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PACE E BENE

SUORE FRANCESCANE MISSIONARIE DEL SACRO CUORE



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EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH - OCTOBER 2019



“Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation” (Mk 16:15).

“It is a mandate that touches us closely: I am always a mission; you are always a mission; every baptized man and woman is a mission. People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships that generate life. As far as God’s love is concerned, no one is useless or insignificant. Each of us is a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God’s love.”

These words of the message of Pope Francis for the world mission day challenge us on a personal, community, congregational level to live in the Church and with the Church. These are very significant words because they are the expressions of the celebration of the extraordinary missionary month - October 2019: an event wanted by Pope Francis and proclaimed by him on October 22, 2017, World Mission Day. During the Angelus he publicly announced to the whole Church, his intention to hold the extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019 (EMM Oct.2019) to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum illud* (November 30, 1919-2019) of his predecessor Pope Benedict XV, who, with this document, wished to give a new impetus to the missionary responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel.

Pope Francis on the same day of the announcement, sent a letter to Cardinal Fernando Filoni, prefect of the congregation for the evangelization of the Peoples (CEP) and president of the supreme committee of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS), entrusting him with *“the task of starting the preparation of this event, in particular through a wide sensitization of particular churches, institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life as well as associations, movements, communities and other ecclesial realities”*.

The theme for the Extraordinary Missionary Month, *“Baptized and sent: the Church of Christ on mission in the world”* and the motivation of *wakening the awareness of the missio ad gentes and resuming the responsibility for the proclamation of the Gospel with new enthusiasm*, share pastoral concern of Pope Benedict XV in the *Maximum Illud* and the missionary vitality expressed by Pope Francis in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: *“Missionary action is the paradigm of every work of the Church”* (EG 15).



There were four dimensions, indicated by the Pope, to live more intensely the journey of preparation and living of the Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019.

1. The personal encounter with Jesus Christ alive in His Church, through the Eucharist, the Word of God, to personal and community prayer;
2. The testimony: the saints, the martyrs of the mission and the confessors of the faith, expression of the Churches scattered throughout the world;
3. Missionary formation: writing, catechesis, spirituality and theology;
4. Missionary charity.

The logo chosen for this Extraordinary Missionary Month is a missionary cross whose traditional colors recall the five continents.

The Cross is the instrument and the effective sign of the communion between God and people for the universality of our mission: it is luminous, full of color, a sign of victory and resurrection. The world is transparent, because the action of evangelization has no barriers or boundaries: it is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Christian charity and the world transfigured in the Spirit overcome distances and open the gaze of our mind and our heart. The words *Baptized and Sent*, which accompany the image, indicate the two characteristic elements of every Christian: baptism and proclamation.

The colors of the cross of the logo of the Extraordinary Missionary Month, October 2019 are those traditionally attributed to the five continents: red for America, green for Africa, white for Europe, yellow for Asia and blue for Oceania.

As a Religious Family, Missionary and International since the Foundation, we have welcomed this extraordinary month as a “providential sign” of the Lord also because this event is part of the congregational journey.

In this six-year period, we commit ourselves to the theme, *FMSC in mission: let us renew the evangelical enthusiasm to embrace and give life with the Heart of Christ crucified.*

The extended General Council, held in Gemona in May 2019, took on the task of raising awareness of all our missionary realities in the world and urging them to live this extraordinary missionary month by participating in the programs of the dioceses, parishes or even with our own specific activities.

THE MISSIONARY MONTH in the Province “S. Maria degli Angeli”

GEMONA-MOTHER HOUSE

Pope Francis, in the solemn Vespers of October 1 in memory of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, opened the “extraordinary missionary month 2019” in St. Peter’s Basilica. In his homily, he recalled that “*if the Church is not outgoing and missionary it is not Church*”.

With great devotion, Pope Francis has incensed the three icons of the patrons of the missions, representing different vocations, but always missionaries in the Church and has emphasized Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus, religious, Saint Francis Xavier, priest, Pauline Jaricot, lay person. “

Addressing all Christians “*Baptized and sent*” he said:” *The Lord asks you to make yourself a gift where you are, as you are, with those around you; not to suffer life, but to give it; not to cry on yourself, but to let yourself be buried by the tears of those who suffer.*

Courage, the Lord expects so much from you. He also expects someone to have the courage to leave, to go where there is most lack of hope and dignity, where many people still live without the joy of the Gospel ... But do I have to go alone? This is not right! If we have organizations and work plans in mind this is wrong! The Holy Spirit is the protagonist of the mission”.

In communion with the Church

Pope Francis concludes with the evangelical invitation: *“Go, the Lord will not leave you alone; testifying, you will discover that the Holy Spirit has come before you to prepare the way. Courage, brothers and sisters; courage, Mother Church: finds your fruitfulness in the joy of the mission!”*.



MISSIONARY VIGIL

On October 18 at 8:30 pm, about fifteen sisters from the Oasis and Motherhouse community participated in the Missionary Vigil scheduled by the Forane of Gemona in the Shrine of St. Anthony. To make the elderly and sick sisters of the motherhouse live this experience of a strongly missionary Church, the same Vigil was organized on October 20 at the motherhouse, at 3.30 pm in the infirmary and at 3.45 pm in the community church.



Among prayers, signs, readings and meditation on the Word of God, our specific missionary spirit that unites us, grew in our hearts. Sr. Nayomi Kumari presented the journey of her call to consecrated life in our Congregation and her missionary experience in India and Africa. All the sisters approached in procession to the bowl of holy water in memory of the Holy Baptism, the Sacrament of “Sending”.

MISSIONARY ROSARY

The missionary group assigned to the sisters of the motherhouse the preparation and animation of the “missionary Rosary” of the month of October open to all pastoral collaboration.

On the evening of October 25 at 8.30 pm the celebration began in front of the altar where everyone’s eyes stared at the statue of the missionary Madonna placed next to the great globe to indicate that the prayer was addressed to her who is ‘the Mother of all peoples’.

As the mysteries were announced and meditated with a passage from the Gospel, the coloured lamp representing a continent was brought.

The Marian litanies that presented to Mary the needs of all brothers and sisters in need of justice, truth, understanding and help in their lives, have been very significant.



At the end of the Holy Rosary, the animator presented to all the invitation: *“We lived this time of prayer in a missionary spirit in the mother house called” S. Maria degli Angeli’.* To her, our Mother, we have entrusted the expectations of all peoples with the Holy Missionary Rosary. In conclusion, we want to greet her with the song *“Madonna degli Angeli”*.

IN TRICESIMO - MADONNA MISSIONARIA

WITH MARIA “SERVANTS OF THE KINGDOM”

It was truly “extraordinary” this month of October 2019, that Pope Francis wished us to be full of commitment and missionary zeal. Strengthened by what the Holy Father suggested to us with his Message for the World Mission Day 2019, we did not want to miss any opportunity to express our “missionary” feelings wherever we are, embracing the whole of humanity in our hearts. Since the first Sunday of October, we have been asked by the Stigmatine Fathers of Gemona, to give our contribution in the Sanctuary of the Madonna Missionaria in Tricesimo that they themselves manage.

We responded with our characteristic passion and creativity, preparing before the altar, for every Sunday, some special signs of the Continent for which we were invited to pray.

Not only that, but above all some of our sisters (Sister Nayomi Kumari, Sister Alessandra Sartor and Sister Francesca Fiorin), had the joy of offering their missionary witness. Other sisters also participated in these solemn Eucharistic Celebrations, in which the missionary dimension of the universal Church was truly breathed.

From the height of its luminous throne, the sweet statue of the Madonna Missionaria welcomed the supplications of the faithful and presented them to the Good Lord, so that indeed his Kingdom of love, justice and peace may reach every person on earth.



PIANO D'ARTA IN MISSION

Another particularly missionary moment, has been lived in the Parish of Piano d'Arta, on Sunday 27 October, with the Celebration of the Word, in the absence of the Priest since he was engaged in other neighboring churches.

On this occasion also, Sister Nayomi made her mission testimony. After thanking those present, for their generous help to our Central African mission from the very beginning, she shared to the faithful her “being a missionary” in the mission of Maigaro. In particular, she focused on narrating the harsh trials of the civil war, the dramatic situation in which people are forced to live. The numerous injured and sick people who were brought into our hospital. She shared her experience of two cases of girls who were seriously ill, which she herself treated and followed up to healing. They were meaningful messages of love that is generously and sometimes even heroically expressed.



Yes, because we too are the “Church of God on mission in the world”, a “Church going out to the extreme limits, which requires constant and permanent missionary conversion”.

It is a mandate that touches us closely, precisely because we are Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, so desired by our Founders.

A MISSIONARY WEEK IN CENTOCELLE

“Celebrating this month will help us to rediscover the missionary meaning of our bond of faith to Christ, faith freely received as a gift in Baptism.

It is a mandate that touches us closely: I am a mission, you are a mission, and every baptized person is a mission. Whoever loves moves, is pushed out of himself, is attracted and attracts, gives himself to the other and weaves relationships that generate life.

Each of us is a mission in the world because it is the fruit of the love of the Lord...” Pope Francis



The month of October is always an important occasion to reflect on our personal mission, but also on the missionary reality of the Church and of the Congregation. We have organized a missionary week in our school Maria Immacolata in Rome, with various activities suitable for all ages.

An exhibition of images of distant beautiful countries and images of courageous and loving women have spoken to the hearts of many students, teachers and parents.

Coming to visit the Exhibition, the students found a missionary sister ready to give her testimony and to whom they asked interesting and curious questions. Many children have declared themselves ready for the missions; we need to take care of and help this desire to grow through accompaniment and discernment.



The children of the Primary School took part in an artistic competition entitled *“Missionaries: a beautiful adventure for all”*. The drawings were numbered and displayed in the exhibition hall, then submitted to the vote of all visitors. Great enthusiasm was raised and visitors increased significantly. Another section has been reserved for the Missionary Fair; the most frequented and repeatedly visited part. Handicraft objects from our Missions of the Philippines and Albania were displayed; objects made during the activities that the missionaries carry out for the promotion of women, besides the fruit of the industriousness of our elderly sisters retired from the activity, but still very active!



The final day was a day of prayer attended by students and teachers. We wanted to conclude by offering a moment of silence, of reflection suitable for each level.

At the center of the altar the five continents were placed as a sign of the universality of our prayer. For each continent there was a sign, a symbol, an activity.

Here are some signs: the globe on which the children attached the name of the peoples who are still forced to leave their land in search of a chance for a dignified life. A special prayer was for them.

The soil with so many seeds has been another sign; a sign of the many cultures and of the many peoples that inhabit Africa.

The children prayed for these people to care for each other by building a new civilization of love. With great seriousness and devotion, they have sown their seed in the soil and have promised to accompany its growth.

Another sign: the flowers of different species with which to celebrate the beauty of creation and prayer has been offered for the peoples of Oceania to take care of the life and beauty of creation and to live as brothers and sisters in respect of different cultures.

At the end, for all, there has been the sign of the water of Baptism that gives us the joy of being Christians and of belonging to the Church: each child has renewed his/her Yes to Jesus and has traced a sign of the cross with holy water.



A MISSIONARY GESTURE of Missionary Childhood in Cusco

Various activities were carried out in Cusco, in the Archdioceses to celebrate the extraordinary missionary month desired by Pope Francis.

In our parish, Nuestra Señora del Carmen, we have lived this month in a special way with the children of missionary childhood.



The children were motivated to make a missionary gesture and to make it happen they prepared a postcard with the image of Mary, the missionary rosary and an image of Jesus with the children.

The children themselves painted all these images.

The objective of this activity was to give the children clear idea that we are all missionaries. We invited them to go out and make a missionary gesture towards the elderly men and women who could be found on the street or at home.

This was Sunday 27 October in the morning in the hour of missionary childhood. The motto that accompanied and motivated the activity was: “*My mission is to announce Jesus*”.

The dynamics of this gesture was the following:

1. Walk and look for the elderly at home or on the street.
2. Greet them and present yourselves as the ‘missionary children’ of the parish.



In communion with the Church

3. Invite them to the prayer by praying 5 Hail Mary, one per continent, for their health and for the needs of the elderly and their family.
4. Make the sign of the cross on their forehead telling: 'the Lord bless you'.
5. Offer each elder a postcard of the Virgin Mary, of Jesus, of the rosary and of the sign that we are missionaries.
6. Offer them the food grains to each elder person, the grains that have been collected or brought by the collaboration of all the members of the missionary childhood, contributing each one in their own possibilities.

This was a simple but meaningful missionary gesture, which created much enthusiasm to the children.



Not all the children were able to participate; however, those who were present felt very happy.

We also felt very happy in conveying the message to the children through their own gesture, that "*We are mission, we announce Jesus*".

Sr. Esther M. Quinde C.



WE ARE BAPTIZED and SENT in MISSION

The youth ministry of the parish of Nuestra Señora del Carmen for the extraordinary missionary month organized a mission experience for young people, to make them work with the children of the communities in a meeting that took place in the parish of the Virgin of the Assumption of the Choquepata sector at 3 hours away from Cusco. The objective of this mission with the youth was to promote in them the commitment to work in groups, to strengthen unity and to build relationship among them as a fraternity, sharing their talents received from God for the good of others. The program of this meeting guided and encouraged by the youth themselves, with the help of Sr. Esther responsible for the pastoral care of the Missionary Youth, was the following:

- Presentation of youth to children.
- Prayer of the missionary month.
- Animation of songs and dynamics performed by the youth
- Theme: Baptized - Sent.



Biblical foundations for the baptized: Galatians 3, 26-27 and for the “sending” Jer. 1.5; Jer 1.7; Mt28, 19; Mk 3.14.

Based on these passages, we set reflection and sharing.

The following were presented for the group works:

- an apron as a sign of service, just as Jesus taught us on Holy Thursday. Every baptized person is called to serve freely and to go out of himself to meet his brother and sister;
- missionary sandals as a sign of going towards others both through prayer and through missionary action such as visiting those in need.
- Explanation of the value of the missionary rosary.
- Sharing of objects brought by young people themselves to give them to others.
- Agape with what the young people themselves had prepared.

The young people participated in this mission with determination, joy, availability and spontaneity; all made their talents available. Some of them prepared the food for the group on that day. Others helped in the dynamic activities group work, preparing prayer, delivery of materials and the snacks for the children.



A great lesson can be drawn from their commitment that they are sensitive to the needs of others and show their availability in sacrificing their time and energy for the purpose.

They need our direction to persevere in it. They are willing to let the Lord act in their lives and know how to give themselves with love. It was a wonderful experience for them, to leave their environment, live and share another reality that would help them to grow strong in their ability to work together.

Sr. Esther M. Quinde C.

**EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH
IN THE NOVITIATE - CARMEL NAGAR**



Together with the Church, we celebrated the extraordinary Missionary Month in our Formation House.

Such events of the Church not only make us to participate and organize some activities but also make us aware that we belong to a Missionary Congregation.

We had every day the prayer of extraordinary Missionary month and Mission Rosary in our chapel.

On 13 October we had Missionary Eucharistic Adoration in Solemn way. It was very good experience for us especially for the novices to deepen their missionary Spirit.

This beautiful event reminding us the principal aim of our Holy Institute that is *“to assist, even personally, the holy Apostolic Missions.*

Therefore, the sisters are to go to the places of the infidels to carry out this purpose”. (Chapter of Holy Missions). So we are reminded during this time to do something extraordinary to celebrate the mission of our sisters, women, men and children all around the world.

We also joined with parish level mission activities such as daily visiting the families, teaching the catechism including non-Christians and reciting the Rosaries in families etc.



At the end of the month, on October 31 we had special rosary and procession with the statue of Mother Mary from our chapel along with our parish priest and parishioners.

This followed by the celebration of the solemn Holy Eucharistic in our Parish Church.

Thus we concluded our Extraordinary Mission Month of October 2019.

MISSIONARY PRAYER IN GROTTE DI CASTRO

October is the month dedicated to the Holy Rosary and to the Missions.

We are convinced that the most important thing in order to live this month effectively is to intensify prayer. In the parish, there is Eucharistic Adoration every Wednesday morning and the rosary in the afternoon on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with the children who are attending catechism classes.

In our chapel, we have resumed the Eucharistic Adoration every Sunday in the afternoon, happy to welcome all those who wish to participate.

This month we have prayed in a special way for the Missions, following the indications of Pope Francis who announced this year the month of October as the “extraordinary Missionary month” with the theme *Baptized and Sent; the Church of Christ in Mission in the world*.

We, the community of Fr. Gregory at Grotte di Castro feel deeply committed and responsible, try to be witnesses in this mission, in harmony with the Pope’s intention. On Sunday 20, the World Mission Sunday, the parish priest with the children and the youth held a small sale of sweets at the door of the church, while we sisters prepared a missionary symbol (next to the altar) starting from the Cross, with saris, ribbons and candles with the missionary colours that indicate the five continents.



At the center, we placed the illuminated globe to ensure that everyone felt committed to help each brother and sister in difficulty without looking at the color of the skin or the language. Jesus gave His life for us all and we Missionaries are called to give it to all the brothers and sisters whom we meet in our daily reality.

THE TIME OF CREATION TO CELEBRATE THE GOD WHO LOVES LIFE

In the message for the world day of prayer for the care of creation, Pope Francis invited everyone to “devote oneself to the prayer which is born from an appropriate initiative in the ecumenical sphere. It was named as *Time of Creation*, a period of more intense prayer and action for the benefit of the common home that opens today, 1 September, the *World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*, and will end on 4 October, in memory of St. Francis of Assisi”.

Pope Francis has indicated this time as:

“The time to get used to praying immersed in nature, where gratitude is born spontaneously to God the Creator. St. Bonaventure, singer of Franciscan wisdom, said that creation is the first “book” that God opened before our eyes, so that by admiring its ordered and beautiful variety, we were led back to love and praise the Creator. In this book, every creature has been given to us as a ‘word of God’.”

The time to reflect on our lifestyles, how our daily choices in food, consumption, travel, use of water, energy and so many material goods, are often reckless and harmful. In many ways, we make control over creation. Let us make a change by adopting simpler and more respectful lifestyles!

The time to take prophetic actions. Many young people are raising their voices all over the world, invoking courageous choices ... The young people remind us that the Earth is not a good to be wasted, but a legacy to be transmitted; that hoping for tomorrow is not a good feeling, but a task that requires concrete actions today “.



On October 4, as a concrete sign, Pope Francis planted an holm oak tree from Assisi in the Vatican Gardens. This celebration was also intended to seal an end and a beginning. The end of the ‘Time of Creation’ and the beginning of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon region. In fact, during the prayer the Synod was consecrated precisely to St. Francis of Assisi.



The ceremony of planting the tree was opened with a prayer led by Father Julio Bunader, vicar general of the Order of Friars Minor. He prayed, *“O God, good Father and giver of all good, we bless you for having given us to share life with so many other creatures; for them and with them we praise and we pray, continue to pour out your Spirit on the universe and to show your glory in it”*.

Before planting the holm oak, eight people representing indigenous peoples and of other realities, including from the group of migration and sustainable development, brought a small bag. Inside there was land from various symbolic places, including the Amazon, India and Assisi, deposited at the foot of the tree. Then Pope Francis, two indigenous representatives, Cardinal Hummes and Cardinal Baldisseri planted the holm oak. A simple and profound gesture that symbolizes conversion to integral ecology, intermingled by the musical accompaniment of the Canticle of the Creatures.



The reflection of Sister Liliana Franco, president of the Confederation of Religious of Latin America and the Caribbean, recalled the profound meaning of this gesture:

“Sowing means knowing the opportune moment, bowing, caressing the earth and humbly trusting what is not seen, organizing everything and being surprised by the creative fruitfulness of God, who is able to make graces and fruits abound, even in the most sterile fields”.

“The testimony of St. Francis of Assisi and of other people who have understood the greatness of God’s work shows us that this path leads to joy, to a transforming commitment and to peace”.

The ceremony concluded with the prayer of the Our Father led by Pope Francis.

We Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart welcome the invitation ...

Pope Francis' invitation resounded for us as a truly special call; our Franciscan and Missionary identity required an involvement on the part of our entire religious Family. The news of the Time of Creation from September 1 to October 4 had already reached us when the General Council met with all the provincial superiors for the extended General Council.

On that occasion, a commitment was made to take care of "our common home", to "plant trees" in the various missionary realities, involving all communities and apostolic activities, taking as a date, if possible, September 17. In all the Provinces, there has been a generous and joyful response. Activities have been carried out in the communities and in the apostolic realities especially in schools to raise awareness among students, teachers, families, etc. The days of creation were celebrated in many places with so much creativity, Franciscan sensitivity and concrete commitment to improve, even with our small commitments, the present and the future of our "common home". We report the articles that have come to us, knowing that much more has been done than what we share with you.



NEW TREES FOR THE ASISIUM PARK

Each year, the 'Institute Asisium' celebrates the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Patron Saint of Italy, with solemnity and joy. A day of prayer, of meetings for the parents, for the children of the various classes and for the staff; all conducted focusing to this special event, and was culminated with the celebration of Holy Eucharist in the park. It was truly a moment of warm feelings awaited by all. Those



particularly excited were the children of class fifth who, according to the tradition of the school, accompanied the children of class first, following in an orderly line that lead them through the way to the large square where the altar was set. The choir of the parents, of a small group of sisters and children, on the notes of the song "the canticle of creation", accompanied the procession at the beginning of the Celebration. The words of the song seemed intentional to illuminate the journey forward of the children who proceeded before the three priests and invited everyone to praise the Lord for the creation. The Holy Eucharist was celebrated by Fr. Alfredo Tedesco, vice parish priest of the Parish of St. Clare at the Giochi Delfici in Rome, who is the teacher of religion and a spiritual guide of the children of the middle and higher classes, Don Antonio Saturno, the parish priest of St. Philip parish at Grottarossa and Don Bonifacio Sarte Lopez.



This year the Feast of St. Francis, in Asisium has taken a very particular meaning .It was the closing day of the period of celebration of the ‘Time of creation’. In fact, on the same day, while we were celebrating in the school park, Pope Francis planted a tree, a holm oak of Assisi, in the Vatican gardens, to emphasize the importance of this special time. It has been the first visible gesture of Pope Francis after his invitation to the world Church to celebrate this “period of more intense prayer and action for the benefit of the common home”.

Don Alfredo, in his homily, managed to attract everyone’s attention: small and big, helping everyone to reflect on the many gifts we receive: education, family, schoolmates, teachers ..., the wonders of creation that we must together learn to protect, following the example of St. Francis.



At the end of the Eucharistic Celebration attended by students, parents, teachers, sisters and even some ex-students, Fr Alfredo Tedesco blessed in a climate of prayer and emotion, the saplings of trees and fruit plants that had already been kept ready.

In communion with the Church

Immediately after the blessing, the various classes, as organized with their class teachers moved to the places allotted and kept prepared to plant the trees. In different places of the park, along the ways, in front of the classrooms, near the playground, everywhere it has been enriched with new trees.

The voices of joy of one class intertwined with the songs of another, while each tree planted followed an applause of joy and celebration. The message was clear for everyone: *let us save nature, save our creation.*

The middle and high school classes concluded the morning by organizing a picnic in the school park, while some primary school classes attended the performance of “San Francesco” in the theater, which was enacted by their parents.

For all of this and for the gift that this Institute is, heartfelt thanks for those who made this day special to all our children and to us parents.

Participating in these initiatives we live out our faith and the hope of a better world.



Alleluia, Alleluia ... our feast must not end ... we are the feast!

Thanks to all with a heart full of joy.

One of the parents

Praised be You, Lord, for the trees, the fruits and the grass.

Here we are: finally, the day has come to experience unity once more and feel like sisters of the same family. On this day of the feast of the Stigmata of our father Francis, we feel particularly united to the sisters of our Congregation, in solidarity with Creation, in communion with the Franciscan Family and the universal Church. With love and enthusiasm, each community has organized itself to make this moment more meaningful and prayerful.

It was a matter of getting ready in the right way: first of all we had to agree on the choice of the tree and the right place to plant it. All the Sisters of the Province of “Saint Louis IX” felt engaged and contributed enthusiastically to making this occasion so beautiful.

Here, then, the Sisters of the provincial community “St. Anthony” Le Mans, gathered in the chosen place: someone with a shovel and other instruments, someone helped by crutches, someone accompanied and supported by a younger sister. It was necessary to complete the hole previously prepared by the gardener.



The rain was part of the party and made this moment even more characteristic. When everything was ready, Sr. Elisabeth took the tree in her arms and placed it in the pit prepared, while all the Sisters sang the praises to God Most High.

This apricot tree was heavy to transport, but what a satisfaction to see gathered almost all the community that participated, praised and sang together “the Canticle of the Creatures”. Then, in the refectory, we warmed ourselves with a hot herbal tea.

“In Kretinga we were very happy with the proposal made by Sr. Paola Dotto, our Superior General. In the community, we agreed on the tree to plant and on the most suitable place.

Many people contributed to the realization of this project and rejoiced with us by participating in this action of solidarity with creation: certainly, we, the three sisters of the community, but also the Franciscan tertiaries who helped us choose the place and have dug the hole on the day of the Stigmata of St. Francis.

All three of us went to buy the tree that would later remind us of this beautiful community and congregational moment.

Later on, we also involved young people. The following Friday, the day of their weekly meeting, the young people had a special place in this action.

After having explained to them the profound meaning of this gesture, the bond it had with all the sisters of the Congregation and the thought of Pope Francis, each was busy to complete the hole, praying with the words of St. Francis and singing the Canticle of the Creatures.

Everyone will cherish this wonderful moment of sharing and joy in their hearts.

Now, from the window, we can admire it and wait for the spring of sharing the joy to admire the beauty of its flowers”.

Every community lives a different reality, and this is how the sisters of the community of “Our Lady of the Sacred Heart” (Paris) lived this moment in simplicity and in communion and are now waiting to taste the figs.

Again: the two communities of “S. Maurice and S. Francis”, gathered together to: choose, dig, plant, praise and sing the canticle of the creatures.

“The ground is not hard to dig and so we ourselves have made the hole, with joy and enthusiasm. It was also necessary to add some fertilizer, which the peasants offered us benevolently”.

Often the two communities come together to share moments of fraternity, and this was an additional opportunity for sharing the joy.

In the community “S. Giovanni XXIII” of Tavannes everything went differently. We had to agree first with the pastoral council, considering that trees can only be planted here after October 20 ... so we had to wait. However, this did not prevent us from preparing the ground.

On September 17, the president of the parish council, Mr. Bernard Koller, came and symbolically dug five small holes in honor of the Stigmata.

A few days later, the gardener digs the pit to plant the plum tree.

From the windows of the chapel, we can now rejoice and wait for spring to see it bloom.



LET US PLANT A TREE

During the last Extended General Council, among the many proposals, one was launched perfectly in accordance with the common concern for the suffering of the Earth, our “Common House”, a suffering for which we are all responsible with our models of life.

In the spirit of *Laudato sii*, the campaign “Let’s plant a tree” was promoted within the Congregation, one for each community on September 17. It was important to adhere not only ideally but concretely to the “Let’s plant a tree” campaign to ensure that the planet welcomes new trees that absorb carbon dioxide - the main cause of the greenhouse effect and the consequent climate disasters - to release



oxygen. Therefore, we must be exemplary workers of that ecological conversion of which Pope Francis speaks in *Laudato sii*. Conversion that we must also implement on a social, ethical and cultural level with the contribution of politics and the economy.

The most prompt to carry out the project were the Communities of Viale Saffi and Duronio, both serving the elderly and the sick. They took the opportunity for a deeper reflection of the environmental problems that afflict us and to organize a celebration during which they planted two plants.

In Viale Saffi an olive tree and in Duronio a pomegranate tree, well-considered choices considering not only the choice of location, the climate and the conformation of the land, but also the meaning of the plants themselves.



Our sisters of the two communities prepared a simple liturgy of the Word, which included the blessing of the plant and finally concluded with the singing of *Laudato sii*.

In 1953 the French writer Jean Giono wrote a small, precious book: *The Man Who Planted Trees*. Story of a shepherd who, alone, repopulates a deserted valley with greenery, to which he is sentimentally bound. He loves that place because he knows how to look at it with the eyes of the possibility, of the future, of hope. He cultivates that landscape with his eyes, even before his hands.

Every tree is basically a right. The rights are not enough to affirm them: we must protect them day by day, make them grow in height and in the conscience of each of us.

IN LATIN AMERICA

A TREE SIGN OF THE CARE FOR THE COMMON HOUSE - Tambobamba

Responding to the call of our Congregation and the Provincial Superior Sr. Marcela Uribe, to plant a tree in every community, as a symbol of the “care of the Common House” on September 17, where we remember the feast of the Stigmata of our father Saint Francis, the community at Tambobamba carried out this activity accompanied by the children of the college of Nazareth, by the students of EI San Antonio de Padua, by the teachers and parents.



We started this celebration with a prayer that referred to the care of nature and also to the Feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis. We sang a Franciscan hymn and later a group of students made a symbolic presentation of the “Canticle of creatures”. Then we all went to the place selected by the sisters of the religious community to plant the tree and a representative of each class of the school, planted the trees. We finished by reading the intentions that everyone, the religious community, the children of the college, the students of the I.E. San Antonio de Padua, teachers and parents committed themselves to practice during the year.

OUR PROPOSALS

- 1- Take care of our common home.
- 2- Do not use disposable objects.
- 3- Treat our neighbor well.
- 4- Do not throw rubbish everywhere.
- 5- Water the plants.
- 6- Take care of creation.
- 7- Save water and electricity.



LAUDATO SI...

In the community of PUERTO VARAS



“Praised be you, my Lord”, sang Saint Francis of Assisi. In that song he reminded us that our common home is a sister, with whom we share existence and like a good mother who welcomes us into her arms. This is the motivation for the celebration that took place around the figure of St. Francis of Assisi and mother Earth. Each class has chosen as a symbol for Holy Mass a tree decorated with reflections about what a love for sister earth means to a Franciscan.

In the ceremony, it represented the renewal of the promise to take care of our planet by acting not only as environmentalists but also as human persons who dialogue, reflect and act as agents of change.

We consider that as a religious community it is extremely important to immerse ourselves in this way of appreciating life and taking care of it, both inside and outside our soul so that the generations to come, which are our children and young people, remember in their lives to say as Saint Francis of Assisi: “Praised be my Lord”.

In the community: ”Santa Maria degli Angeli” SANTIAGO del CILE



As a community on September 17, we bought a tree that had been chosen by agreement: the choice fell on a small peach tree, which already had new shoots and flowers that helped to create a beautiful image of God’s Creation.

The peach tree chosen and planted by the community, has acquired for each one not only the desire to contribute to the care of creation, but has also meant the grace to share the gifts that we all possess, also because we are a newly formed community.

In our tree, we can see the invitation to bear many fruits that will reflect the providential love of God the Father. Peace and Goodness!

A small tree narrates...

I am a tree that was planted by the sisters of the community of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cusco - Peru. I find myself at the entrance to the parish of Our Lady of Carmel in General Ollanta, in one of the corners so that when the parishioners enter for the Eucharistic Celebration they can see me. I have two companions: hydrangeas and geraniums, I am in the middle of them. Since they planted me, I have not grown much, but I have spread my branches to the sides. From time to time, they give me water.

Despite being protected in the place where I am, sometimes there are children throwing stones at me; I am still growing little by little, because I feel protected by the sisters who visit me to see how I am, they talk to me and remove the stones.



OUR ECOLOGICAL “SIGN” COCHABAMBA

Pope Francis, in his Encyclical *Laudato Sii*, invites everyone to reflect and participate in an authentic human ecology (LS 5). “*There are not two separate crises, one environmental and one ecological, but a single and complex socio-environmental crisis that today threatens the planet and humanity; where the poor are the main victims*”. Pope Francis calls us to “*hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*” (LS 49) “.

Carefully accepting this call of Pope Francis in the encyclical *Laudato Sii*, also on the initiative and invitation of our religious Family, on September 17, the feast of the impression of the sacred Stigmata of St. Francis, the sisters of the community of San Francisco together with the children and young people have left an ecological mark by planting two “mimosa” trees. This event was preceded by meetings to give reasons for greater awareness and commitment, in all our mission fields, to care for the common home. As Franciscans, we have a great responsibility to promote, to care and to love our sister, mother earth.

With this gesture of planting trees we intend to promote the idea that “care for creation” is a different model of development, fair, supportive and sustainable, with people who feel themselves citizens of the world and are willing to get involved and change own consumption habits and lifestyle focused on having.

It is urgent to combat this throwaway culture and the indifference that underlies the socio-environmental crisis. It is important instead to engage with small but concrete gestures like this, which seem insignificant but are the beginning of a new culture that takes care of fragility, of communion and wants to live on austerity.



THE SEASON OF CREATION CELEBRATION IN THE HOLY FAMILY PROVINCE

There are many initiatives taking around to safe guard the Mother Earth, our Common Home. The celebration of the season of creation is one of that moment, where the people made aware of the need for a special attention and concern in curing the nature.

“Creation, says Pope Francis, is the fruit of God’s love: His love for each of His creatures, and especially for man, to whom He has given the gift of creation, as a place in which “we are invited to discover a presence”.

The province Holy Family decided to plant 50 trees during the season of creation, distributing the responsibility to the communities where it was possible.



All the communities followed the initiative, except the communities at Mumbai and Chennai, where they do not have the land. The communities where there are hostels and schools the children and the teachers were given an awareness and responsibility about our mother earth making them part of the program with so many activities.

The celebration began in the chapel with a moment of animated prayer; praising and thanking God for the wonderful gift of creation.

Then the sisters followed in procession to the courtyard where they had prepared the land for the planting. Joyfully and gratefully, they planted fruit trees and shade trees that will grow as solace for the future generation.

During the prayer and also while planting the trees, the sisters joyfully sang the canticle of the creatures and honored our father St. Francis, who is the patron saint of ecology.

It was indeed a wonderful experience in which we felt our Mother earth is rejoicing over our simple acts of concern for her.





Apart from this, earlier all the communities in the province have composed the poem, “Laudato Sii”, praising God for their presence and mission where they are.

In the poem, they referred the various apostolates they accomplish, the beauty of the nature and the style of life in that particular mission.

It is indeed a recognition and appreciation of the blessings of the Creator; thanking and praising Him for everything.

Yes, God made everything beautiful and has given us the earth as a gift and as a duty, to take care of it and to answer for it; we are not its owners. We are called to honor the Creator, by honoring creation and loving each other.



IN THE NOVITIATE IN CARMEL NAGAR

The Season of Creation is celebrated throughout the Christian world from September 1, the feast of Creation, to October 4, the feast of St Francis of Assisi, and the theme for this year is “*the web of life*”..

This year the Catholic Church has united with the Orthodox, the Anglicans and the World Council of Churches in celebrating this special time. So we too participated in celebrating the season of creation on 8 September, through planting the fruit trees and conducting prayer service as a sign to protect the natural environment.



We had the Procession with plants, flowers and fruits of the harvest grown in our garden and during the procession, we sang the Canticle of Creatures to thank our Creator God for His wonderful creation.

After the procession, each member of our community lighted a candle on the altar as a sign to safeguard the Creation and then we pray: *O Creator God, open our hearts and our eyes to the wonders of your presence among us. May we see the sign of your beauty within and around us and ever be in awe of the simple gifts of life. Help us to reach beyond ourselves and to give thanks for all of your creation that shares this universe with us: peoples of every nation, animals of every*



species, all forms of vegetation, the planets, stars, and all the elements. We pray this in union with the incarnate Word of God in whose image everything was created. Amen

After keeping a pause, we had the scripture reading:- Job 12:7-10

Then after a short pause, we had prayers of petition for different intentions.

With the concluding prayer, we invited each one to make a personal silent commitment to care for “our common home”. Then we together prayed the Laudato si of our community.

LAUDATO SII (some phrases)

Praise the Lord for the morning dew and the sunrise and sunset, which inspire us to raise our hearts to God the Creator in thankfulness and love...

Praise the Lord for the Carmel Nagar for with its Earth's natural environment and beauty, which protect us from pollution and keep our lungs healthy...

Praise the Lord for the St. Joseph Parish Church where we all are nourished with Christ's Word, Body and blood.

Praise the Lord for St. Joseph studentate an abode of love and prayer.

Praise the Lord for the gift of St. Joseph Studentate and its pastoral and apostolic activities.

Praise the Lord for St. Joseph who is the patron and protector of St. Joseph studentate.

Praise the Lord for the gift of our good novices and sisters for we live the unity in diversity because we belong to different parts of India.

Praise the Lord for our beautiful chapel the centre of prayer, power and holiness, where we encounter with our Lord and draw strength and energy.

Praise the Lord for our novitiate house, where many receive and gain wisdom & knowledge and to be moulded as the perfect followers of Christ and true members of the F.M.S.C.

Praise the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity who guides and leads us in every moment of our life.

After the final blessing, we distributed saplings, flower plants and fruit trees, for planting in our garden. Flowers are the makeup on the face of the Mother earth and we sisters and Novices were very happy to plant and take care of the nature because the nature is the art of God and it wears the colours of the Spirit.



INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND CATHOLIC PRISON PASTORAL MINISTRY

A meeting to promote and support the care of people in prison

In many local Churches, social pastoral care does not receive enough attention and even less attention and resources are devoted to prison ministry. There is a great diversity of situations and challenges that this pastoral ministry has before us, such as, for example the spiritual and material attention of the prisoners, of their families and of those who have already finished their time in prison and have returned to freedom, as well as the processes of reconciliation with the victims of crime.

For this reason, the Dicastery for the service of integral human development had given an attention to help this pastoral service with a clearer support and guidance. They wanted to invite prison chaplaincies from different parts of the world to the Vatican for an international meeting on 7 and 8 November 2019 in order to listen to the different experiences and the innumerable problems that this ministry encounters. Among the participants, about forty coming from 35 countries, participated, Sr. Miriam Oyarzo fmsc, together with Fr. Eleuthere Makuta ofm from Istanbul - Turkey.

They have been serving for 4 years in the Bakırköy women's high security prison in Istanbul, assisting foreign and non-Christian women in that country. Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery, expressed right from the beginning of the first day, the purpose of the meeting. In an atmosphere of fraternity and communion he told us his concern for this noble service. In addition to the exchange of experiences between the various leaders of this pastoral ministry, he proposed to us:

- Identify the challenges and needs experienced by this pastoral dimension in the ecclesial and social sphere.
- Know the contributions of this specific pastoral ministry to integral human development, as well as the resources and initiatives that it has developed in the various national and regional realities.
- Strengthen the collaboration between the DSSUI and the different persons of the Catholic prison ministry.

The most significant moment that the participants had, was the Audience with the Holy Father Francis on November 8 at the Sala Clementina.



Pope Francis wanted to launch a new appeal, “*The prison serves to re-educate, not to repress*” urging all of us Christians not to punish with indifference those who leave the cell, but favoring work and social reintegration.



Pope Francis condemned the abuse of preventive detention and repeated, *“The prison situation continues to be a reflection of our social reality and a consequence of our selfishness and indifference synthesized in a culture of waste”*.

On this occasion, Sr. Miriam had the opportunity to present to the Holy Father an envelope containing various letters from the inmates in the prison in Turkey. Those letters spoke of their stories and their suffering. *“They pray for his Holiness and they asked me to greet you and ask for your blessing,”* said Sr. Miriam to Pope Francis, who replied: *“Continue to do this beautiful service in Turkey and even if you find difficulties ... continue ... and do it with joy ... always with a smile”*.

Let us listen to the words of Sr. Miriam:

“I was able to tell His Holiness in those short minutes about our difficulties as persons in the field of prison ministry in a Muslim country. He listened to me very carefully and asked us to continue with a smile. Certainly, this pastoral ministry is not as easy or even easy to get to our nearly 300 foreign prisoners, with only one visit a month, of only one hour.

We try to do everything in our own small way, and fill the small joys that we live with them. We work with a wonderful ecumenical team: Sr. Kayane Dulkadiryan, Armenian Orthodox sister, Ali Kalkandelen, evangelical pastor, Fra Eleuthere Makuta, OFM and I, Sr. Miriam Oyarzo, fmsc.

Seeing ourselves all united for charity certainly reinforces the bonds of fraternity among the various Christian churches present in Turkey and this is an enormous wealth for our presence.

We are not only following prisoners in Bakırköy prison in Istanbul but also those who are in different prisons in Turkey and also some who have already finished their time in prison and are on probation.

Certainly it is a unique experience to accompany them to the point of freedom, up to that day when they take the plane and return home ... to write a new story ... as free womenno longer locked up”.

Sr Miriam Oyarzo, fmsc



**DIALOGUE OF PEACE:
IN the SQUARE A CIVIDALE IN THE SPIRIT OF FRANCIS**

From October 3 to 6 the first edition of the Franciscan Palio was held in Cividale. The Palio, in this first edition was dedicated to “Dialogues of Peace”. It is born from an idea of the Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, with the patronage of the Municipality of Cividale. It is now becoming one of the initiatives of the Circuit of the Franciscan Festival, with the intention to bring and actualize the beauty



of the Franciscan message through the means of encounter, art and prayer.

The program of the event was characterized by moments of prayer, animation in the square, music, activities for schools, meetings open to all people and exhibitions.

What is the Franciscan Palio?

The Palio was born, precisely, to bring and make present the beauty of the Franciscan message: fraternity, respect for Creation, dialogue, peace, joy ..., among the young, in the squares of the city and in schools. A competition has been proposed, aimed at schools of all levels of the Municipality of Cividale del Friuli, with the intention of inviting children and young people to reflect on peace, addressing this issue through creative language, which is particularly effective for conveying ideas and messages with expressive freedom and through shared participation.

The animation in the square, among the people, wanted to reach the maximum possible audience, to make known the universal message of St. Francis of Assisi.



We, too, Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart participated in it.

It was a positive experience, in which St. Francis united us and made us feel sisters of the wonderful Franciscan Family of friars, lay people of the Secular Third Order, families, young people, and above all made us feel part of the great gift of Creation.

In the square of Foro Giulio Cesare, some exhibition stalls had been set up to which the organizers (the brothers and sisters of the Third Secular Order) had given a name: Stall of Peace, of the Proclamation, of Sharing, of Listening, and of Meeting.

The Poor Clares were also present, thanks to the volunteers who had exhibited their products and an association promoting the products of the prison network.

We, Sr. Miranda, Sr. Valeria, Sr. Natalina, Sr. Lissy, Sr. Elodie, Sr. Mara, Sr. Adelina C., Sr. Treesa, Sr. Nayomi, Sr. Francesca, have committed to set up a stall so beautiful with the photos, clothes and typical objects from the various missions.

Thanks to Sr. Chiarfrancesca for her support in this regard.

The celebrative moments, the Transitus of the evening of 3 October, the Holy Mass on the day of St. Francis, the prayer for Peace, which concluded the Palio, were all well cared for and were the soul of the event.

Very significant was also the theatrical musical *“Simply rich”* proposed by the *“Controcorrente”* group, as well as the

testimony of the singer Nicole Cocceancig and the vocalist Kose, who intervened on Saturday morning during the award ceremony for the work of the schools.



The person
of St. Francis
is always new, it is
just like
the Gospel,
it is the good news
made flesh,
humanity, dialogue,
love, joy.

*Sr. Francesca Fiorin
e Sr. Mara Lorenzet*

**THE FRANCISCAN WEEK in the school “SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA”
Tambobamba - Peru**

The Franciscan week in the school “San Antonio de Padua” began on September 30 with different activities, every day. The first day the students were busy making drawings, using various different techniques.

On the second day, we committed ourselves to cleaning “the common home”: all the students cleaned and arranged the gardens and green areas.

On the third day, each class presented songs that referred to St. Francis.



On the fourth day, we celebrated the transit of our father San Francis of Assisi and the procession that ended with the celebration of the Eucharist.

At the end of the day, the parents and third grade students who were responsible for organizing the feast, offered refreshments. We thank them because they have donated a statue of St. Francis.

On 4 October, students, teachers, parents and the religious community participated in the solemn Eucharist of St. Francis, celebrated by Father Raymond Baptist OSA.

On the same day in the afternoon, the blessing of the animals was taken place. The students joyfully brought their pets and got them blessed.



CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI IN BAMENDA

All the Franciscan institutes of Bamenda, coming together on October 20, as a Family to celebrate the feast of our seraphic father, St. Francis of Assisi, which took place in La Verna, the spiritual center of the Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis.



This gathering could not normally take place on October 4, due to the socio-political crises taking place in southern Cameroon.

Despite what is happening, God has given us the grace to be there as missionaries and witnesses of reconciliation, justice and peace. It was very nice to get together as one family and celebrate together to encourage each other.

Our celebration began with Mass celebrated by the Capuchin fathers (OFM Cap).

The liturgy was animated by the young Franciscans, the Capuchin brothers and by the Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis. Our community sisters and the Fatima sisters shared the readings of the Eucharist. After the Eucharistic celebration, we took a break and then went to the hall for the second part of the celebration. There was a brief meeting to see how to plan the Franciscan meetings and also to establish the activities to be carried out together as a Franciscan family, how to visit the prisons, assist internally displaced persons, victims of the continuing crisis and other projects.

This brief meeting was followed by the animation and presentation of some recreational activities such as dances, sketches, and dramatizations, from the part of the young Franciscans, of the Franciscan laity and postulants and novices of other Franciscan institutes.

We concluded this celebration by sharing a fraternal meal. We thank the Almighty God for his infinite love, mercy, guidance and protection and for the grace, He has given us to be able to come together and celebrate as one family. We continue to pray for peace to our land.



In Egypt to celebrate the meeting of Francis with the Sultan



— 1219 800 2019 —

Colloquium Sancti Francisci cum Sultano
اجتماع القديس فرنسيس مع السلطان

The Formation Course for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Dialogue of the Franciscan Mission in Istanbul held from October 14-28, 2019 had a very special meaning this year. In fact, to celebrate the 800 anniversary of the meeting of St. Francis with the Sultan, the program included four days in Damietta. There were 26 participants in the course, including five Franciscan sisters and other Franciscan and lay friars from different parts of the world, from Italy, Africa, India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Korea and France. In addition to the three sisters of the Buyukada community who are now part of the organizational group, two Sisters from Cyprus, Sr. Gracykutty Puthiyadath and Sr. Elsapaola Pudussery participated.

The course began on October 14, the themes were: Anthropological Foundations, interreligious dialogue, challenges and the future. The course was very interesting and a challenge for us all, helping to live the interculturality, the beauty and the exchange of the richness of diversity.



WALKING TOGETHER

The pilgrimage to Egypt, from 24 to 28 October, was intended to commemorate the historic meeting of St. Francis and the Sultan Malik Al-Kamil in Damietta and the title given for this event was, “Walking together”.

The intense days in this beautiful and historic land of Egypt were lived through “encounters” with the Franciscan brothers of Cairo and “seeing” the cultural richness of Egypt such as the Pyramids, Cheops, Khafre and Menkaure, as well as the great Sphinx. It was a great opportunity to be able to contemplate the works and monuments that marked the history of an important civilization!

The center of the pilgrimage was the visit to Damietta, and to feel warmly welcome in this small city, the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary opened their home, their church to share what it means to live in this place so significant for us Franciscans.

In addition to welcoming the group, the sisters stated that it is beautiful and rich to live with their Muslim brothers and their Orthodox brothers “a reality that here in Damietta really lives without difficulty”.

Proof of this reality was the meeting with an Orthodox priest, “a neighbor” who narrated the legacy that this meeting between the Sultan and Francis left in this small city.

In this context of “meeting” Fr. Gwenole Jussset, ofm, held a conference to explain the various theological reflections today of this meeting; *what this meeting gave us and how Francis gave us guidelines to understand the reception and dialogue / meeting with his brother.*

To finish and commemorate the pilgrimage with a concrete and fraternal gesture, we visited the

Mosque of the city and met the Imam who witnessed his gratitude for being able to relive such an important meeting in his Mosque, like 800 years ago, between Francis and the Sultan.



Back in Cairo, in order to experience and touch the work and service of the Catholic Christian community in this Muslim country, the pilgrims visited the community of Sisters of Mother

Teresa of Calcutta in the neighborhood, known as the “city of garbage”. The missionary spirit has no limits and to see the service of these sisters, their sacrifices and their walking beside and together with the poorest ... to those who have no voice was an evidence of how the presence of the Church is alive wherever charity operates.

The friars of Cairo also accompanied the pilgrims on a journey to the north, to the oldest monasteries of the Coptic Church. Introducing us into this monastic world was undoubtedly a religious and mystical experience.

Touching and seeing the traditions of the monks, the stories of the saints of the early centuries and how they are still so alive today was still proof of how much Christianity is alive ... in the heart of these Muslim cities.

On a journey together, it enlightens us on to experience the richness of this event that this year has been reflected and lived, in order to grasp the essence of the encounter with the brother ... be it far or near ... known or unknown ... with the language of hospitality.



V MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL – FORMATIVE COMMISSION

Our Franciscan Missionary Charism in the Church for the world, yesterday and today.

From October 13 to 27 at the Generalate, there was the fifth meeting of the Sisters of the Historical-Formative Commission, coming from the various provinces of the Congregation. This meeting followed the theme “Baptized and Sent” of the Extraordinary Missionary Month 2019 that the Church celebrates this year. The Congregational theme was, “*Our Franciscan Missionary Charism in the Church for the world, yesterday and today*”.

The historical commission at this time had the opportunity to listen, to share fraternally and to deepen the missionary charism of the Congregation on the journey with the Church, in the Church and for the Church.

This meeting was not just a work on the documents, but an opportunity of formation to assimilate the Charism through the themes proposed by the speakers that Providence sent. The purpose of the historical commission, which is research and study of historical sources, as indicated in these meetings, must first help us better to understand more and more as a Family, the richness of the spiritual heritage that has been left to us by the Founders Laura Leroux and Father Gregory Fioravanti and by our first sisters.

The meeting also included the participation in the Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Pope Francis on World Mission Sunday, in St. Peter’s Basilica. It was an event that included our Conference in the journey of the missionary Church in the world today, confirming in some way the preciousness and responsibility of our charism that must be lived with fidelity and openness in the “today” of the world and of the Church. The words of Pope Francis in the homily confirmed this specific missionary identity of the Church Jesus also says to you, “*Go, do not miss the opportunity to testify!*” *Brother, sister, the Lord expects from you that testimony that no one can give in your place. May Heaven grant that you can recognize what that word is, that message of Jesus that God wishes to tell the world with your life, [...] so your precious mission will not be lost*”.

What instructions does the Lord give us to go to all? One, very simple instruction that is to make disciples, but beware His disciples, not ours.



The Church announces well only if she lives as a disciple and the disciple follows the Master every day and shares the joy of discipleship with others. Not conquering, obliging, making proselytes, but witnessing, putting himself on the same level, disciples with the disciples, offering with love that love we received... ..



Dear brothers and sisters, each of us has a mission, each of us “is a mission on this earth”. We are here to witness, to bless, to console, to raise, to transmit the beauty of Jesus. Courage, he expects so much from you! ... Go with love towards everyone, because your life is a precious mission, it is not a burden to suffer, but a gift to offer. Courage, without fear let us go to everyone!

The first speaker for this meeting was Fr. Delio Mendonça, S.J., who spoke about the history of the mission to understand the mentality, the cultures, and the changes, which took place from the mid-nineteenth century until today.

The second speaker Fr. Giancarlo Rocca, ssp, who for years has been following the meetings of the historical commission, led the assembly to understand how to write the history of an Institute emphasizing the importance of the methodology. After these two historical and methodological paths, the Providence guided the assembly to a profound reflection to treasure the charism of the Institute, through Professor Ulderico Parente, with the theme, *Missionary orientation of the Franciscan Order with the female Congregations of late 1800s*. Professor Parente got the knowledge of the Congregation through the fundamental sources (Writings of Fr. Gregory and Laura Leroux and the Historical Memoirs), and welcomed the Institute’s missionary charism with surprise and joy. His speech was guided by an intuitive question: *Did the Order of Friars Minor give a specific missionary mandate to the FMSC Sisters or did the Congregation make an “autonomous” journey?*



The Professor said that the sources are the only possibility to go back and to know the specific charism of the Institute. Giving a metaphorical image, he explained that if we imagine the charism as the water of a spring, the foundational charism is pure water, that is, a particle of God detached from Him, descended on earth and entered into the history of humanity.

Therefore, the Professor pointed out starting from the sources, that we are genetically missionary. The mission is part of our DNA.

It is a fact, desired by God for us. A time when the nationalistic spirit was so strong, our Founder, a Friar Minor of the Papal States and the Foundress, a French Duchess, proceeded against the spirit of that time, giving rise to an international Congregation!

The professor then translated the term “international” with the religious term “mission”.

The ‘mission’ flows in our DNA. We are missionaries, from birth, confirmed also by the departure of the sisters for missions to the United States almost immediately, to respond to the needs of the Church in that distant country. A few years later, other sisters also left for the mission in Turkey.

The missionary nature that is characteristic of the Institute, throughout history, walks together with the Church. Right from the foundation, we are called to respond to the needs of the Church wherever we are, participating in the continuous call of the Church today, like yesterday, to bring the Good news of the Gospel, the encounter with Christ to all.

This is the challenge for us, so that our journey with the Church always encounters the past through history, we live the present and be projected towards the future.

The present has a connection with the past; history should be re-interpreted to adapt to the present time. Evangelization, that is the evangelical mission of the Church, is not a question of continuity against change, tradition against modernity, text against context, but rather continuity and change, underlined also P. Mendonça.



“Our Franciscan Missionary Charism in the Church for the world, yesterday and today”, walks with history, evolves with history to unite the identity that belongs to us.

We give thanks to God for this gift to the Church, to treasure it, to respond with joy to our specific call.

The days of the meeting were rich and intense both for what was offered to us by the speakers and for the commitment of the sisters to search for documents, to register, to organize the material.

In the midst of this busy time of meeting, we had the joy of visiting our nearest communities, those of Centocelle and Viale Saffi.

Two very beautiful fraternal afternoons that made us taste the beauty of the fraternity, helped us to appreciate the gift of the life of so many sisters who marked the history of our Religious Family with generosity and love, those who are living the experience of illness and of the old age as true “mission” offered.



This meeting gave the opportunity to understand better, of what we are and where we go, with the Church and for the Church. The historical commission in the task it has, can only adhere to these words of Pope Paul VI. He says, *“Historical culture is necessary and, neglecting to be concerned and know about it and assuming it is ... a serious draw back... It starts from genius, from nature, from necessity of the Catholic life itself, which has a tradition, which is coherent, and develops a design over the centuries, indeed, one may well say, lives a mystery. It is Christ who works in time, it is He who writes, yes, it is He who tells his story! This is why our passages of paper are certainly echoes and remnants of that passage of the Church, indeed of the passage of the Lord Jesus in the history of the world. So here, having the cult, the passion of these papers ... of the documents ... of the archives ..., means, consequently having the cult of Christ. It is having the sense of the Church ... it is having the right feeling of man and of fragile humanity ... It means therefore, to give all of ourselves to offer those who will come the story of the true, tireless realization of the “Transitus Domini in mundo”, (passage of the Lord in the world).*



MISSION OF THE FMSC PROVINCIAL SECRETARIES at THE SERVICE of the SISTERS in the CHURCH

1st Meeting- Generalate, 6-17 November 2019

On Wednesday 6 November, the first meeting for the provincial secretaries began with the theme: *Mission of the FMSC provincial secretaries at the service of the sisters in the Church.*

An event expected for many years and desired by the previous general Superiors. It was therefore lived with gratitude and as a special gift of Providence.

Ten participating sisters from the various Provinces, who along with the General Council, deepened the important and delicate mission of the secretary.



The words of greeting of the Superior General, Sister Paola Dotto, who introduced the conference, expressed the significance of the service of the secretary as “... *A hidden treasure that has the advantage of promoting communication, the relationship.... The Spirit is creative within practices that may seem arid ... Documents, letters, various writings, minutes, reports etc. They are not to be considered only ‘writings’, but constant and renewed historical memory of the Congregation ... and therefore charismatic-missionary service*”.



A moment of reciprocal presentation and sharing of the realities in which the sisters live followed. In particular, attention has been paid to the critical situation and social and political disorder that is occurring in Chile, Bolivia and Lebanon, where some of our communities are located.

Guided by the General Councilor, Sister Augusta Visentin, we began to view the handbook, a precious tool to help and support the sisters who carry out this delicate service.

It was prepared, intending to bring uniformity to the various procedures done in different Provinces.

It also helps to collect indications on how to apply the rules in some circumstances with details and gives examples on how to prepare some documents.





In the days from 7 to 15 we were guided and inspired by various resources persons competent in the field presenting different aspects inherent in the “mission” of secretaries.

In the various meetings and days dedicated to us with **Fr Agostino Montan** (Canonist, member of the congregation of the Josephites of Murialdo), with his competence and fraternal affection, clarified and developed many important aspects in this mission like:

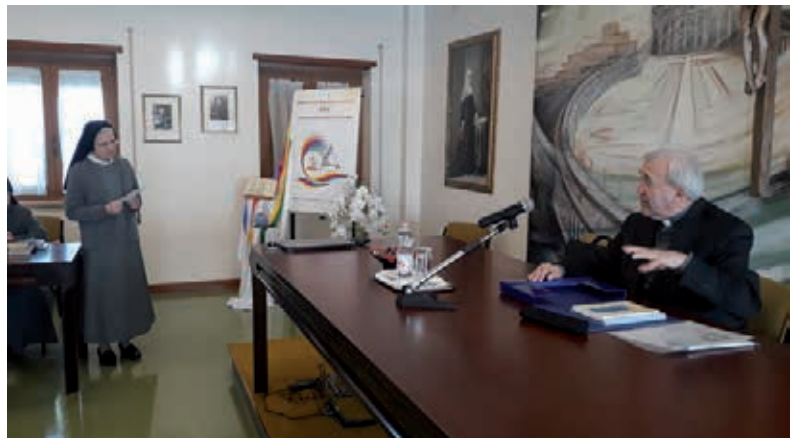
1. The governing power of the Institute:

The major superiors, in the name of the Church, enjoy personal, ordinary and executive power.

They have the office of: **TO TEACH - TO SANCTIFY - TO GOVERN**

In the exercise of authority, the Superiors are assisted by the Council according to the Constitutions.

2. The identity and duties of the provincial secretary according to the Code of Canon Law and the Constitutions of our Congregation.



Fr. Giovanni Rinaldi (Secretary General of the Friars Minor) presented the “Role and competences of the Provincial Secretary” presenting the characteristics of the general archive of the Order, and sharing his experience.





Claudia Avendaño, Secular Consecrated 'Regnum Christi' (female branch of the Legionaries of Christ) - (Archivist) she offered suggestions on how to manage an archive:

- Current archive: archive in use and in continuous growth, normally kept in the secretariat.
- Informatics archive: documents recorded in the current archive set up and transmitted with telematics tools.
- Archive of deposits: documents already implemented, but not yet intended for permanent conservation.
- Historical archive: selected documentation, which, after 50 years, is part of the historical archive.

In her presentation, she constantly stressed the importance of organizing the provincial archive well, by following established criteria, since the documents testify to the transmission of a message of faith, evangelization and missionary spirit and the sources present the historical development of the communities. If you remember, you keep the roots alive.

Fr. Orlando Manzo (Barnabita - Canonist of the S. Congregation for Congregations and Religious Institutes) presented the problem of the absences and separations of the members from an Institute:

- Absentia a domo - Exclaustration
- transfer to another Institute
- Exit from the Institute - Mandatory resignations etc. Evaluation of the Causes...
- the procedures to be introduced - the rights and duties of religious and major superiors - intervention by the general Council - readmission.



He accepted our questions by giving precise answers and almost always supported by concrete examples he himself experienced.

Sr. Antonietta: She accompanied the secretaries to visit the historical archive of the Congregation. It was arranged by her; there placed special cabinets with several internal shelves in which all the documentation indicated in a particular "Inventory Register" is located at hand to find easily the documents needed at the moment.

- She pointed out how some particular closets should be placed under lock and key to keep documents that require complete secrecy.
- She also made available the material kept in the archive of her office and concerning the historical cause of the Venerable Fr. Gregory.

It was a further opportunity to appreciate the beauty and richness of the history of our religious Family on the day we remembered the official beginning of the Institute (November 14, 1860). We recognized the great commitment and precious dedication of those who sought, put in order and organized all the material present.



In the mornings or afternoons when we had no speakers from outside, we continued the analysis and discussion of the handbook. We had the opportunity to meet Father Agostino Montan several times to present to him questions and doubts that arose during our discussions. In every area, we have received clear and precise answers to proceed with confidence in the articulated secretarial service. The presence of Father Agostino Montan was really a precious and reassuring one.

The moments shared among us and the sisters of the general house have consolidated in all the joy and beauty of our vocation and mission in the Church today. A very special moment was experienced with the sisters of the infirmary in viale Saffi. They welcomed us with joy and we spent some time with them sharing, stories, memories and singing popular songs dear to them. The sisters of the infirmary always await these visits with emotion, not only because of the presence of the sisters but also to get to know the different realities of the religious Family and ensure their prayers and offerings, which are constant and confident.



We all appreciated all that was offered to us to know better the directives of the Church and to acquire greater competence in the “mission” of secretaries entrusted to us. The fraternal climate and sharing among us has been important and beautiful, which has revived our belonging to the Religious Family and has given renewed enthusiasm to our commitment.

25 YEARS OF PRESENCE IN ALBANIA

“Go and announce a long love story”

“The Congregation strives to be present where the most urgent needs of the Church calls it.” So our Constitutions say and for us who have had the joy of being sent to the mission of Albania, these words have been fully realized. The adventure began in the now distant 1994, the day after the fall of the Communist regime in Eastern European countries, when the Holy Father John Paul II addressed a heartfelt appeal to the Churches and Religious Families to take care of them, the brothers and sisters who came out of the darkness of totalitarian regimes.

Our Congregation, conscious of its special missionary charism, responded generously and sent its sisters.

We left without security except that of the missionary mandate, without language except that of love, without projects, but with the great desire to listen to the people, to share, to welcome, to love.

Listening with the heart, we understood and then we started to work.

25 years have passed and, always remaining available to listen, we have succeeded in being faithful to our mission, essentially of evangelization also through social works, always favoring the poor, the sick, and the last of society.

We wanted to celebrate the anniversary of our arrival in this beautiful land not only in private, but also by sharing and making everyone participate in it on August 29.

Then we really saw that the seed, a tiny little one of our presence, has grown, has become a tree that begins to bear its fruits of peace, of peaceful coexistence, of mutual help.



We have three Albanian sisters and a young novice in formation.

The volunteers who helped us with many projects and still support us came from Spain, Italy and Austria.



They came from all over Albania to Dushaj for this important day; first of all our Bishop Mons. Simon Kulli, many priests of the Diocese of Sappa and of Scutari, our Franciscan brothers from Gjakova and somehow they asked excuse for not being able to be always present to us. That day was a fitted day to thank the Lord even for that experience, after all He never failed us, He always assured us His consoling and continuous presence, He gave us strength and joy for such an important mission: to bring Jesus everywhere, finding Him already present in the poorest, the suffering and the sick.

At the beginning, back in 1994, we often traveled on foot and in every condition for kilometers on the mountain for hours and

hours of walking and we found no one waiting for us to pray. The church was full of people on the day of the jubilee, moved and eager to take part in the celebration, the believers who now know how to pray, sing and listen.

To us, it seemed a real miracle and with tears, we publicly thanked the Lord who gave us the strength to remain faithful.

After the Holy Mass, we spent another beautiful moment outdoors, of meetings, greetings with emotions, participating in an artistic show, prepared by teachers, Catholics and Muslims without distinction, because, they say: “The sisters are for everyone, not just for Catholics! “

The long love story did not end;
we want to continue it until the Lord gives us strength to give the gift of our life.

Missionary Sisters in Albania



1919 - 2019 One hundred years of presence... in the footsteps of Providence

“Wonderful are the ways of Providence, to which no one has the right to ask why this, in this way and not otherwise ... God tries, but does not abandon and this is enough to comfort us.”

These words of our Founder, Fr. Gregory Fioravanti ofm, have always supported the first sisters, who on August 14, 1919, courageously undertook the work of founding a new community in Colonnata and opening a “nursery school” to welcome the children. Those were the hardest times that the sisters lived. The world war just ended and in consequence, it was a time marked by extreme poverty, lack of necessities, difficulties of all kinds, sometimes even adversity.



“In Colonnata (we read in the community chronicle) they found nothing, only the walls. This extreme poverty touched the Mother General who said: Poor sisters! Then she encouraged us by saying that our hardships will bring the Blessing of God on our mission.” The sisters were not discouraged, far from it, they were able to entrust themselves to God and face the difficulties with patience and Franciscan joy. From those times they were “outgoing sisters” (using a word so dear to Pope Francis). *“They began to make acquaintance with good families”* and to open up to the territory to bring the word of Jesus.

In addition to the kindergarten with the little ones, they devoted themselves to the after-school program for the children of the elementary school and later they also started the school of work, many initiatives to keep closer children and young people. Sr. Amedeo tells us in her chronicle: *“We gave ourselves over*



to the works of the apostolate of the true heart.”

One hundred years have passed, but our mission as Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart is still “to entrust ourselves to Providence”, to walk with the Church and to open ourselves to the territory by welcoming each person, in the Franciscan style, of minority and simplicity, bringing consolation and hope to those who are in trouble.



On November 24 at 11.30 am, we, Sisters of the community “S. Maria Maddalena De ’Pazzi”, gathered ourselves together with the Provincial Superior and her Council, in the Church of St. Romulus, to praise the Lord of the many gifts that He granted to the sisters who have passed through this mission. The church was filled not only with so many people who attended our school and many others who have association with us and established good relationships of friendship and gratitude, for what they lived by frequenting our home. Together we thanked God by singing the hymn “Marvelous Providence”, for the journey made until today, because He guided and supported us with his Blessing. We invoked the Lord, that the people of this mission may never miss the presence of the consecrated people amidst them. After the celebration, we moved to our school, to visit the large exhibition with almost three hundred photos, which recalled pieces of life of so many people. Everyone started looking for their faces, letting go in the good memories of the past. A beautiful extended Family feast, lots of joyful participation, lots of sharing, and at the time of blowing out the candles on the cake, the beautiful message of Sr. Cristiana.



THE BEGINNING OF THE INTER-PROVINCIAL SYSTEMATIC JUNIORATE US

“Francis, go and rebuild my church, falling into ruin. Touch not the walls or the stones; it is my people.”

On this Memorial Day September 14, 2019, the feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross, we witness with great joy and thanksgiving the official beginning of the Inter Provincial Juniorate in America.

With this missionary song springing from the depth of our hearts to our lips like a gracious fragrance of God’s mandate: *“Francis, go and rebuild my church...”* we walked out the big chapel in procession to the small chapel of the Juniorate.

Fr. Charles Reinbold with the Blessed Sacrament leading the procession, then the three Juniors sisters: Sr. Sylvia Bong, Sr. Pascaline Yenmole, Sr. Lisa Grace and their Mistress Sr. Hortencie Koa Lebogo followed by Sr. Paola Dotto, our Mother General Sr. Tiziana Tonini, the Vicar General, Sr. Laura Morgan, the Provincial Superior of America and all the Sisters as well as some lay people who took part in this ceremony.

Once in the Juniorate chapel, at first the intronization of the Blessed Sacrament and a short moment of Adoration in silence.

Fr. Charles R. proceeded by a prayer of blessing, then Sr. Hortencie tuned psalm 147 *“O praise the Lord, Jerusalem! Zion praise your God!”*.

In turn the Juniors read a passage of psalm 27: Sr. Sylvia *“I have asked one thing from the Lord; it is what I desire: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life”*; Sr. Lisa Grace *“My heart says*

this about you: seek his face.”

And Sr. Pascaline: *“I am certain that I will see the Lord’s goodness in the land of the living”*.

Sr Laura then read the FMSC Constitutions and Sr. Tiziana the Formation Document.

After that Sr. Paola gave an encouraging message to reaffirm that this initiative of the Inter Provincial Juniorate in America is a sign of our renewal in the Spirit,



the precious gift of the divine providence and the hope for the continuity of our mission in this land where flourished our charism in the past.

Sr. Laura in response expressed her gratitude to see this day: the birth of the Systematic Juniorate in St. Francis Province for the First time in the history. How wonderful and blessed this event!

In joyful apprehension, we leapt up our hearts to the Lord and reaching out to all the members of our religious Family in different part of the world, near and far we prayed the Lord's prayer: *Our Father, who art in heaven...* and concluded with this antiphon of the Virgin Mary: *"Look upon us, Maria! Bring to us your treasure, grace beyond all measure"*.

After the liturgical ceremony came the moment of refreshment and fraternal sharing.

We shared our joy and gratitude of being part and testimony of God's grace of this historical event. This step is determinant for the continuity of our mission in the US.

We are thankful to God and to our Superiors for this opportunity giving for the Formation of the Juniors Sisters. We are happy to live concretely this experience of internationality and interculturality in this formation stage.

We trust in Jesus Christ guidance in our daily journey to this Emmaus road of deepening our faith, consecration and mission. With our Father Saint Francis of Assisi, great lover of Jesus Christ Crucified, we can say: *Laudato Si, o mi Signore!*



“What will I do to the Lord for all the good that He has given me”?

PERPETUAL PROFESSION of:

**Sr. Elisabeth Beri, Sr. Regular Modufe Ching, Sr. Huguette Stéphanie Keumo,
Sr. Joana Mezofuonuv and Sr. Chancela Nambe Bemba.**

On October 4, 2019, the day of the birth of our Seraphic Father Francis to heaven, it was a very significant and unforgettable day for us in the personal history of our vocation.

“What will I do to the Lord for all the good that He has given me”?

It is with this psalm that we wanted to give thanks to the Triune God for the gift of vocation that He has given us and for His grace that has always accompanied us to this day of our Perpetual Profession and of our commitment to His service and to that of the Church.



The solemn Eucharistic celebration was held in the church of Nkoabang, which was presided over by Bishop Damase ZINGA ATANGANA, bishop of Kribi.

At the beginning of his homily, His Excellency urged us to be able to give thanks to God for the gift of vocation and perseverance that on this day we are celebrating. We have been preparing for six years and some for seven and therefore, today, we, freely, with love and great joy, offer ourselves and all what we have, totally to the Lord. With our consecration we are no longer worldly people, but consecrated to the Lord because it is He who has chosen and removed us from the world, not because we were the most beautiful or the most intelligent, but He did it freely out of His love.

By calling us, the Lord entrusts us with a mission, *“To go and bear many fruits, ... fruits that remain”*. To bear fruit, we must remain united to Him with prayer, adoration, the Eucharist, reading and listening to the Word of God.

On the other hand, the Lord calls us to work for the sanctification of our soul and that of our brothers and sisters. Continuing, the bishop added that we, with Perpetual Profession, are called to be “armored in Christ” that is, people called to imitate the life of Christ, conforming to Him, day after day, following the example of our seraphic Father, St. Francis.

Ending his homily, the bishop urged us on the importance of prayer and fraternal life in community, the two elements so dear to St. Francis, that will help us remain faithful to our consecration and our journey of following Christ as we cannot talk about religious life without fraternal life in the community.

We express our gratitude to our religious Family, in the person of the Superior General, Sr. Paola

Dotto and her Council, to our Vice-Provincial Superior Sr. Béatrice Bifouma and to her Council who have welcomed us definitively into this religious Family.



We thank our Formators in different stages who, with love and patience, accompanied us on this vocational journey without forgetting all the people who helped us mature in the love of God.

Thanks also to our respective families who joyfully accepted our choice and who subsequently encouraged and supported us over these years.

Together we give thanks to the Lord for the gift of vocation in our Religious Family and in the Church.

*To you,
Lord,
all glory,
honor,
blessing
and
thanksgiving!*



THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING IN FAIRVIEW... THANKS... 4 ...GIVING!!!

Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday celebrated primarily in the United States and Canada as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest of the preceding year. For many, the meaning of Thanksgiving usually includes feasting, four-day weekends, family reunions, or a forerunner to Christmas festivities.

Originally Thanksgiving included days of fasting during difficult or pivotal moments and days of feasting and celebration to thank God in times of plenty.

The “first Thanksgiving,” however, was neither a feast nor a holiday, but a simple gathering.

In September 1620, a small ship called the Mayflower left Plymouth, England, carrying 102 passengers-an assortment of religious separatists seeking a new home where they could freely practice their faith and other individuals lured by the promise of prosperity and land ownership- sailed to the New World.

It would take a span of over 150 more years to establish Thanksgiving as we celebrate it today-George Washington proclaimed it a National holiday in 1789, Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November as thanksgiving to God, for His abundant blessings.

Thanksgiving is an attitude of the heart that reinforces an intimate relationship with God.

Thanksgiving has undergone numerous transitions but still remains an expression of gratitude. It is a time to gather in unity.

By “giving-thanks” we choose to extend ourselves and give to others less fortunate. Out of the abundance of our hearts, we are able to offer our hand to help others.



In many American households, the Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance; instead, it now centers on cooking and sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends. Turkey, a Thanksgiving staple so ubiquitous it has become synonymous with the holiday as well as other traditional foods which include stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.

Volunteering is a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and host free meals for the poor.

In keeping with the American tradition of giving thanks and with the attitude of gratitude, every Sunday before Thanksgiving the Franciscan Community Development Center, the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and scores of volunteers gather to help the needy for the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday.

In following the example of St. Francis of Assisi which was to follow in the footsteps of Jesus by living simply and helping those less fortunate, forgotten, unaccepted, and rejected by our society, a small group of volunteers join us helping the poor and marginalized.

Our purpose goes beyond distributing food, groceries or clothing to poor, neglected or marginalized.

Of all the things that defined St. Francis, joy, compassion, and hope are still the fundamental values we cherish and are at the heart of what we serve and share with those less fortunate. It doesn't matter why people come to us. It doesn't matter who they are, where they live, or what they do with what they receive.

What matters is that for one brief moment someone reminds them that they are worth and that they are loved. Whether serving scores homeless folks with a snack and warm clothing or handing out turkeys and bags of food to the poor, giving is who we are, and we are blessed to be able to help those in need.

Year after year, day after day we meet the needs of those struggling and the holiday season is no exception. We are incredibly grateful for all those that support our mission in helping us to help the helpless.

For more than 13 years, we have blessed the poor by helping hundreds of thousands of people in need, whether homeless or starving for food, vulnerable.

They are receiving warm clothing and are able to enjoy a simple holiday meal. Our commitment to the poor is a testament to the spirit of Thanksgiving.

It is a BLESSING to BLESS!



Sr Anna Maria Not and Sr Gloria Aranguiz



On a mission from Menjez to Kormakiti

From 3 to 10 August with some young people belonging to the group of “Saint Francis Mission” of Menjez Lebanon, we went to Cyprus - Kormakiti - for a very special mission.

The commitment that awaited us was to animate a large group of children and teenagers gathered in the camp and to witness to them, the joy of our faith and the many values that we can grasp from the life of St. Francis of Assisi, our model. For the first time these young people got an opportunity to bring the message of Christ to a foreign land.



Our community in Menjez, and in particular Sr Beatrice, followed this dream step by step, which at first seemed only a desire. The difficulties were not lacking, but everything was overcome also with the help of Koko Skorti, our referent to Kormakiti who knew how to handle the organization with such a commitment.

The Lord opened the doors, one after the other. We often looked at each other with tears in our

eyes simply because the SFM Group - made up of us, these young people of ours, who grew up in our home under our gaze, were about to begin a new journey. The feelings were similar to those of a mother who sees her children fly! Seeing them leave Menjez was exciting.

Arriving in Limassol, Sr Angelica, Provincial Superior was waiting for us with the Sisters of the Community who warmly welcomed the whole group to Saint Mary's School. Here we have not missed anything. We also enjoyed the night visit of Limassol, along the sea to the port, and the real mission started from here. Young people sang along the way and many tourists and passersby stopped with admiration to look at us and listen to us. Sunday morning, always accompanied by our Sisters of Limassol, we headed towards Nicosia, taking a nice stroll here too, giving voice to our joy along the streets, among the people, until we reached the borders and crossed the border to get to Kormakiti. We were about to start the real mission!

Here is how Victory expressed himself with the greeting addressed to all the people gathered in the amphitheater of the Church of the Madonnina for the final party, *“Kalispera! My name is Victory Elias and I am a member of the Saint Francis Mission group. We come from all over Lebanon but our headquarters are in Menjez, Akkar. Our journey of evangelical life and witness is based on the example of Saint Francis of Assisi. Every year, in two stages, we carry out our mission of animation, prayer and accompaniment in the different parts of Lebanon.*

This year we chose Kormakiti, and why Kormakiti? The story itself guards your origins from Kour in Lebanon, where your ancestors started. A part of them has come to these areas, another has never arrived - hence the name of the country Kurmakiti.

We are here to tell you that you are not alone! We are here as brothers and sisters! We are here to tell the young Maronite generations to keep the typical Arabic language of the place and your traditions because you are the future of Kormakiti.”

For young people it was a new adventure, to bring the Gospel to a foreign land, to get rid of the habits of one's own country, to leave one's home to live with other new families, to overcome one's limits to know a new reality ... all this is become a reason for growth and sharing.

In addition, the young people understood it well.

They did not spare themselves in giving themselves to others also through learning the local Arabic and the various moments of animation.



Between the Lebanese children and young people, a strong Franciscan relationship has been created, simple and immediate. I saw the spirit of donation develop, starting with Victory as manager, together with the whole group. I noticed that everyone set aside something of their own to dedicate themselves to others. However, what struck me so much is the example of the spirit of Francis that the young people have been able to convey. Indeed, it is rare to see many young people happy and gathered in prayer! They have become bearers of peace and joy in the families who have welcomed us and in the middle of the country itself. They lived in poverty and simplicity that turned into a legacy of values.



They shouted and made noise in the name of Jesus! They told everyone that it is possible to be happy by following Francis of Assisi.

At our side were the Sisters of the Kormakiti community, always ready and attentive to every little need. For our stay, the families who welcomed us and the many volunteer friends who were there and in silence did everything so that we could enjoy everything.

How can we forget the moments of joy and familiarity! The going out to the sea, the flavor of the barbecue, visits

to beautiful places along the sea, recreational moments and evenings ... what an explosion of joy!

We have never forgotten our duty to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus and to bear witness as a Franciscan youth. We prayed, sang and danced in the Turkish area, on the streets and in the squares, always wearing our yellow T-shirt with the sign of the Tau.

Several young people from Kormakiti have asked to be part of the SFM group ... and this is amazing! They asked to come to Lebanon to get to know the group closer! With Francis, ours was a mission of joy! Many people contributed to all this. We sincerely thank Sr. Angelica Hadjihanni, Provincial Superior and Sr. Beatrice Skorti for doing everything possible to ensure that our mission is successful. We thank the Sisters of Kormakiti who were always among us. We thank all the Sisters of Cyprus who collaborated to organize our stay. We thank all the staff of the local managers in Kormakiti. Heartfelt thanks to Koko Skorti, grand-nephew of Sr Beatrice, who did everything in silence but with competence and attention.



We finished the mission in Kormakiti tired but happy, emptied but rich, we walked in the sun, listening to strong messages. All this because we lived in synergy, all together - we look for each other, we expect, we love each other, we support each other. We thank the merciful God for such goodness! To you, young people, I say, you are wonderful! Thanks for your life testimony! Thanks for your passion for the gospel! Thanks for the love you have for the “Poverello of Assisi”! Thank you because you let yourselves be surprised by the Lord!

On behalf of the Saint Francis Mission group -Sr Krasimira Govedarska

FESTIVAL OF YOUTH IN BELOZEM

The Lord surprises, calls and loves

An unforgettable experience! The Festival of Youth, organized by the Capuchin Fathers in Bulgaria, was held in Belozem from 26 to 31 August. Pope Francis often reminds us that young people need roots and memories, that they must communicate with each other without fear and attend the future.

The Bulgarian Church is a church highlighted with youthful faces, it is a meeting place between cultures and civilizations, and it is a land with ancient Christian roots. In this land, young people find inspiration in serving the Church. The idea of organizing and participating in the Festival is precisely this: to find synergies of mind and heart, life and prayer, service and testimony through group meetings, conferences, workshops, Eucharist and moments of prayer in order to motivate young people to be the protagonists of the new evangelization.

We too, FMSC have been given the opportunity to immerse ourselves, together with about 100 young people from all over Bulgaria, to live this particular atmosphere, perhaps a bit tiring - but

those tiring experiences that are good as they make us all feel part of a big family. It is in this adventure that we rediscovered the originality of our Franciscan missionary charism. It is destined to change the heart and history of the youth who approach us, fascinated by the meeting of Francis of Assisi with the Lord.

The Youth Festival also has allowed us to express the beauty of our diversity, not only at the nationality level, but also as a Province. We simply narrated the fraternities of our missions with the participation of Sr Elka Staneva, Sr Jyothi Kodumagundla and Sr Svetla Zekova from Bulgaria, Sr Roly Kaithakulath and Sr Aurora Castardo from Cyprus and Sr Krasimira Govedarska who returned from Lebanon.

The young people noticed our genuineness that they felt confidence to entrust us with their desires for the future and the efforts in the society in which they live. We simply welcomed their yearning for happiness by scrutinizing during the days of the Festival the proposals for work and meetings offered to us by the organizers.



The Lord surprises, calls and loves. Through the three key words, we wanted to encourage young people divided into groups to take charge of awareness on the themes of re-evangelization, the centrality of God, the experience of prayer, witness through digital communication, of the call to consecrated life. Sometimes it is thought, that young people do not like to pray or that their relationship with us religious is rather a distant relationship and instead we realized that in these days of sharing something has matured, slowly, on tiptoe. It was great because the young people themselves questioned us, they wanted to know us and know about us. We spent strong moments of prayer under the gaze of the Crucifix of San Damiano, we attended and animated the daily Mass and the sacrament of Reconciliation. In the midst of many youth, the variety of

religious and charisms from all over Bulgaria was the most beautiful testimony to the identity of the consecrated.

Truly, the singularity of our charism has been expressed through a simple but immediate language with young people, for us that is nothing more than a recalling of what touches us personally. Today, more than ever, we know how to assume the language of love and the dimension of Gospel communication, which creates history with the Lord.

Today the Young people are surrounded by temporary and precarious models, but their strong desire for, a true, beautiful, happy and full life is a challenge for us consecrated persons.

Religious life has its charm and we, with Franciscan simplicity, have tried to communicate its beauty and its validity. We, FMSC sisters, have not carried out any vocation campaign. We have been bearers of the charism and identity that still people fall in love with. In return, the young people gave us their great desires for the search for the meaning of life, for the maturation of life's projects as a gift.

We took away some fruits, such as:

- unconditional acceptance
- empathic listening
- immense sympathy
- openness of mind
- the joy of the Gospel, sharing with them the art of happiness!

We therefore have this mission, always to express a proposal and an orientation through great openness and constant discernment!



IN PARIS ...WITH THE POOREST

“Christian Solidarity” has existed for years in the Batignolles district, 4 to 8 volunteers organized three lunches per week, for 40 to 50 guests. It is a Christian ecumenical action open to all those who need help, without distinctions or discrimination.

Thus the parish “Saint Joseph des Epinettes” inserted in this famous district of the Parisian metropolis is also actively engaged in the service of the poor.

In fact, every Saturday the doors open for the poorest. Some rooms in the parish have been



designed to create a welcoming space and to encourage fraternal friendship meetings. In collaboration with the volunteers of the parish, we the sisters of the community, put ourselves at the service of the forty and fifty people who find refreshment and comfort here. For everyone there is a complete and hot meal, everyone has the opportunity to take a shower, to wash and dry clothes, to experience a moment of relaxation and hospitality and to experience the joy of the meeting.

As soon as we arrived in this district, we recognized in this service a privileged place to meet the Lord, “*I was hungry and you fed me ...*” (Mt 25:35).

It is a warm and strong encounter with the most fragile people of our society and our neighborhood. A unique experience that makes us touch the “Body of the Lord who suffers”. In his message on the World day of the poor, Pope Francis reminds us, “*By being close to the poor, the Church discovers, that she is a people who, scattered among many nations. She has the vocation not to make anyone feel foreign or excluded ... poor obliges not to take any distance from the Body of the Lord who suffers in them. We are called, rather, to touch his flesh to compromise ourselves in a service that is authentic evangelization*”.

Another beautiful parish initiative: one Sunday a month the parish invites all single people to share a meal in the parish premises; each according to his possibilities brings something, because the meaning of this meeting is welcoming and sharing.

On Sunday 27 October, a day of rain and high humidity we were about forty participants. Everyone took the meal with joy and good humor.

This is another great opportunity for



us to be closer to the poor, often to the people on the street ... they are very sensitive to our attention for what they live and if they are in pain, we give paracetamol tablets. These Sunday meetings last the whole afternoon because they are intended to offer the pleasure of spending time in the company of other people. After the meal, and setting of the place, there was the recreational moment to play a question-answer game, or the lottery and sometimes riddles to keep everyone’s intellectual ability alive. At around 5.00 pm all returned to their home happy with what they have lived.

The sisters of the Paris community

WONDERFUL ARE THE STEPS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

On September 20, I had the joy of taking part in the meeting of the leaders of the “Singer-to-the-Star” teams, “missionary childhood” of Romande Switzerland, which meets in Freiburg. The community has invited me, to inform me of the procedure to set up a “Missio-Enfance” (children’s mission) group in Tavannes.

The happy and familiar atmosphere of the meeting made me feel perfectly at ease and we were all very enthusiastic. But ... what a surprise!! During the meeting I discovered that the “missio” project of the month of October organized by Romande Switzerland, in close connection with the extraordinary missionary month proclaimed by Pope Francis, is in favor of the school of our Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Menjez , in Lebanon. This “surprise discovery” filled me with joy and wonder, a project for our sisters who work in a very difficult context for the poor!



The joy of those responsible for the “missio” was also great. They are precious instruments of Divine Providence for the works of our sisters. With our venerable Father Gregory I can only exclaim: “Wonderful are the ways of Divine Providence!”

Catherine Soldini and Nadia Brügger went to Lebanon and met the community of our sisters working on the front line on the border between Lebanon and Syria. Visibly moved, Catherine and Nadia spoke to us, of the love and dedication of our sisters among these children. They expressed, *“The sisters show great kindness and tenderness, they fulfill a mission of love and benevolence, competently do a valuable job of re-adaptation with children suffer the consequences of war; whether they are Lebanese, Palestinians, Syrians ... of Christian, Muslim or other religions, and the sisters give them joy, peace and become messengers of hope for them”*.

The action of the “Missio-Enfance” groups during the year will continue with the sending of the Extraordinary Missionary Month decreed by Pope Francis and will be in solidarity with the other children who experience the terrible consequences of the war in Lebanon.



During this meeting, we also took the time to reflect on the mission that has been entrusted to us and we shared how we can live it concretely in everyday life.

Praised be my Lord, your designs are mysterious and your ways wonderful.

*Sister Beniamina Borsato
and the sisters of the
Tavannes community*

Youth and vocation Ministry - Philippines

“Christ is alive!

He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world ...”

The vocation animation program prepared together at the beginning of this Pastoral Year is proceeding in all three of our communities and will conclude with the week of “observation” that will take place in Quezon City in March 2020. In this experience will participate the young people who expressed the desire to discern their vocation and that the sisters are already following with monthly meetings in their own communities.

Taking advantage of the presence of our sisters who come to visit their family, we involve them in vocational activity. In November sr. Teresita and sr. Vangie have reached the island of Iloilo



where Sr. Angel Rose was waiting for them, who had already identified how and where to bring young people the joy that comes from the awareness that *Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way He brings youth to our world.* We liked this document very much, we studied it and reflected it together in order to share it and fill the life of young people with joy. We met the young people in high school and in the parish. We saw them interested and eager to get to know Jesus, to open up to His love, to start a journey with Him. We also had the opportunity to present the Congregation and witness to our joy of being consecrated and missionary, sent, participating in the mission of Christ who consecrated Himself to the Father.

In Bacolod City

We stayed for a week with them and we also went to Bacolod City where we were welcomed by a large and good family who also shared our program. We really experienced that where Jesus touches, everything becomes young, everything is filled with life, it was truly a feast.

Thank you Jesus that you are alive, you are the Risen One, you are with us and you never go away. When we feel “old” for sadness, fear, doubts, failures, lack of vocations, you are with us to give us strength and hope.

*Sr. Teresita, Sr. Vangie
and Sr. Angel Rose*



First meeting of the lay associates, Santiago 10-13 October 2019

“Lay people and religious, baptized and sent to open ourselves to a missionary communion”

When you open the doors of the house and welcome those who arrive, you begin to share life: this was perceptible in the first meeting of the lay associates of Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico and Chile. Everyone participated with enthusiasm in the various reflections. They spoke, prayed, expressed their concerns and above all were happy to find themselves in the desire to continue walking and respond to their particular vocation to God and to the Church, but as they themselves said above all, as Lay People of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

From 9 October, the reception began with the arrival of those who came from afar and on Thursday 10 October, most of them greeted each other with joy and emotion to start living this new experience. They went to visit the school “Santa María de los Ángeles”, where they were welcomed by the director, Mrs. Roxanna Gheza and Sister Attiliana Durigon, local superior of the religious community “Santa Clara”, promoter of the lay movement associated with that community. The educational community and the religious who exercise their educational and pastoral mission in the College were present.

The reception had an entirely Franciscan tone, as the people were received with traditional dances, with a small representation of the “Pergola of flowers” and the voices of the choir of the students of the High School, third class who presented typical songs of famous singers of our country. All of this, with much joy for this circumstance, was followed by a fraternal agape for all.

Then they returned to the provincial house to begin the experience of these four days and, as usual, Sister Marcela Uribe, provincial superior, officially opened the meeting with the words of welcome. Miss Enriqueta Lipari led a dynamic of integration and knowledge and Father Luis Alberto Nahuelanca ofm presented the theme *“Franciscan lay people and missionaries for Latin America”*. It was a challenge because despite the hour after a good lunch, he was able to attract the maximum attention from



all the participants. However, as they themselves expressed, they did not feel the heaviness of the hour because the theme was interesting and easy to listen to the reflection of the father.

In the Eucharist celebrated in the “San Damián” chapel, we presented our praise to the Lord, asking the Holy Spirit of God to accompany us in this First Meeting of the Lay Associate.

In this Eucharistic celebration, Father Luis Alberto Nahuelanca gave value to these days by combining the reflection of his presentation with the need for the active participation of the lay people in the Church. As a sign of their commitment in the Church, the provincial superior, Sr. Marcela Uribe, together with the vicar, Sister Mirella Venturin and the Councilor, Sr. Zulma Ayma, gave each participant the book of the Liturgy of the Hours and of Prayers of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, the Missionary Rosary with the image of our Founder, the venerable Father Gregory, so that, joining in daily prayer, they can crave the presence of God in their life and walk as children in the daily search for His will.

Franciscan simplicity made them pose for the photo with some sisters from the community of “*Lourdes*” and those who had participated in the Eucharist.

The day culminated with the sharing of what was experienced and their participation in the prayer of Vespers of the community of the provincial house.

On Friday 11 October, the reflection was focused on Saint Francis and Sacred Scripture; with this theme our lay brothers and sisters were able to deepen, from the spirit of St. Francis, the centrality of Sacred Scripture in every believer and understand the value of the Eucharistic Sacrament, the living presence of Christ. The fraternal meeting with “*Mother Cecilia Lazzeri High School*” was another moment to share the beauty of our country’s culture. On that day also we had the presence of the Provincial Minister Father Isauro Covilí ofm who presided over the Eucharist and in a very simple and fraternal way, he gave value with his words to the event we were experiencing.



On Saturday, the day began with the Eucharist, and then each group shared their own history of lay associates and related their journey by presenting the pastoral and charitable activities that testify to their missionary work in the Church. In the afternoon, they received with great enthusiasm Father José María Arnaiz with a significant reflection: “*Shared life and mission*” which ignited the desire of the groups to grow further and become multiplying agents of the charism of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

On Sunday 13 October, Father Arnaiz concluded his theme and presided over the closing Eucharist. Much more could be narrated, everyone has treasured the sharing of these days and the many experiences of dialogue, meetings, reflections and also of what they could have known about our works and pastoral care. Jesus has already said to them: “*the harvest is plentiful and the workers are few*” this is their time. May the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Church protect and safeguard their faith and keep them faithful on the journey undertaken.



Educational and Missionary Pastoral ACTIVITIES in Tambobamba

FORMATION MEETING FOR TEACHERS

On 16 and 17 August 2019, the team of the diocesan office of Catholic education (ODEC) held the second provincial level meeting of religious education teachers to strengthen their lifelong learning and evaluate the teaching processes that we have put into practice in this area.



We studied the “lectio divina” directed by Sr. Consuelo Borda Director of the ODEC at a theoretical and practical level.

We also explored the theme of “gender ideology from the Vatican” presented by the teacher Verónica Aguilar Enriquez, (teacher of religious education) and we also developed thematic areas in groups that helped us strengthen our knowledge to better develop our learning sessions.

45 teachers attended this meeting.

VOCATIONAL PASTORAL MEETING

Saturday 24 August 2019 we began the meetings of the vocation days organized by the diocesan office of Catholic education (ODEC).

In every meeting, each teacher invites 3 or more young people from each educational institution among boys and girls, and we meet at the main office.

We started to show the person of Jesus and to understand the importance of His presence in our life; we then presented and discussed the Vocation to life, to happiness and to a specific vocation. After the presentation of the themes, we have reflected on the value of being and doing of each person and try to understand what Jesus is calling us to.

The speakers who participated: Father Raymundo Bautista, of the order of San Agustín, Sister Marilú Tesci, head of the vocational ministry of Tambobamba and Sister Consuelo Borda, director of the ODEC-Cotabambas. 55 young people participated in this first meeting.

We ended with a survey to find out what they thought of priestly and religious life and if they wanted to participate in a second meeting, but only girls because the boys would participate in a professional meeting in Chuquibambilla organized by the Prelature, which was attended by 15 young people of our Cotabambas province.



Saturday 28 September 2019 there was the second vocational meeting of young women where 19 girls, who are attending the last year of school studies, participated.

On this occasion, we deepened the lectio divina with a biblical text “*The miraculous catch*” Lk. 5.18 to 24; then the call in Sacred Scripture and the meeting culminated with the presentation of the charism through an audiovisual. Sr. Marilú Teci and Sr. Consuelo Borda presented the topics.

We have decided to meet for the third time with a weekend retreat.



Non-formal education to the village women

It is really an experience of great joy and fulfillment when we see the poor analphabetic women writing their names with great contentment.

Non-formal education to the adult women in the villages is one of the program of ASWAS (Assisi social welfare and services), which the sisters carry out in different regions of Andhra Pradesh aiming primarily at the development of women.



Most of the village women we work with are poor agricultural laborers, who earn a daily wage for their living. They struggle to educate their children today, because they understand the need for education. Many parents especially women are analphabetic due to their poverty; either they had to work along with their parents in the fields or to stay back at home to look after the younger children. Most of them got married in the early years, as it was their custom. Today they realize and desire for education to live in the modern world socializing with all.

We, along with the volunteers from the villages take the initiative to make them reach at least to the basic level of learning; reading, writing and making their signature. Lacking this minimum education lead them to lose many opportunities offered by the government and non-governmental organizations. We form the women in different villages into groups and appoint volunteers from the same villages to dedicate on teaching them.

The sisters, who are in-charge, supervise and guide their services by making frequent visits. The women are very happy and enthusiastic and regularly attend the classes since it is in their

own villages in a fixed convenient time for them.

They are excited of joy when they write their name or read a piece of newspaper for the first time.

The program, ASWAS (Assisi social Welfare and services), the very name itself reflects the kind of services we do and the beneficiaries of the services. In the spirit of St. Francis, every activity in this program is intended to reach out the poor, to proclaim them the Good News, the compassionate love of the Savior.

It is intended to reach out to the poor people and inculcate in them the need to be united and supported each other. Mostly it is meant to empower the women, to 'help them to help each other'.

As they are poor and illiterate, many times they are exploited in all the ways.

We conduct many training programs and awareness classes on healthy and hygienic living; give awareness also of the many opportunities of development available for women from the government and non-governmental organizations. Many are the activities we involve in with the program ASWAS: form many self-help groups and teach the short term finance saving schemes; help the education of the poor children; help the orphans, widows and aged men and women; conduct medical camps; visit the leper colonies etc.

Our services reach to the people beyond their caste or religion.

We praise and thank God for this mission entrusted to us which help us to live our charism meaningfully and effectively by being available to these poor of the Lord.



JOY OF SHARING

“It is not about how much you do but how much love you put into what you do that counts”.

Saint Mother Theresa

Young minds are global transformers and we challenge them to engage in this process creatively and imbibe this simple outlook of life through various community services in addition to the strict and rich curriculum. When we channelize their energy and enthusiasm, they will become a great force, which will bring light and life to the lives of others.

Our Service unit in the school has produced an unforgettable impact among the students over the years through various community based programs like visiting the home for the aged, helping the underprivileged and destitute children, organizing programs like Joy of Sharing, Grandparents day, Drivers Day, Non Teaching Staff’s Day so as rendering a helping hand, where ever necessary.

“Charity is the cement which binds Communities to God and persons to one another . . .” says St. Vincent De Paul.

Since three years, the school is organizing Joy of sharing an out reaching program to draw the attention of our community to the needs of the marginalized. This year on 16 October we gave a list of provisions which the students of each standard to bring.

On 15 evening itself the library hall was filled with Packets of Rice, Dall, Oil, Sugar, Soap, Detersive etc. Every one brought according to their generosity. The students with the help of teachers packed everything and carried to the truck. We, the teachers along with the students followed the truck in a bus joyfully singing and entertaining ourselves.

The joy trip reached the village Oravakam, a hill station where a group of villagers were waiting for us. Most of them are poor tribal people. They welcomed us with their smiling faces. After the refreshments, we distributed the things to the people who were waiting for us. They thanked for our initiative and went home with grateful hearts. We too returned with gratitude to God Almighty for making us instruments to touch the hearts and lives of the many poor families and children, through the generous contribution and hard work of our students and teachers.



Grandparents Day.

‘Honor your father and mother’ is the commandment of God. In today’s very busy life, we often forget the people whom we do not need or people who are not directly involved in our daily tasks. Unfortunately, one such among them is the grandparents. Many times, they are the silent members in the family, watching the running race of their children and grandchildren for life and success.



‘Give them a word of appreciation and a touch of affection’; that is what we mean and want to inculcate in the young minds with our celebration of Grandparents’ Day. We have invited 50 grandparents of our students and about 45 have come on time, wearing their festal suits and Saris. The students gave them a formal welcome with School band. A few students as well as teachers shared their thoughts, how the grandparents’ life made an impact on them.

The Principal appreciated the coordinators of the service unit for their initiative of such a day. At the end, we distributed gifts and sweets to the grandparents. Many of them expressed their gratitude with tears in their eyes.

Auto drivers day and non-teaching staff’s Day

"Gratitude is the music of the heart."

In our life, we have received many favors, big and small from people around, but often in our busy life, we fail to recognize and appreciate them. The people like auto drivers, who get the children from the parents, carefully bring them to school and back home after school are people who do great and a delicate service.

The parents and the school authorities place great trust in them. In the same way, the non-teaching staff, who keep the classrooms clean and help the children in their basic needs, are people who play a great role in the school life of the children.

We, the service unit of the school includes teachers and students of all religions, decided to create an awareness in the children to organize a day to recognize and appreciate these people. They were invited to come together. The students and the teachers shared their words of appreciation for their services, distributed a small memento and some sweets to each one. It was indeed a wonderful experience and they shed tears of joy and gratitude. The service unit members also felt very happy and fulfilling.

We made the children practice the words of Jesus, *“Truly, truly I say to you whenever you did this to one of the least of my brothers, you did it to me”*. (Mt.25:40)

Sr Annie Thomas



PRISON MINISTRY INDIA, SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

“I was in prison you came to visit me” (Mt. 25:36)

The Prison ministry of India celebrated its silver jubilee on 19 November 2019 at Bangalore. Over 420 volunteers of the PMI gathered at St Joseph’s College Auditorium in Bangalore, to praise and thank ‘the God of the lost, the least and the last’ in the presence of bishops, priests, nuns and lay people. Prison Ministry India (PMI), a voluntary organization under the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI), working for the integral human development of prisoners, had its foundation in Kerala.

It was a great joy for our sisters Sr. Elsamma Parappuram and Sr. Sahaya Rani Gnanaprakasam who received the invitation to participate in the celebration. On this occasion, the National award given by the Prison Ministry of India, to Sr. Elsamma Parappuram, for her 21 years dedicated ministry in the prisons in different regions is indeed an appreciation given to the Congregation of Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

We thank the Lord for making us instruments to share His compassionate love to these marginalized brothers and sisters.

It is true; the present political situations are not in favour of our activities in the prison. The words of Jesus , “*I was in prison you came to visit me*” (Mt. 25:36), motivate the sisters to take the risk of making a visit to the prisons every week. It all depends up on the officers in-charge. We can spend the maximum two hours time to talk with them, organize our prayers or other programs always under the supervision of the guards.

When we reach at the given time, the prisoners will be brought out of their cells to a common place, under the thorough vigilance of the guards. We begin with simple conversations and make them get certain confidence in us.

Then we lead them to small prayer session, evidencing in simple way the unconditional love and compassion of

God the Father. They listen to us with much care and ask for prayers and blessings. Even people from other religions are also welcome if they like.

We can see those shedding tears and they come forward to share their suffering.

At times, the guards bring to us prisoners in desperation or in depression. We speak to them and pray over them. The merciful love of Jesus give them much relief from their tensions and express their readiness to listen more about Jesus.

We conduct programs in the prison on special occasions like Independence Day, Martyrs day, and Feast day of St. Maximilian Kolbe, Christmas, and New Year etc.

On such occasions, we conduct competitions like drawing, moral story telling etc, and distribute the prizes through prison authorities. There are many cases where people are innocent, but to prove their innocence it needs a long process in the slow system of judiciary.



The jubilee celebrations at Bangalore began with a concelebrated Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr Allwyn D'Silva, the PMI Chairman. Fr Varghese Karippery, the PMI co-founder in his homily highlighted that the unconditional and forgiving love is the golden key for the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. The Holy Eucharist was made very solemn with the presence of many dignitaries who are associated with the ministry and many from different parts of the country. Archbishop Peter Machado of Bengaluru in his address, prior to the benediction, highlighted the significance of documentation and research studies of prison visits and rehabilitation centers. Children from Premodaya and Kolbe Home, the Homes meant for prisoners' children, presented a variety of cultural items, which gave more color to the celebrations.

The volunteers of Prison Ministry India, regularly visit 1412 prisons in India and do whatever is possible for their release and rehabilitation. They do ministries inside and outside the prison. Moral Instructions, cultural, entertainment programs, counseling, and spiritual directions, consoling the broken-hearted through letters, setting-up of libraries. They conduct job-oriented training program, literary, arts and sports competitions, preparing prisoners to write school and University exams, conducting medical camps, providing free legal aid, releasing prisoners, assisting foreign nationals with the help of embassies and assisting Indian citizens in foreign prisons etc..

The ministries outside, include Providing Rehabilitation centers for released male & female prisoners. Offering Homes for prisoners' children – boys and girls, educational assistance for prisoners' children, research and documentation center, volunteers training programs, legal cells to assist prisoners, counseling and moral instructions in rehabilitation centers, reconciliation and forgiveness with victims, counseling prisoners' families, marriage settlement, vocational training and job settlement and house construction and settlement in family.

Prison Ministry is indeed a very fulfilling mission, a special call to live the words of Jesus, *“The spirit of the Lord is up on me. He has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives...and sight to the blind. To free the oppressed.....(Lk.4:18..)*



Prison Ministry Volunteers from Andhra Pradesh Region



*Come, you who are blessed by my Father.
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you
from the foundation of the world!*
Mt.25,34



**Sister Biancamaria Morao
of the Virgin of the Rosary**

*Born in Vedelago (TV)
on 24. 02. 1933
Died in Gemona (UD)
on 21.08. 2019*

Sr. Biancamaria was born in Vedelago (TV) on 24.02.1933, the first of the six children of holy parents Pietro, sacristan of the parish church, and Almerica Andrezza. Their family, humble, poor, simple, can be said to have an authentically Franciscan spirit. The eldest daughter is brought to Baptism the following day and called Maria Alessandrina.

Soon, at the age of 15, she responded to the Franciscan vocation that she felt in her heart. No wonder, because in her family three other Franciscan vocations have arisen, Mons. Luigi ofm, still Bishop in El Salvador, Fr. Tarcisio ofmconv who carries out

his ministry in the community of Camposampiero (PD), Fr. Fulgenzio ofm who has been present for years in the community of the Sanctuary of Barbana.

Maria Alessandrina came to Rome in the generalate house 'S. Elizabeth on 11 September 1948, and here she began her studies. Returning to Gemona, mother house, she lived the formative journey from postulancy (23 August 1953), to the novitiate (01 February 1954) where she was given the name of Sr. Biancamaria, to the first religious profession (02 February 1955). The journey reached solemnly the Perpetual Profession (02 February 1960) in which Sr. Biancamaria expresses her decision to belong totally to the Lord. She wrote: *"I am aware of the step I am about to take and I am firmly determined to consecrate myself to the Lord for a lifetime. I will not miss His grace and I will try to correspond to Him in the best possible way!"* After her consecration, she returned to Rome to complete her studies until her master's degree and her degree in letters. ... And immediately began her mission as a teacher, and in some periods even with the responsibility of Dean, in Gemona in the school 'S. Maria degli Angeli' and in Rome in the 'Asisium school'. A long curriculum always lived in humility and openness to young students,

families, people who approached her, with a particular eye of love and predilection for the most needy. Even today, many do not forget the goodness and benevolence of Sr. Biancamaria experienced in the years of study and in the following time.

She also welcomed various services such as Vicar, Councilor and Provincial Secretary. In addition, she carried out the commitment of local superior in the general house, always tireless in her generous dedication to the sisters, attentive to their needs and committed to supporting the spiritual journey. In the last long period of her life, since the year 2000, Sr. Biancamaria has dedicated herself to the local community of the mother house and also in the parish she has always been ready in direct pastoral care: Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, prepared and participant in the prayer meetings, significant presence on the parochial and foranial council.

We can define Sr. Biancamaria as a 'sensitive and welcoming person' to everyone. Even in the last period, already curved and with the walker, at every call, she went down to the hall and made herself ready to welcome, greet, entertain people, communicating joy to the known people or passing guests: for her everyone was brother/sister!

Suddenly, the physical suffering,

dragged for many years with courage and without holding back, has re-emerged in serious form, forcing her to bed in the infirmary of the mother house. She felt sister death coming and said: *"I am going to meet the Lord and the Lord is coming to meet me!"*. Accompanied by the superiors, the sisters and the inevitable presence of Fr. Fulgenzio representing her family with prayer and fraternal closeness, Sr. Biancamaria replied her definitive 'yes' to the Lord on August 21.



**Sister Theresa Ann Kallimanis,
of St. Joseph**

*Born in New York
on 11 January 1936
Died in Peekskill
on 9 November 2019*

Sr. Theresa Ann Kallimanis, FMSC (Sr. M. Dominic) and her twin sister Mary were born in New York City on January 11, 1936, to Jerry and Mary Kallimanis. They had an older brother George and two younger sisters: Cecelia and Eva. After graduating from grammar school and Cathedral High School, Theresa entered the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart on September 8, 1957 and made her final profession on August 12, 1964. In 1970 she graduated with a BA degree from Ladycliff College.

Sister spent her life as a primary grade teacher in Holy Family, Union City, NJ (1959-1961),

St. Leo's in East Paterson, NJ (1961-1962), Assumption in Peekskill (1962-1964), St Patrick's, Yorktown (1964-1970), Immaculate Conception, Irvington, NY (1970-1974), and St Joseph's in West New York, NJ (1974-2014). After returning to the Motherhouse in 2014 she worked at the switchboard until she moved to the Sisters' Infirmary in 2018. Sr. Theresa had a love for music and old movies. Turner Classic Movies and the song of Jerry Vale were her favorites. She loved young children and often reflected on the antics and stories of her 1st grade classes. Many of those children kept in touch with her through the years.

Recently she was waiting outside the hospital for her ride and a deacon from Yorktown approached her, asking if she was Sr. Dominic... Sister was his 1st grade teacher and he lovingly remembered her after so many years. That encounter was a special gift for her during a very hard time of physical suffering.

Theresa's special devotion was to St. Joseph, and every day she prayed her three rosaries: one for the living, one for the dead, and one for the community.

She spent lots of her time in her last years praying, and offered up much pain and suffering for the good of others. We thank God that her last days were pain-free and she was surrounded by her Sisters, her family, and her friends.

We count on her intercession for our many intentions.



**Sister Corinna Bandiera
of the Immaculate Heart
di Maria**

*Born in Ospedaletto d'Istrana (TV)
on 27. 12. 1927
Died in Gemona (UD)
on 23.11 2019*

"Truly, I say to you: today you will be with me in my Kingdom!". Precisely on the day of the Solemnity of Christ the King, this promise of Jesus was fulfilled for Sr. Corinna who responded with faith to the invitation by entering the Kingdom of Heaven. She was born in Ospedaletto D'Istrana (TV) on 27. 12. 1927 Her parents, Giuseppe and Rosa Cavallin, in baptism (22. 01. 1928) had called her Maria Giovanna. In the context of her large family (11 children) and the parish where the Christian faith was the foundation of life, Maria Giovanna accepted the call of God and responded to the religious vocation by deciding to enter, on July 26, 1945, among the Franciscan Missionaries of the S. Heart in Gemona. After a year of formation, on August 12, 1946, on the day of the entrance into novitiate, she received the new name: Sr Corinna of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. To Mary she entrusted herself convinced of her help, as she underlines in her writing: *"She let herself be guided by God in His humility... God chooses the humble, not the powerful... In humility and in concealment God speaks and helps! Mary gives*

me joy to live with serenity also in pain, in sacrifice, in faith". The first Religious Profession was celebrated in Gemona, on August 20, 1947. In the same year she was sent to carry out her service as a cook in the nursery school of Buia (UD) and then, returning to Gemona, she forever put her life in the hands of God with the Perpetual Profession on 4 October 1952. Voted to the Lord forever, she continues her mission in other communities: in Salzano (VE), and again in Gemona in the Collegio degli Stigmatini. After she went to Rauscedo where she worked for fifteen years (from 1955 to 1970), then in Camino al Tagliamento for nine years and in Cavasagra, in S. Maria Maggiore-Treviso, in Postioma offering for years her generous service, convinced that "to reign is to serve" as Jesus did. Open and joyful, she easily established a relationship of sympathy and confidence with the sisters of the community and with the people, so as to leave a fraternal and pleasant memory in the different realities where she worked. In 2009, already in her eighties, she was withdrawn to the mother house where a new 'service' awaited her, that of prayer and the offering of suffering. Lately, bedridden in the infirmary, she has endured her physically painful situation with serenity, remaining conscious until the end. On November 23 the doors of heaven opened for Sister Corinna: finally the eyes of the heart were able to see that light that her fleshly eyes, prevented by a particular pathology, had prevented her from seeing for many years. From the eternal Kingdom where Sr. Corinna now surely lives, she will continue to make everyone feel her closeness to fraternity and charity.



**Sister Danila Cavasin
of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary**

Born in Cavasagra (TV)

on 27. 07. 1928

Died in Gemona (UD)

on 15.12.2019

"Rejoice, I repeat to you rejoice, the Lord is near!". (Phil. 4, 4-5)

It is the invitation that on the third Sunday of Advent 'GAUDETE' proposed to us. And today, December 15, this joy was fulfilled for Sr Danila: for her it was her Christmas in heaven!

She was born in Cavasagra (TV) on 27. 07. 1928.

Her parents, Eugenio and Erminia Cavallin, in the baptism that took place on the same day, had called her Rosa and as such she grew up in her family (5 children) to blossom in the vocation to Consecrated Life by entering among the Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Gemona on March 17, 1946.

After a year of formation, on May 27, 1947, she started her novitiate and welcomed the new name: Sr Danila of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. Her first Religious Profession was celebrated in Gemona, on 2 June 1948.

In the same vocation, certainly attracted by the testimony of Sr. Danila, follows a younger sister, Sr. Ermenegilda, who became Superior General and Provincial Superior in the Congregation: same vocation with a different mission! Sr. Danila, after working for two

years in the Vedelago typography, engaged herself in the study obtaining the diploma of "Teaching qualification in the Preparatory School".

Therefore, we can say that the mission with children was the characteristic of Sr Danila who had the art of raising children with great skill and love by preparing them for life. Sent to different countries (Castagnole, Gemona, Mother House and Oasis, Artegna, Udine, Sedegliano, Treviso Borgo Cavour and Appiani, Codroipo, Cavasagra, Lancenigo, Paularo, Vivaro) she was also involved in parish ministry, close to families, the elderly and responding to people's needs. Several times and in different communities (in Sedegliano, Vedelago, Treviso-Appiani, Gemona-Oasi, Cavasagra and Paularo) she was entrusted with the service of local Superior who she carried out with a sense of simple and communicative responsibility.

In 2013, at the age of 85, she went to the mother house where she was no longer in the direct apostolic work, but the particular mission of prayer and offering of the last period of her history, when she could read with more lucidity the value of one's life 'spent for others'. In the last few days, we noticed the slow path towards the fulfillment of her earthly life now oriented towards heaven.

On December 15, the Superior and a group of sisters sang the Marian song which in the town of Sr Danila is called the 'Hymn of Cavasagra': "... *Who will take us to the longed-for beach? Merciful and beautiful Mary, shining star of the sea, Mary our hope, will be our guide!*"

And Mary became 'guide' towards the 'heavenly beach' where Jesus was waiting for Sr. Danila to give her the joy promised by the Word of God in 'gaudete sunday'.



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