rains, storms or thunderstorms and the inevitable landslides. She managed to reach and follow 14 communities and, with a medical team and invaluable volunteers, together they treated thousands of patients, confirming that: "Divine Providence is on my path",

At the end of the journey, the Father allowed her to try on her the last gift that was missing from the "crown of thorns".

Last July 2020, the sickness was starting to be stronger.

Sr Fulvia asked to be followed by the doctors she knew in Italy and she arrived in Rome on August 16.

Her physical situation began to deteriorate inexorably.

She was hospitalized for a month but nothing could be done to stop the course of the disease.

From September until January 5 when the Lord sent her the invitation: "*Come blessed by my Father ...*" she remained in the community of Asisium, lovingly cared for and assisted by the superior of the community, also a nurse, Sr. Laura Leon and by Sr Maria

Firmina Ramos and Sr Petrona Chorè.

She felt a privilege to be able to have the blessing of the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto on a daily basis and with her blessing Sr Fulvia flew to Heaven to receive the eternal blessing of the Father in His Kingdom.



**Sr Agnesina Fassouliotou
of the Good Shepherd**

Born in Limassol (Cipro)

on 30 January 1926

Died in Roma

on 13 January 2021

Sister Agnesina Fassouliotou

She was born in Limassol (Cyprus) on January 30, 1926 into a large family of seven children, wealthy and middle-class with a good economy.

The family professed the Orthodox religion and, according to this faith, the little girl, at the age of one, received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

She grew up serene with many interests for studying, surrounded by the great care and love that her parents had for their children.

She loved to tell the peaceful years of her childhood and asserted that the goodness and love of her father made her understand the love of God the Father.

Together with her three sisters from the year 1944 we see her as a student in our High School in Limassol which at the time was called the "Holy Land" and was, as still today, a school attended by young people of different religions.

Here Kyveli came into contact with the Catholic Religion, deepened the Catholic message, was guided and instructed by the sisters who were her teachers and who discovered in her a great openness of mind and appreciate her keen interest.

The community chronicles note a very important date: September 27, 1947, Kyveli abjured and became a full-fledged Catholic in the community chapel in the presence of three sisters.

It is also noted that her sisters had left for America and only she was left in Limassol, waiting to take the flight to Rome. It is not known exactly when she left the island, but a note speaks of the intervention of the Police in the house of the sisters, on August 12, to question the internal students and see if they had any news of her.

Searches began throughout the island and lasted for three days until on August 15 the rumor spread that Kyveli left for Italy to become a Catholic sister.

At this point, the father and the brother went to Trodos to investigate the matter, convinced of the complicity of the sisters. They met Sister Giulia and Sister Orestina and insisted that they must let her return to the island as soon as possible and, seeing that the issue is not resolved, they continued to disturb the sisters. The young woman's journey was marked by the plan of God who chose her to consecrate her, in fact Kyveli was in Gemona where on September 4 she began her formation in the religious life in the pre-novitiate. On 18 August 1948 she was admitted to the Novitiate with the name of Sister Agnesina of the Good Shepherd and the following year to the Profession of the Holy Vows. Immediately afterwards she was sent to Rome, to the Generalate in Piazza Pitagora where she taught and attended the University, obtaining a degree in literature and the qualification to teach religion in the elementary school. On August 22, 1954, she was admitted to Perpetual Profession and she continued her educational mission at the "Santa Elisabetta" Institute in Rome where she distinguished herself for her excellent cultural preparation and skill in teaching. Until 1968, she remained there when the Institute for Education moved to the new Generalate "Asisium" built on the northern outskirts of the city, in Via di Grottarossa. Here too she worked as a teacher of literature but only for one school year, because she

was transferred to Centocelle and it is here that she dedicated the best years of her maturity to the youth. An untiring teacher, she tried to transmit to her students the love for culture through which they can acquire human and Christian values and thus collaborate in the formation of a society based on solid principles, inspired by the Congregation's Educational Project. She has been teaching in our school for 32 years, loved and esteemed by families and pupils. In 2001, she retired and she began the period in which she re-elaborated her life of such an interesting life in the service of God and of teaching. She was reserved and silent, she spent her time in silence reading and dedicating spaces for prayer and meditation in solitude in the little chapel of the infirmary. In January 2021 she got the Covid and the last period of her life was really an act of offering to the Father. She died in our infirmary on January 13, lovingly assisted by the sisters.



**Sr Odilia Bonanni
of the Blessed sacrament**

*Born in Villa Santina (Udine)
on 8 October 1925
Died in Roma
on 14 January 2021*

Sr Odilia Bonanni was born in Villa Santina (Udine) on 8 October 1925 into a wealthy family. Her father Domenico was a well-known lawyer in the city and her mother, Caterina Mauro, a teacher. They took her to the baptismal font two weeks after her birth and she received the name of Liliana Maria. Both of her parents were very busy because of their profession, so the little Liliana was entrusted to the care of her maternal grandmother who lived in Vicenza. Sr. Odilia talked about it willingly, acknowledging that it was she who educated her in the faith, took care of her religious formation and took care of receiving the Sacraments, especially the Confirmation she received at the age of 16 in Udine where she had returned to access the studies at the High School.

She was very committed and she highlighted a strong artistic inclination for which she chose the Art School, obtained the diploma and subsequently also the master's qualification.

At the age of 24 she responded generously to the call of the Lord who wanted her for Himself; she was welcomed in Gemona for her religious formation. She made her Holy Vows on 4 October 1950 and immediately left the Mother House because obedience called her to Centocelle and entrusted her with the educational mission as an elementary school teacher at the Maria Immacolata Institute. There in those years had arisen a school as a response to an emergency educational center in the suburb of the capital which was becoming populated with families from southern Italy in search of better living conditions. Sr. Odilia stands out as a trained teacher. She was joyful while demanding and severe, which was a must because the classes were very numerous. After only 5 years she was sent to Veduggio, engaged in the printing house, a place of great cultural importance at the time, where the prayer books and documents of the Congregation were printed. There is little time left, because she was called to Gemona to carry out the mission of teacher of art education.

She was original, active and lover of art, she intended to help the search for God through beauty and she guided her students to discover the Creator in nature, in animals, in all things and as a true Franciscan

she sang His praises. In 1965 she returned to Centocelle and continued teaching art at the Institute for Education. Her pupils remember her as extremely correct, a little shy, but nice and passionate about her mission. In the Community she worked as a local treasurer until 2008.

She was attentive to her duties, participated in the life of the Community always with some reason to make her sisters smile: in fact, her collection of jokes has been famous, which has also reached the Philippines and the Albania missions.

She knew how to carve out time to enjoy the beauty of flowers, which she cultivates with passion and which brighten her office. She spent her last years in our infirmary in Centocelle, keeping her liveliness and giving her sisters delightful moments of leisure.

Her prayer was her strength, her life in common her joy, her daily life as an example of a religious now detached from everything, and who does not demand anything and thanks for everything.

In a few days, struck by Covid 19, she left us on January 14 at the age of 95.



**Sr Elena Preo
of the Holy Cross**

Born in Robegano (Venezia)

on 26 November 1933

Died in Roma

on 24 January 2021

Sister Elena was born in Robegano (Venice) on November 26, 1933 from a deeply religious family, which based life on solid moral principles.

Her parents loved life and were welcoming towards the children that the Lord wanted to give them: they were six, three boys and three girls.

A few days after her birth, they took care to take their child to the baptismal font where she was given the name of Gina Maria, thanks to the special devotion that her mother had for Our Lady and that she also transmitted to her children.

Gina Maria grew up in a healthy environment, since she was a child she attended catechism, so much so that at the age of 8 she was deemed ready to receive the Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. Her childhood was peaceful, surrounded by a lot of affection and respect



despite the simplicity of a reserved and hard-working family. A niece has told that at that time in the families, everyone had at heart the religious education of children and had the desire that at least one of their children be consecrated to the Lord.

When her parents were looking at Gina Maria when she was still a teenager and her choice was falling right on her, to their surprise it is she who declared herself willing to go to the convent to become a sister.

She was only 15 years old, but she was determined and the Sisters of the nearby community of Salzano helped her entry into Gemona, where she was an aspirant for a year; she dedicated herself to her passion which is embroidery and in the meantime she studied and obtained the diploma of cutting and sewing.

On May 30, 1949 she began her formation in the Pre-novitiate, and she took the name of Sister Maria Elena. After her Profession on 7 May 1951, Sr Elena was sent to Treppo Grande (Udine) to take care of the working school in which she expressed all the good taste of her art, harmonizing colours and styles.

These are the years in which the young women of the villages could not attend High School and were initiated into the domestic arts so that they were ready to form a family.

Sr Elena always remembered with great pleasure the years of the "working school" in which she followed many young people, distributing the time

between prayer, reading the Gospel, work and conversation. She was also very fond of doing the Catechism and she was not satisfied with the poor images that the books had at that time. She, with her original ability and with the simple pastel technique, prepared posters that illustrate the various themes, so beautiful that the children were enchanted. She kept them and it was her desire to offer them to the younger sisters or send them on a mission.

Her missionary life was very varied, active and interesting: from Treppo Grande to Roggiano, then to Lido dei Pini, Borgo Bainsizza, Le Marmore, Borgo San Michele, Pianello, Borgo Montello, then again to Lido dei Pini engaged in the education of girls and then in Borgo Carso in 1990.

Now times have changed, there are no more working schools, all the countries have their schools and the girls are sent to their studies, so Sr. Elena made herself available to respond to any need of the community, so we could see her busy in the kitchen or assigned to various tasks.

In 2006, she arrived at the Community of Centocelle, a precious collaborator in the various activities of the big house.

When in recent years, suffering from various pathologies, she slowed down her service a little, she lived withdrawn in her room where she passionately dedicated herself to making and embroidering small objects that are then exhibited and sold in missionary markets or to give to

the sisters in occasion of feasts and celebrations.

Already very weak because of her pathologies, Covid 19 hit her in January 2021 and she immediately faced hospitalization. It was a great pain for everyone at the thought of her that she would have to face her illness and then her death in solitude. But this was not the case. The Lord entrusted her to the care of two Camillian sisters who held her by her hand while reciting the Chaplet of Divine Mercy keeping in front of her the image of Our Lady of Fatima, of which she was very devoted.

In this way, she fell asleep in the Lord on the Sunday of the Word of God, January 24 at 12.00.



**Sr Teresina Lazzaron
of the Divine Love**

Born in Paese (TV)

on 22 July 1932

Died in Gemona

on 25 January 2021

Sister Teresina Lazzaron, third child of 10 children of the spouses Giuseppe Lazzaron and Rosa Borsato, was born on July 22, 1932 and baptized on July 28, 1932.

The family, already tried for its precarious economic situation, is further undermined by the war events of the epoch.

Her maternal grandparents Borsato came to help her and welcome the girl Teresina into their home. Here she stayed for a few years sharing games, small family and rural services with her cousins, and learning the basic elements of the Christian faith. Soon, also due to the testimony of her other cousins, she felt the call of the Lord; to guide her in her first path of vocational discernment was Msgr. Attilio Andreatti, then archpriest of Paese, until she arrived in Gemona-mother house on 03.08.1951. After three years of formation, on July 22, 1953, she celebrated her first religious Profession, entirely consecrated to the 'Divine Love' with the spirit of FMSC. Two other sisters of her family took the path of consecration: the eldest, Sr. Paola, chose the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of the Sacred Heart (Verona) and a younger one, Sr. Rosangela, entered the Dorotee family of Vicenza.

Sr. Teresina, was sent after her religious Profession to Codroipo and Gervasutta (UD); she immediately showed her particular aptitude for following children. In 1956 she was sent to Lido dei Pini as an aid in kindergarten. Here, on 03.10.1958, she made her Perpetual Vows consecrating herself forever to the Lord.

Later, she was sent in other different countries and parishes: in Fontane, in Salzano

where in the nursery school of Villattega. Then in Vedelago, Cavaso, Rauscedo where she prepared the message of the Word of God on Sunday in the parish. Something really special in those times! Again in Cavasagra, Castagnole and in Treviso Borgo Cavour where Don Giuseppe Tosin bore witness to a beautiful memory of her, passionately dedicated to her catechesis and pastoral care despite her now advanced age. In living her Franciscan missionary spirit, in fact, she was able to devote herself with true passion both in the field of infantile education as in the pastoral one, developing and taking care of an innate passion and creativity that supported and integrated the simple elementary preparation of the time. She did not have special diplomas, but she possessed the qualification par excellence, a gift imprinted by the Spirit in her human abilities.

She had certainly not shown hesitation in front of the novelties because she had always been able to find a solution or remedy to the perplexities of the moment. Her doing was enriched by the joy and desire to offer something beautiful and good to the people with whom she shared the fraternal life and the pastoral ministry. In 2008, she permanently reached the mother house community and here too she showed her creativity: she was pleased to offer the sisters who visited her the gift of one of her hand-painted images. Passion turned into sisterly love!

She certainly did not neglect good relations with her family. In compliance with the times and the possibilities of her, she was able to pay the right attention to all members of her large family, preferring those who presented or experienced moments of difficulty or precariousness without neglecting the joy of sharing successes and good starts of others.

In the last period of her life she too suffered Covid 19 for a long time, fully aware of the value of offering to the Lord not only in prayer, but also in pain.

On January 17 she was rushed to hospital in Tolmezzo and from here on January 25 at 7.00 she left this world.

*The Fruits of the Spirit
were ripe
and she was welcomed
into heaven!
From there
she will surely continue to
benefit all her dear ones
and also us her sisters
that we will remember
her with fraternal gratitude.*





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