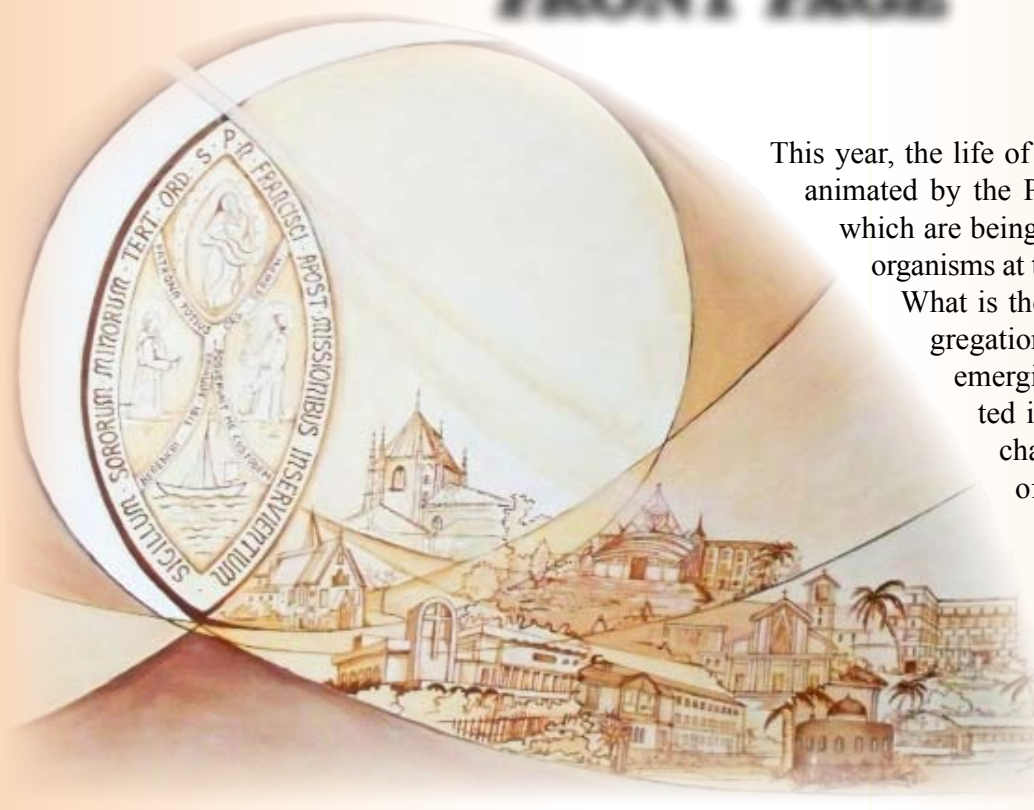


FRONT PAGE



This year, the life of the congregation is animated by the Provincial Chapters, which are being held in the various organisms at the appointed times.

What is the image of the congregation that is slowly emerging? It is a variegated image, owing to the characteristics of each of our Provinces or Apostolic Region: an immersion in very different cultures, a very different average age in the various organisms, and the specific problems of every society that welcomes us. All of the above is known by every one of us.

However, what unites us is that family love which is deeply felt, which makes distances shorter, ages closer, and cultural differences respected and appreciated. It is the “culture of religious life”, embraced by the charisma of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, which is stronger than and above what creates divisions in the world. In every Provincial chapter, although with different nuances and renewed styles, it was said that we are the bearers of a great project of spirituality, fraternity and mission. We all believe that fraternity, a gift from the Spirit, asserts the primacy of God and of His Kingdom, because it is the place of the encounter with Jesus Christ, with The One Who chose, gathered and sent us. An evangelized community is bound to evangelize. However, in order to be an evangelizing presence in this globalized world, which presents all the hues and nuances of pluralism, it is necessary to be mature women, adult in faith and culturally prepared. We must be able to combine the “how to do” with the “how to be”: this is what has resounded over and over again in our meetings.

In some environments, our mission is implemented in a “new”, though effective, way: without any conspicuous activities, but thanks to a simple and humble presence, the testimony of a fraternal cooperation between us and the others.

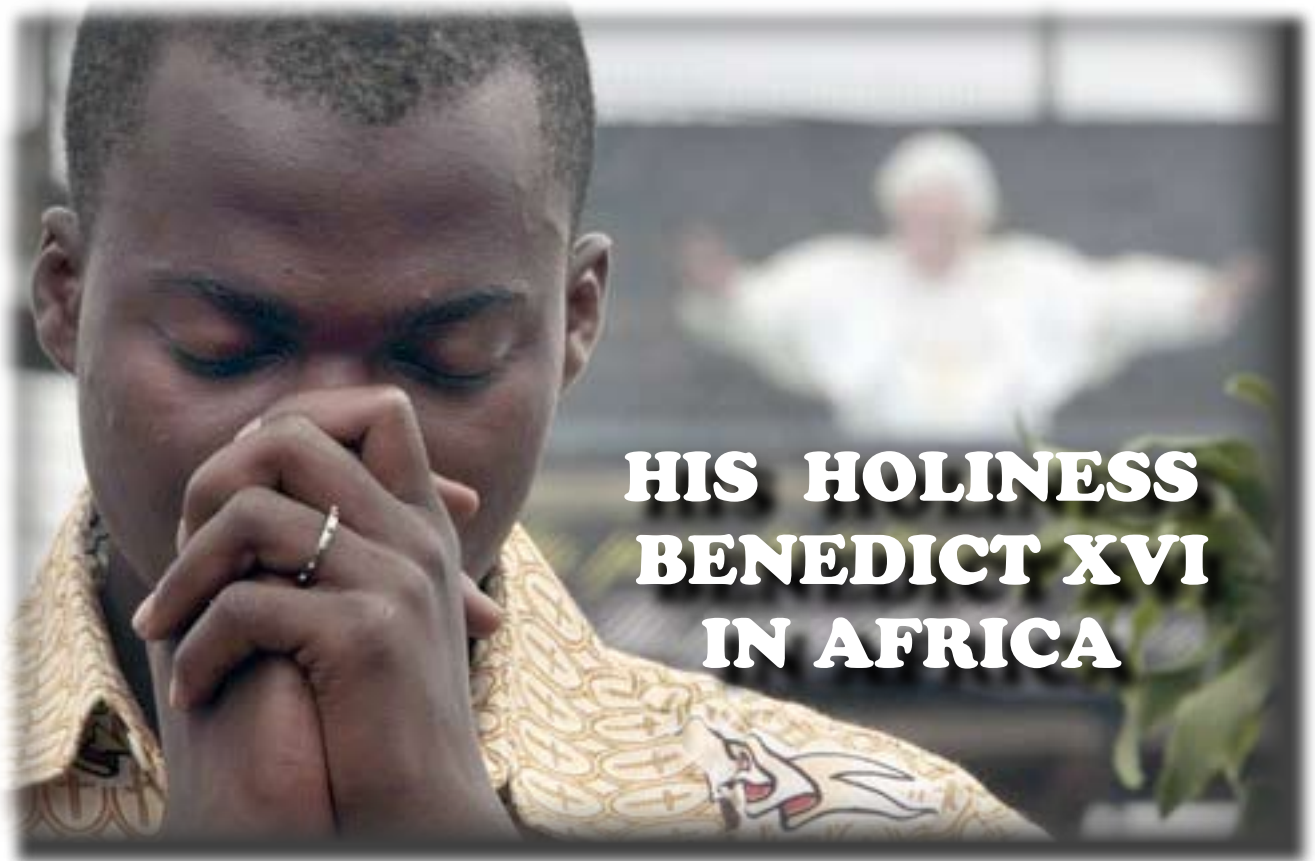
The missionary dimension, as St Paul used to repeat, prepares the person to a continuous operative effort everywhere, as a sign of the love of Christ that presses her (see 2 Corinthians 5:14). It was pointed out that we need to be able to keep up with the evolution of the societies where we live, because only by walking into the world that we want to evangelize, can we accomplish the mission that has been entrusted to us, accepting to face today’s problems and challenges.

One of the most creative challenges comes from lay people: this challenge is for all religious an opportunity to mature, a place and a chance to grow in communion and solidarity, and a new laboratory of faith and announcement.

The institutional tree shall display all the richness of its fruits by enlarging its branches to encompass the world of lay people.



WALKING WITH THE CHURCH



HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI IN AFRICA

“Spokesman of the justice and peace outcry”

This journey precedes by some months the second “Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops”, scheduled to be held in the Vatican from 4 to 25 October, whose theme will be: “The Church in Africa at the service of reconciliation, justice and peace”.

On this occasion, the Holy Father handed personally the work document “Instrumentum Laboris” to the representatives of the bishops conferences of Africa. The Pope responded to the invitation that had been addressed to him by both the Cameroun bishops conference and the President, Paul Biya, thus reinforcing cooperation ties between Cameroun and the Holy Seat.

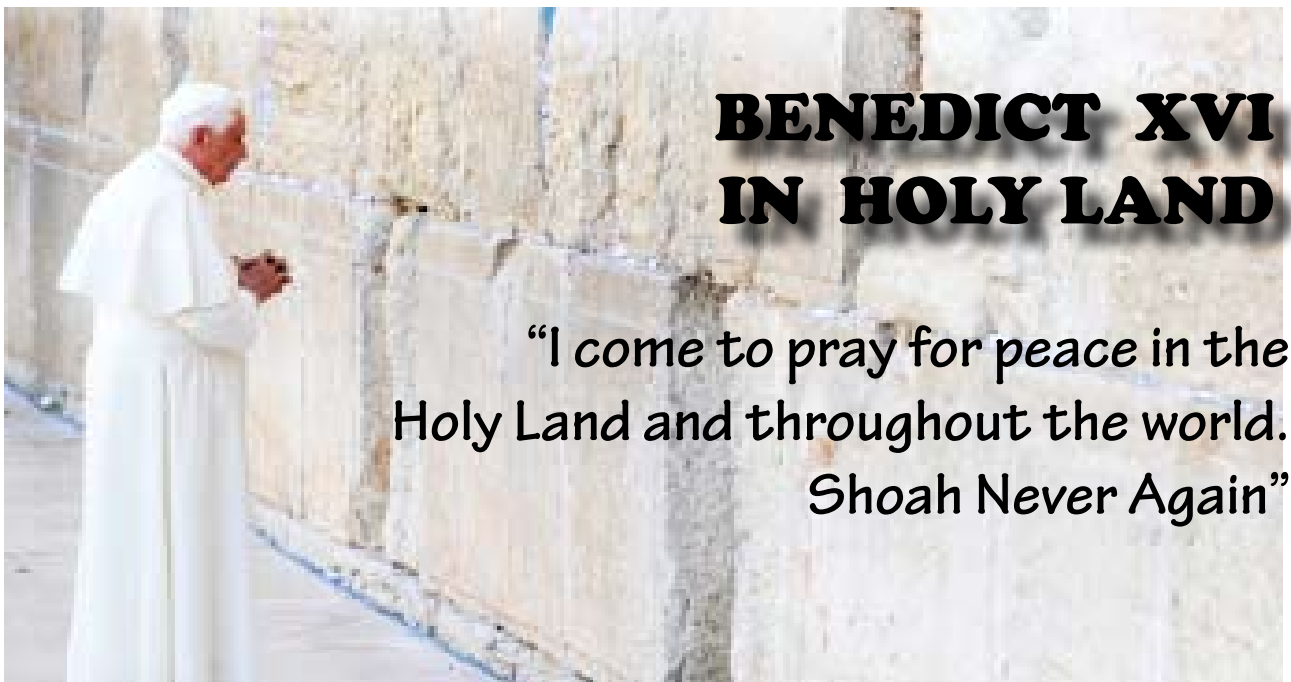
In addition, the Holy Father stressed how much he has at heart the African children, who are one of the challenges of evangelization that the Synod proposes to deal with, by reflecting on the social, economical, political and ethical aspects in order to combat increasingly successfully people’s poverty, wars and ethnic conflicts that have been lasting for too long. At the end of the visit, we have felt moral and



spiritual comfort for being able to pray with this “Man of God”.

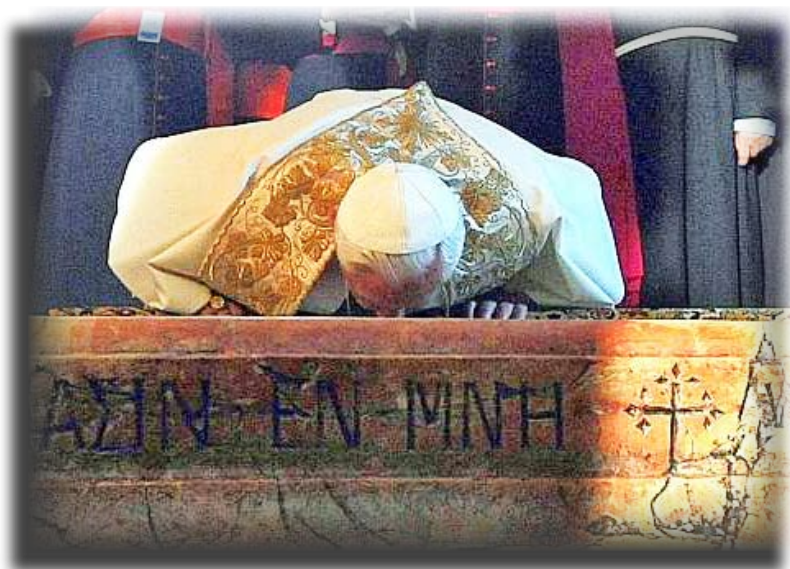
Some of our sisters, Sr Sylvie, Sr Rita and Sr Pascaline attended the services of sacristy, liturgy and the reception, and so they had the joy to meet the Pope.

After the visit in Cameroun, the Holy Father went to Angola and Sao Tomé for the 500th anniversary of their evangelization.



From May 8-15, 2009, His Holiness Benedict XVI made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The presence of the Franciscans and the role of their Custody there have always been of utmost importance for the Catholic Church since XIII century – when the missionary vocation of the Order started with the establishment of Missionary Provinces, especially this one beyond the sea, the Holy Land.

The Supreme Pontiff quickly recognized the Franciscans as representatives of the Church in the Holy Places. There are records that describe the presence of the Franciscans of the Holy Land as a gift of Divine Providence for the Church. In 1342, Clement VI was the first to recognize such a mission by the Franciscan Order; and in the subsequent centuries of relations between the Holy See and the Custody of the Holy Land, the concept that the Church has entrusted the



Franciscans with the custody of the Holy Places has always been affirmed.

The Pope acknowledges, for example, that despite the difficulty and sufferings of the Friars—especially the many Friars Martyrs of the faith – they have been faithful to the charism of their Father Francis. For this reason, the Popes reiterate that the Church admires and renders homage to their mission and constantly encourages them to continue their service to all.

“I come to pray in the holy places to pray especially for peace - peace here in the Holy Land, and peace throughout the world” is what Benedict XVI said this morning during the welcome ceremony at Ben Gurion International to Tel Aviv. The Pope was welcomed by President Shimon Peres and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. “The Holy See and the State of Israel - said the pontiff - share many values, above all the commitment to give to religion its rightful place in society. The just ordering of social relations requires and demands respect for the freedom and dignity of every human being ... When the religious dimension of the human person is denied or placed on the margins, it is put into jeopardy the very foundation of a correct understanding of human rights inalienable. “ He then stressed: “It is only right and fitting that during my stay in Israel, I have an opportunity to honor the memory of six million Jewish Holocaust victims, and pray that humanity has not ever to be a witness of a crime of similar magnitude. Unfortunately, anti-Semitism continues to raise its hideous head in many parts of the world. This is totally unacceptable. Every effort must be made to fight anti-Semitism wherever he is, and to promote the respect and esteem for those who belong to every people, race, language and nation around the world. “ Then he spoke of peace between Israelis and Palestinians: “beg those who are vested with responsibility to explore every possible way to find a just solution to the enormous difficulties, so that both peoples can live in peace in a country that is theirs, within secure and internationally recognized. “Finally he asked Christians, witnesses of the One who preached forgiveness and reconciliation”, to contribute to peace in the Holy Land.



WALKING WITH THE FRANCISCAN FAMILY



INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER

OF MATS 2009

The First Order of Friars Minor, Conventuals, Capuchins and the Third Order Regular (TOR) celebrated the International Chapter of Mats from April 15-18, 2009; it was an echo of that first Chapter that took place at St. Mary of the Angels back in 1221 where there were about 5,000 Friars. Although we may not have reached the extraordinary and intense level of 1221, nonetheless, our International Chapter of Mats will always be a *historical event*.

*** The Participants:** There were about 2,000 out of 35,000 Franciscans from 65 countries present at the event. In addition, there were Delegates from both the male and female Institutes who are inspired by Francis and Clare, the SFO/YouFra, and Franciscans from other Christian confessions.

*** The Motivation:** This year we celebrate the 8th centenary of our origins since the Spring of 1209 when Francis and his companions made their way to Innocent III to seek approval for their Gospel way of life which the Saint later committed to writing in few and simple words.

*** The Goal:** In their Summoning Letter of Easter 2008, the Ministers General of the Conference of the Franciscan Family have re-affirmed the sense of the Jubilee year, i.e., to renew our fidelity to our charism and capture anew all the spiritual heritage of our founder. Each one can do this with greater

commitment, energy, and openness to Christian hope by giving real and creative answers in their daily lives to the many challenges of



**"My blessed brothers,
let us observe the Rule
we have promised
the Lord "
(St. Francis)**



modern times. They indicated, moreover, that the Chapter of Mats should be “on the first day a moment of real communion and welcoming, on the second day of personal witness, the third day of penance and fasting, and lastly the forth day one of gratitude.”

At the conclusion of their Summoning Letter, the Ministers General then said, “During these days, as guests of the Church in Assisi, we will reflect on the Rule we have promised to observe and we will express in gestures our desire for conversion. We would like especially to conclude this historical experience by renewing our obedience to the “Lord Pope” and receive from him the command to go throughout the world and preach penance.” These gestures, therefore, were expressed during the first 3 days through our welcoming spirit, our witness, penance, fasting, and on the last day, April 18, through our thanksgiving to the Pope at Castel Gandolfo.



CAPITULUM GENERALE OFM

Portiunculæ (S. Mariæ Angelorum) 24.V.2009 - 20.VI.2009

GENERAL CHAPTER - CAPITOLO GENERALE - CAPÍTULO GENERAL

Verbum Domini nuntiantes in universo mundo



The 187th General Chapter of the Friars Minor



The 187th General Chapter of the Friars Minor began on the 24th of May 2009. The main celebrations are being held near the Sanctuary of the Portiuncula, where the Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis of Assisi was born 800 years ago.

The solemn opening concelebration of the Eucharist, presided by the current Minister General, Br. José Rodríguez Carballo, was on the 25th of May. The Minister, during his homily, highlighted the need to announce the Gospel with the power of Paul and the immediateness of Francis. The challenge is to go and stay, with out fear, in those regions where this mission is the cause of trial and suffering. «Go, Friars Minor, the Spirit of the Lord continues to say to us today, not as patrons of the truth, but as humble servants, and give gratuitously what you have received gratuitously. Go and announce their status of sons and daughters of the same Father and your brothers to all those you meet on the streets and squares of cities. Go and evangelise in collaboration with the laity, men and women, young and old. Go and, in every place and in every activity, give witness to evangelical values by remaining beside the people who do not know Jesus yet. It is certain that we will not be without difficulties, but it is the Lord Who says to us “Courage, do not be afraid”».

Report of the Minister General



«In a Chapter like ours, in which the theme is that of mission evangelisation, I think it would be appropriate to begin by recalling briefly what is meant today by ‘the evangelising mission’ in a franciscan style.

The evangelising mission, together with the experience of God and fraternal life, is one of the constitutive pillars of the religious life. Indeed, the mission will be effective only if there is a strong experience of God and an authentic fraternal relationship. The religious life, through these inseparable three elements, is thus transformed into a credible sign of the presence of the Kingdom and of the vitality and relevance of the Gospel, it is transformed into.



Evangelii
nuntiandi.

Besides the above mentioned elements there is a fourth essential element for the Friars Minor: minority, a dimension which orients and characterises our relationships with God, the Friars and the world. We are not simply a fraternity on a mission, or a contemplative fraternity on mission. We could, from what we have said, define ourselves as missionaries in the world, as Friars and minors, with our hearts turned to the Lord.



Looking to the future, it is necessary to strengthen the culture of collaboration in the Order on all levels – local, intermediate and universal –, even if the tendency to close itself into its own small world is strong on the part of every Entity. Inter-provincial and inter-cultural fraternities are increasing at too slow a rhythm. It is necessary to make a qualitative leap in the understanding of collaboration.

This cannot only be viewed as a remedy for or a way out of needs or of the lack of human resources, but as an important instrument for responding better to the demands of our vocation as Friars Minor, as the Church and, obviously, the society in which we live, asks of us. It is necessary to grow in the sense of belonging to the Order, aware that we all have professed the same style of life beyond the frontiers of our Entities».



THE GRACE OF THE ORIGINS

FROM THE MUSEUM OF MOTHER HOUSE “S. MARIA DEGLI ANGELI”

(Continuation)

THE FOUNDER FATHER GREGORY FIORAVANTI

Let us continue our visit to the museum of the Mother House, coming with veneration near the mementoes of our Founder.

In this first part, we shall present objects that, based on written witnesses, belonged to Father Gregory or were closely linked to him.

Unfortunately, there are not many objects that have been preserved to this day, but each of them is a precious testimony of the human and spiritual life of our Founder and of the origins of our Institute.

An example are the “Historical memoirs”, a work written in the years from 1878 to 1985 by Father Gregory, who left us the whole manuscript in two volumes. It is the only and irreplaceable historical document about the origins and the development of the Congregation from 1859 to 1885.



In a showcase of the museum, a handwritten letter is displayed which Father Gregory sent to the Archbishop of Udine to ask for the authorization to the Foundation, on 6 November 1860, with the affirmative and benedictory answer by the Archbishop on 14 November 1860.

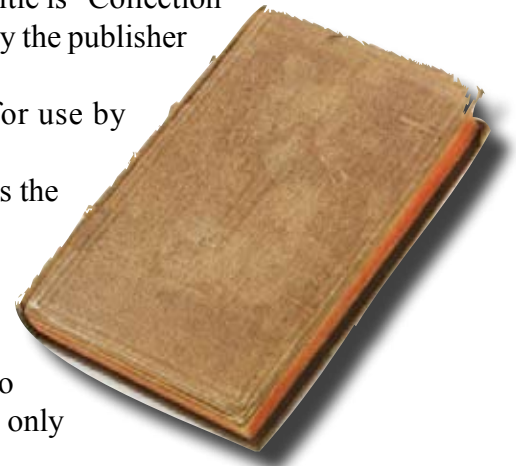
A book that belonged to the Founder is kept in the museum. Its title is “Collection of prayers and good actions” and was printed in 1855 in Rome by the publisher Perego-Salvioni.

On the first page there is the following proprietary note: “for use by Fr Gregory from Grotte di Castro, Min. Oss.”

The binding, made of cardboard reinforced with canvas, reflects the Founder’s spirit of poverty and humbleness.

We instinctively compare this book to the precious books, with refined bindings, which belonged to the Foundress.

These are telling witnesses of two very different personalities that, however, the Divine Providence had meet each other to implement one project: the foundation of a new Institute, whose only aim was the glory of God.



Father Gregory left us a booklet that he wrote by the title “A flower from Sudan”, printed in 1885 in Udine by the printing works of the Patronage.

It is the painful story of the young Sudanese Limona Dakoby, called Nibo, an African slave ransomed by the missionaries and, after many vicissitudes, entrusted to the Sisters in Gemona. Father Gregory had a primary role in the Christian formation of the young woman. After a few months from her arrival at “St Mary of the Angels” boarding school, she received Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist on 4 October 1883 in the Cathedral of Gemona, and she was given the name of Maria Francesca. She died shortly afterwards, on 22 April 1884.

Of special importance is the gift sent to Father Gregory by the Sisters in the United States. It shows the deep filial love that the first missionaries felt for the Founder.



TRAY

Silver-plated metal

The following dedication is engraved: To Very Revd. Father Gregory Prov. / From His American Daughters. / A. D. 1876.

The tray was brought to Gemona by the Superior General, Mother Angela Dell’Angelo who, in 1878, visited the American communities.

The original gift, a Silver snuffbox, that an American colonel sent to the Founder, also expresses the continuous paternal care that Fr Gregory had for the first American mission. The colonel, P Shaffner, helped the sisters with administrative work and was an admirer of Father Gregory.

His faithful observance of the vow of poverty is also apparent when, in a letter sent to the Minister General and dated 28 July 1876, the Father stated that the gift, for which a rich Protestant “had spent 82 dollars”, would remain in the convent, since “it is not suitable for a friar minor...”.

BUFFALO HORN WITH SILVER SNUFFBOX

Gift to the Founder by an American colonel. On the lid, the following dedication is engraved: Very Revd Father Gregory / M.O. Provincial / from Tal. P. Shaffner LL.D. / Kentucky /Colonel and knight Commander of Sword Order. / .Sweden:/ St Olaf Norway Dannebrog Denmark: S. C.& C.

Under the lid there is Shaffner’s photograph.



Another very meaningful memento is the statuette of Our Lady of Lourdes that Father

Gregory gave to Mother Angela.

A handwritten note, found in the inner cavity of the statue, bears the following testimony: “The Very Revd. Father Gregory, our Founder, went to Rome in 1884. He had this statuette blessed by his Holiness Pious IX. Then he gave it to the Superior General of the Institute, Mother Angela, who died in Solagna and left it as a memento”.

The small statue, which was kept by a sister who had come back to the Mother House from Solagna (province of Vicenza), was fortuitously recuperate after the 1976 earthquake; as it was broken, it revealed its origin.

The sister who wrote the note probably did not remember that, in 1884, the Pope was Leo XIII and not Pious IX.



We keep a precious image, wanted and venerated by the founder: it is the picture of the Lady of Perpetual Help.

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Oil painting on panel 1883

On request from Father Gregory, the Roman artist Monacelli reproduced faithfully the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, whose original is still venerated in the Redemptorists’ Church in Rome. The nice icon features Our Lady, melancholy and gentle, surrounded by Angels who show her the instruments of the Passion, the Passion of her Son, whom she is holding tenderly in her arms, as He is still a child.

It was solemnly enthroned on 31 May 1883.

Father Gregory’s intention was to spread the devotion to it in the whole region by displaying the picture over the Church altar with suggestions of prayers and reflections.

In 1895, the Convent Church was enlarged and modified. The picture of the Byzantine Lady was hung





on a side wall. In 1947, After other repairs, two small side altars were built with the wood that had been found in the warehouse and that dated back to the origins of the Institute.

The picture of Our Lady was placed on the right-side one, embellished with a crown made out of the ex voto offered by many devotees. A picture of St Joseph was placed on the left-side altar, on the model of that of the Virgin.

During solemnities, two Gothic ante were opened at the sides for displaying precious relics.

After the 1976 earthquake, the picture was placed in the Mother House's Infirmary Chapel.

We shall now present two precious objects that Father Gregory used: the kneeling-stool and the armchair.

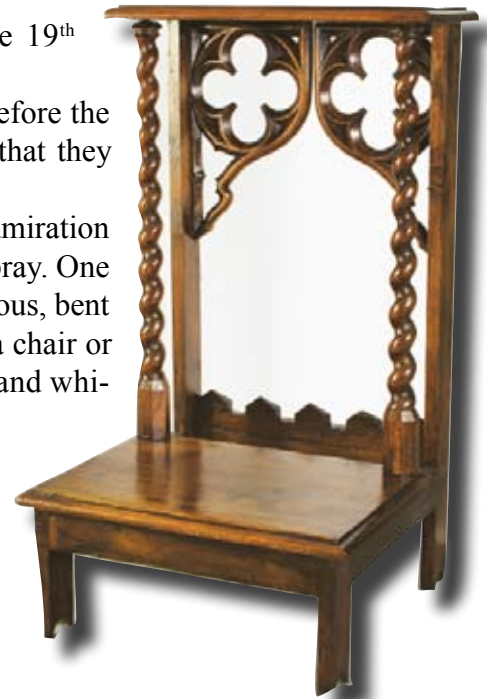
KNEELING STOOL

Wood with neo-Gothic motifs from the second half of the 19th century.

“Father Gregory spent long hours in prayer and in adoration before the Most Holy Sacrament. If they needed him, the Sisters knew that they could find him there

The Father's deeply silent and meditative attitude excited the admiration of the boarders too, who went privately in their small choir to pray. One of the girls, when he entered the church by the sacristy door, pious, bent and limping, used to tiptoe down the small choir to offer him a chair or a stool. He accepted the small gesture with an obliging smile and whispered “Thanks, Maria”. It was the young Maria Metz, who few months after Father Gregory's death would enter the Novitiate and become the sixth Superior General of the Institute with the name of Sr Maria Joseph of Jesus.

(Description by Sr Eligia Capriz).



ARMCHAIR

It is on this armchair, in the hospice sitting-room, that Father Gregory spent the last moments of his life and sufferings on earth, after the first ailment that had struck him during the celebration in the Convent Church.

That was on 23 January 1894.

Up to 1976, the armchair was in the small sitting-room of the hospice of “St Mary of the Angels” Convent.

PORTRAITS OF THE FOUNDER

Oil painting, probably the work of a contemporary brother.

The Father is portrayed at about the age of fifty. The crucifix hanging on his chest shows his status of “Apostolic Missionary”, as he had been recognized by the Order Authorities since 1866. By carrying (like many Franciscans) the beads of the Immaculate hanging from the al cincture and the missionary crucifix that was maybe meant to show that he was on the same wavelength as the Franciscan Missionary Sisters. Up to 1976, the picture was in the small sitting-room of the hospice.



About 1880
Of unknown painter, the work was made with charcoal on linen cardboard. The Father is portrayed at about the age of 60; the caption below is interesting, since it shows that his identity as “Founder” was now official and widespread. Up to 1976, the picture was in the Chapter Hall.

CHALICE AND PATEN

18th and 19th century
Silver and gold. Embossed fretwork which recalls the German taste. The foot, la stand and the stem date back to the fist half of the 18th century. The cup, the paten and the gilding of the pommel date back to 1800. At that time, it was customary to make such assemblages, since what counted was the value of the metal.





PISSIDE

19th century

COPE USED BY FATHER GREGORY

Second half of 19th century

Damask

Paraments made up of:

cope, chasuble, two dalmatics, two stoles,
two maniples, chalice veil and burse.



PAUSE UPON THE OLD TESTAMENT

Venice, Recurti, 1726
Handwritten note: Loci
Capuccinorum, Glemona

**SMALL NEO-GOTHIC ALTAR
WITH OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP**

Second half of 20th century

Built with the wood that had remained
in the warehouse since the times of foundation of the Institute.



PIANO

Father Gregory, who, like all the members of his family, had a nice voice and who, as a connoisseur of Gregorian chant, to which he used to introduce the young candidates, had the task of tuning up the pianos in the Convent. Brand name with coat of arms featuring the imperial eagle: “B. Filippi, Klabiemacher.”



WOOLLEN BLANKET USED BY FATHER GREGORY



“...He died with the smile of the just, the calm of the saint. He did not complain for the suffering caused by his illness, but resigned like the Angel of pain to that God who crushes and relieves, who troubles and comforts, engrossed in prayer and contemplation of heavenly things, he had no other wish than exchanging earthly things with Heaven’s eternal joy”.

(Letter which announced his death to the fraternities of Triveneto (north-eastern Italy), sent by the guardian Father Pier Battista da Valdastico)



CROCE ASTILE - ASTYLAR CROSS

1860

Neo-Gothic style carving

It preceded the processions that took place inside the Convent and along the garden paths during the Ember days”.

In addition, the cross preceded every funeral cortege during the accompaniment of the deceased Sisters to the graveyard.

LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION



Activity of the General Council December 2008- July 2009

In this period of time, the General Council dedicated themselves to various demanding activities.

- THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS:

* From 26 to 31 December 2008, the Superior General, Sr Emmapia, presided over the **XIII Chapter of “Mary Immaculate”** Roman Province, held in Rome, in the provincial House. The Vicar General, Sr Cecilia Subiabre, and the Councillor Sr Paola Dotto also took part. The theme of the Chapter was well presented in the logo: “Living our missionary vocation with passion, announcing Christ’s love and reaching for the redeemed mankind”. During the presentation of the situation of the Province, prominence was given to the missionary activity

On 30 December the Chapter elected the new provincial Council, which is made up as follows:

Sr Ermenegilda Cavasin	Provincial Superior
Sr Rosaria Iacobucci	Provincial Vicar
Sr Daniela Boa	2 nd Provincial Councillor
Sr Concettaria Barison	3 rd Provincial Councillor
Sr Antonia Costa	4 th Provincial Councillor.

Successively, the Provincial Council named

Sr Daniela Boa	as Provincial Secretary
Sr Concettamaria Barison	as Provincial Treasurer.

* From 18 to 25 January 2009, Sr Emmapia and Sr Cecilia took part in the **XII Charter of “St. Anthony”** Latin American Province in Santiago do Chile. The Chapter meeting, which was focused on the theme “Called to be sent... to live and serve in communion”, encouraged the exchange of reflections and missionary life experiences among the participants, many of whom were young, coming from five countries of Latin America. The opening of the Chapter was preceded by the inauguration of the Province’s infirmary.

On 23 January, which is dedicated to the commemoration of our founder, Father Gregory Fioravanti, the new Provincial Council was elected:

Sr Ines Pavan	Provincial Superior
Sr Antonina Turrina	Provincial Vicar
Sr Roxana Zapata	2 nd Provincial Councillor
Sr Mirella Venturin	3 rd Provincial Councillor
Sr Marcela Uribe	4 th Provincial Councillor.

Successively, the Provincial Council named

Sr Mirella Venturin	as Provincial Secretary
Sr Roxana Zapata	as Provincial Treasurer.

* In the **United States of America, the sisters of “St Francis” Province**, gathered in the Peekskill Provincial House on 14 March 2009, elected the new Provincial Council, which is made up as follows:

Sr Anne Matthew Carlone	Provincial Superior
Sr Antonia Maguire	Provincial Vicar
Sr Anna Maria Not	2 nd Provincial Councillor
Sr Anne James Guerin	3 rd Provincial Councillor
Sr Ellen Marie Mulloy	4 th Provincial Councillor.

* From 21 to 26 April 2009, Sr Emmapia, Sr Cecilia and Sr Paola took part in the **XIII Chapter of “St Louis IX” French Province**, which was held in the Provincial House in Le Mans. The capitular sisters, reflecting on the theme “Called, summoned and sent to live the mission in communion”, managed to rekindle a strong desire of spiritual and apostolic revival, as well as a stronger commitment for vocational pastoral.

On 24 April, the anniversary of the birth of our founder, Father Gregorio Fioravanti, the new Provincial Council was elected and is made up as follows:

Sr Elisabetta Varikkakuzhyil	Provincial Superior
Sr Armelle Kosta	Provincial Vicar
Sr Maria Luigia Borsato	2 nd Provincial Councillor
Sr Emmanuelle Piccolo	3 rd Provincial Councillor
Sr Paolina Mookenthottathil	4 th Provincial Councillor.

Successively, the Provincial Council named

Sr Armelle Kosta	as Provincial Secretary
Sr MariaLuigia Borsato	as Provincial Treasurer.

* From 9 to 14 June 2009, Sr Emmapia and Sr Cecilia took part in the **V Charter of “Saints Martyrs of Uganda” Apostolic Region in Nkoabang, Cameroun**. The theme of the chapter, “Sent to announce the Word and witness with our life” spurred a revision of consecrated and apostolic life, also in the light of the commitment of the whole African Church to prepare for the next Synod of Bishops.

On 13 June, the feast day of St Anthony, the special protector of the Congregation, the Superior General, Sr Emmapia, communicated the composition of the new Regional Council, which had been elected by the General Council. It is made up of:

Sr Fabrizia Zanettin	Regional Superior
Sr Beatrice Bifouma	Regional Vicar
Sr Mary Lukose Chamakala	2 nd Regional Councillor
Sr Giovanna Craighero	3 rd Regional Councillor
Sr Dorothee Ngassouga	4 th Regional Councillor,

Successively, the new Council named

Sr Dorothee Nkassouga	as Regional Secretary
Sr Mary Lukose Chamakala	as Regional Treasurer.

* From 1st to 8 July, Sr Emmapia and Sr Cecilia took part in the **XII Chapter of “St Mary of the Angels” Venetian Province**. The work instrument that collected the preparatory work of all the sisters in the Province was structured in three parts: “The Word enlightens life, the Word enlightens the mission, and the Word enlightens history”, and it developed the theme of the Chapter: “Mission: a gift - a commitment”.

On 4 July the new Provincial Council was elected and is made up as follows:

Sr Luisangela Severin	Provincial Superior
Sr Anna Maria Volpato	Provincial Vicar
Sr Marian Fusi	2 nd Provincial Councillor
Sr Chiara Ceron	3 rd Provincial Councillor
Sr Gina Tomadini	4 th Provincial Councillor.

- CANONICAL VISIT

In February and March 2009, the **Superior General, Sr Emmapia, visited the communities in “Mary Immaculate” Province** and went also to the Philippines and to Albania. She was happy and satisfied to see the missionary spirit, courage and apostolic zeal with which our sisters deal with situations of extreme material and moral poverty, bringing the healing Word of the Gospel everywhere, according to the Congregational charism.

- MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

- After a careful reflection, the General Council approved the “Formation Project”, which was updated during the formators’ meeting and later completed with the suggestions coming from the Institutions and reviewed by a commission led by the Vicar General, Sr Cecilia Subiabre.
- Attention and care was dedicated to the organization of the meetings scheduled in the six-year programme, which will take place in Rome’s General House:
the meeting of the Provincial Treasurers, which will be held from 9 to 19 December 2009;
the Extended General Council, which will take place from 4 to 12 January 2010;
the third meeting of the historical formation committee, which will be held in April 2010; the July 2010 renewal course for the sisters celebrating the jubilee of their religious life;
- After the necessary discernment, the following nominations have been confirmed:
Sr Daniela Boa, Mistress of the Juniorate in “Mary Immaculate” Province in Rome;
Sr Mercy Jacob Paruvaplackal, Mistress of the Novitiate in “Holy Family” Province, India;
Sr Giovanna Craighero, Mistress of the Pre-Novitiate in “Saints Martyrs of Uganda” Apostolic Region in Cameroun.
- The confirmation of the admission to the Perpetual Profession of the following sisters was reason for joy and gratitude to the Lord:

“St Mary of the Angels” Province:

Sr Marzia Ceschia
Sr Elodie Semdouto

“Mary Immaculate” Province:

Sr Maribel B. Yabora
Sr Lilibeth G. Labian
Sr Mirza B. Corral

“St Anthony” Province:

Sr Esther Mercedes Quinde Cuso
Sr Ana Ruth Ayma Quispe

“Holy Family” Province:

Sr Nirmala Buradagunta
Sr Karuna Minj
Sr Litty Myladoor
Sr Valeria Ekka
Sr Nayomi Gadapati
Sr Shaiby Paul Kolenchery

-TRANSFERS:

Sr Ermellina Callegari was transferred from “Saints Martyrs of Uganda” Apostolic Region to “St Mary of the Angels” Province,
Sr Crescence Mbezele was transferred from Cameroun to Santiago in Chile,
Sr Silvia Aro from Chile to Cameroun
Sr Marlene Rocio from Chile to St Mary of the Angels community in Assisi
Sr Alicia Gallardo from Chile to St Mary of the Angels community in Assisi



USMI

TRIMESTER SABBATICAL

“A time
of grace”

*“Bless the Lord my soul,
do not forget any of its benefits
Bless the Lord, O my soul”
(Psalm 103)*

In 2008 too, at USMI (Union of Italian Major Superiors) in Zanardelli street in Rome, the sabbatical trimester took place for 60 religious belonging to 36 congregations, of 16 different nationalities, some dedicated to apostolic activities here in Italy and others, the majority, in countries of mission in the five continents.

In this rich mixture of cultures, experiences and various charisms, there were also three of us, Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart: Sr Alicia Gallardo, Sr Ana Maria Escanilla and Sr Antonella Lago.

Formation started on 15 September and ended on 13 December. The fixed programme was not typical of a pastoral updating, but was set up in order to favour a genuine experience of God, as well described by the title: “Making our way to spiritual life”.

This is the reason why we would like to share it, in joy and in the praise of God for the gifts of grace that we have received.

“During the first week, spent at the community of the Canossian Sisters from Ottavia, we could get to know one another and familiarize. This was favoured by the place’s fraternal atmosphere, by teamwork and by the presentation of the first themes “Communication and dialogue in community and spirituality of communion”.

The formation paths immediately introduced us to the reality of our life as consecrated women: being in a love relationship with God and others, almost a reflection and a participation to Trinitarian love.

Hence the need to assume and deal constructively with personal and external conflicts, both within the community and those regarding our apostolic activity, until we are able to accept limitations as a space of hope. This would be impossible without a knowledge of the person, of the dynamics of psyche in the spiritual path, without accepting our own history, re-examined in the light of the love which redeems, makes us free and welcomes every man to turn him into a new creature. For a lucky coincidence, we had our sabbatical trimester in the Pauline year. Paul helped us in the sense that he incessantly reminded us to consider everything so much rubbish in order to find HIM, the true light that comes into the world and to increasingly take the shape of Christ by giving more and better Love.

It was important to understand the unity of the person made of body, soul and spirit, reaching out towards God, who urges us to be women of contemplation and mission within our community and



the Church. Women like Mary, sister and disciple, like all those who have followed and served faithfully the Teacher during his apostolic journeys, with a feminine connotation of motherly dedication and sensitivity, that the Church has never lacked, but which needs to emerge even more in our times.

Many of us have understood quite clearly that they are often overwhelmed by action, that they put urgencies before what is fundamental for our life and the Kingdom.

The Synod on the Word of God too was a sign for us, a strong invitation to really nourish ourselves with the Eucharist and the Holy Scriptures, because this is the only thing that can renew our life and make us joyful and free in a world which increasingly relativizes our work, but which remains sensitive to the witnesses of the Gospel. Various moments of lectio divina and spiritual exercises helped us further experience the legitimacy of this choice to become liturgy in life.

Finally, the encounter with Jewish faith and the Islamic world enabled us to make an obvious comparison regarding the themes of religious freedom and salvation.

The teachings at the venue were positively alternated with days of itinerant formation: Montecassino - Calamari; audience of the Holy Father; pilgrimage in Turkey; Pauline itinerary in Rome; visit to Quirinale Palace and to the catacombs. Those were quite meaningful and appropriate moments not only for the spiritual, historical and artistic beauties that we visited, but also for the cohesion of the group, since they enabled us to stay fraternally together and to get to know one another even better.

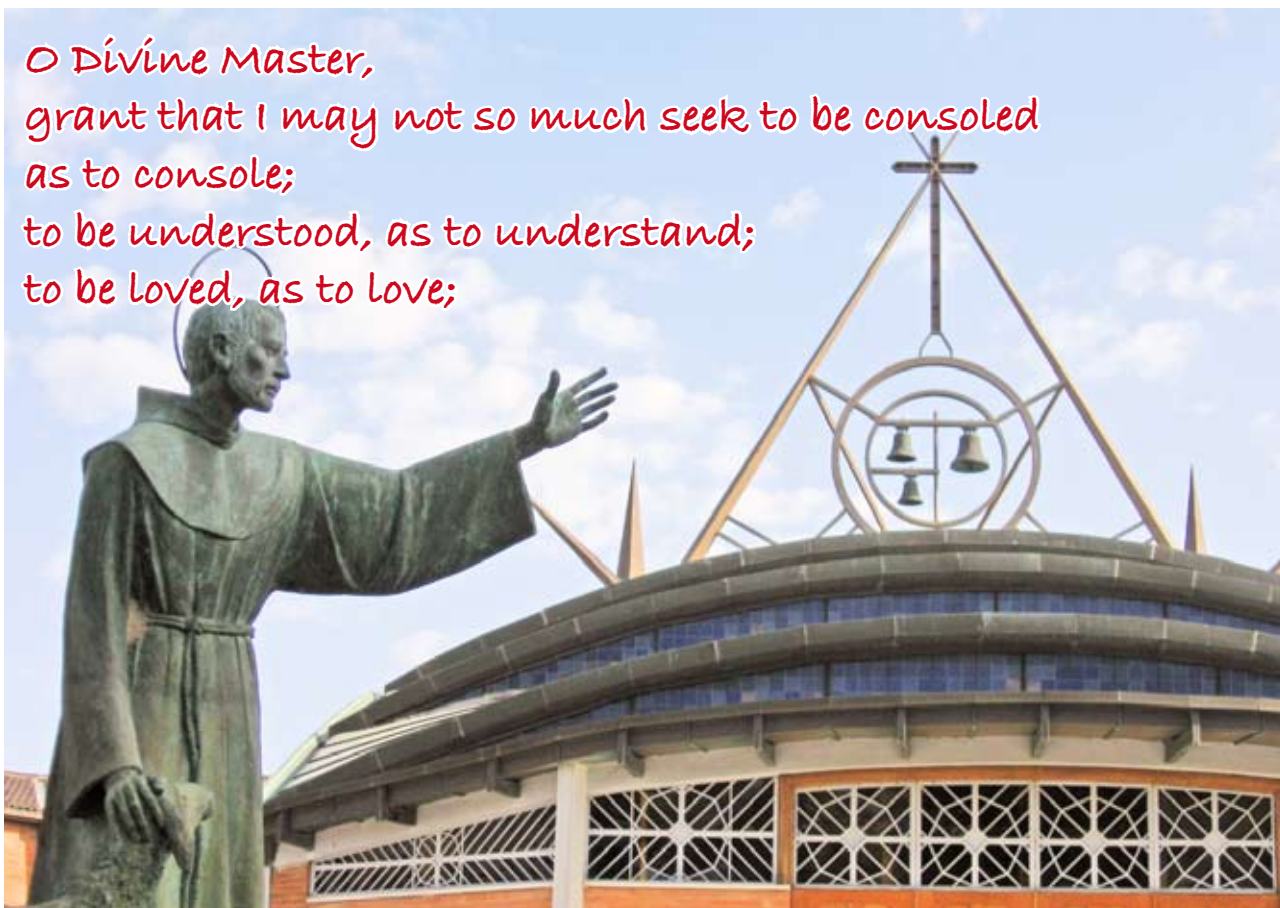
God has really shown us the path towards spiritual life: it is up to us to keep the door open, to be vigilant and follow Him in the mystery of life and love, in a faithful abandonment to His will”.

The sisters of the 2008 sabbatical trimester

“God has truly shown the way towards the interior: to us to keep the door open, be vigilant and follow him into the mystery of life and love, trusting in abandonment to his will.”



O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled
as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;



Name day of the Superior General Sister Emmapia Bottamedi

April 19, 2009

“The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord”. These words of the Liturgy are finely tuned with the reason of our joy today. Indeed, there is a great celebration today in the General House for the Name Day of Emmapia, our Superior General. Many sisters from the communities in Assisi, Grotte di Castro and in the Roman Province have come since early this morning. It is a feast for the whole Congregation: a sign of it are the numerous greeting messages coming from everywhere and by all means. We all rally around our Superior General, relishing the joy of feeling sisters of this big religious Family. The heart of the celebrations is certainly the Eucharist, presided by Fr Mario Favretto, Definitor general of the Friars Minor. By commenting the liturgy of this Second Sunday of Easter, he has given us a message that was quite relevant and meaningful. Let us welcome his words with an open heart:

“This anniversary is a good opportunity for you to dedicate a day of feast and gratitude to the major Superior who is guiding you. Therefore, it is a feast of the Fraternity, as testified by the presence of the

neighbouring communities and of the representatives of the various parts of Italy.

The service of the Superior General to all the Sisters of the Congregation must continuously draw from the risen Christ and always refer to the Community. These are two fundamental aspects of the service of the person at the helm of a community or of a Congregation of people that are consecrated to the Lord. The reference to the risen Christ, especially on the part of those who bear the responsibility of authority in the community, leads to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

The Lord who leads His flock, that is the Community which was newly born at Easter, this is the model for every superior.

In this reassuring figure we find the picture of our service that we now celebrate in the person of Sr Emmapia. The Shepherd must find pasture for his flock. In practice, it is the experience told in the Gospel: “we have seen the Lord”.

In the community, the Sisters must be guardians of the encounter with Jesus Christ, but there is a need for so-

meone who guarantees and voices this experience. The Superior General is the one who must keep this memory and hope alive constantly and everywhere: by bearing witness, urging, animating and correcting... that is the Pasture!!

The Pasture is also the guidance, the choices, the novelty, all things that the Superior General -not alone- must offer to the whole community.

Then the shepherd must precede the flock. The Superior General walks in front to instil confidence, to orient the community and to make the presence of the risen Christ, who never leaves his own alone and orphans, visible.

Sr Emmapia, who constantly travels from one nation to the other; her frequent visits... are the ways of a guide who must precede those who have been entrusted to her (and we know how demanding and tiring this service is, which often makes one regret the quiet of one's home and the serenity of daily routine).

Jesus, who appears in the Cenacle and surprises his own with his frequent visits, is the emblem of this service by the Superior General: "the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord".

Finally, the guide of the community, like the Good Shepherd, must take care of loitering sheep and look for those who get lost or go astray. In this trait it is easy to see the experience of Thomas,

who momentarily emarginated himself from the community.

However, testimony, patience and love for those who sometimes find it hard to find the risen Christ, or faith itself, or for those who lack faith in the community, sooner or later conquer and ensure that the communion is restored: "they were of one heart and mind".

Dear Sr Emmapia, here are some aspects of this Easter that can enlighten and sustain a service that is both precious and demanding.

And to you, all Sisters, really dear because we share St Francis' charism, here is a feature of Easterly light and joy that can become part of your community and your life, through today's opportunity, but more often through the presence and the person of your Superior General.

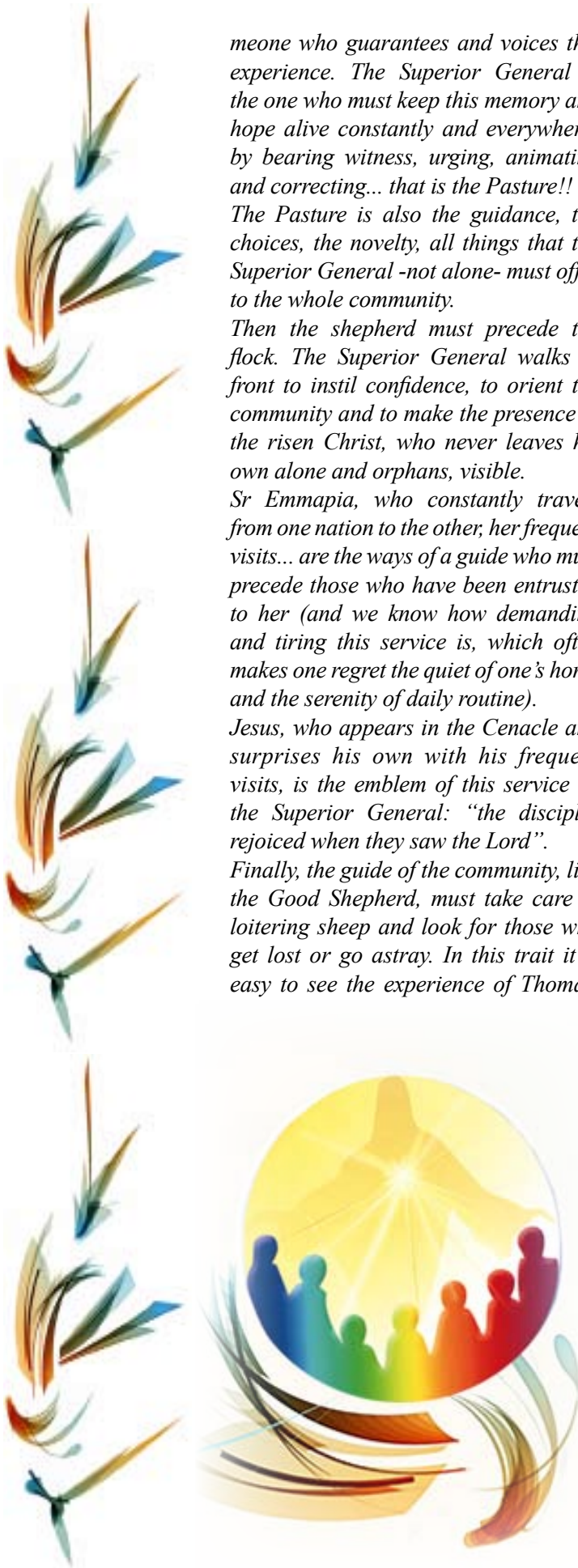
Dear Sisters, here is how the risen Lord never leaves us alone, but wants the novelty of the Resurrection to actually overwhelm our life and make us all true witnesses.

Therefore let us pray that it be so!"

With the good taste of the Word and of the Bread broken in the Eucharist, let us continue our celebration by sharing in fraternal joy the meal, which also makes it possible for all the attending sisters to exchange fraternal greetings and wishes.

In the afternoon, the young sisters of the General House entertained us by offering a sample of their creativity. In this city, we could not avoid a reference to the Pauline year, which is involving the whole Church. So, our good young sisters presented us, in an original way, a last letter from St Paul Apostle, a fresh letter, written especially for us religious, a synthesis of all his letters, full of spirituality but above all of the love for Jesus Christ that was burning in Paul's heart.

Encouraged and happy, after a day spent in fraternity and Franciscan joy, we resumed our daily path with the reassuring certainty of a spiritual presence that pervades us all: the unique charism of our religious Family.



From the Community of St. Mary of the Angels
 "Porziuncola" - Assisi

"THE EXTRAORDINARY
 IS ORDINARY!"



It is an immense grace to be Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Assisi. Many times have we thought that it is really a big gift for our big religious family to have a house here, where lie the roots of the faith and spirit that have animated our Founders themselves! "Saint Mary of the Angels" in Gemona, the common birthplace of all the Sisters of the Congregation, providentially corresponds to "Saint Mary of the Angels" in Assisi! So, how do you live in Assisi? Well, first of all you live in Assisi... in an ordinariness which is always extraordinary! Indeed, the first goal of this fraternity is welcome and whoever comes brings with her -and for us too!- her wealth, her novelty, her exceptionality! Since this house was opened, many sisters from all parts of the Congregation have been able to find here -for short or longer periods- a privileged point of reference to make personally, in these suggestive places, a concrete experience of Francis and Clare's spirit. This is for us an important opportunity to get to know, directly from our Sisters, the variety of our missions in the world, to listen to different points of view, to strengthen our common bonds, and to marvel at the diversity in unity of our Family.

And then there are the young people: they come in groups or alone. They find accommodation at our community and attend the vocational courses and the courses for engaged couples organized by the friars minor during the climax of the liturgical year. Sometimes -especially in summer- they ask us to accompany them in a Franciscan itinerary or they get in touch with us to listen to our witness. Anyway, they live with us, they share our environment, and this -they say- makes them feel "at home" and enables us even in the simplicity of the most material services- to be close to their histories and hopes, by going a short way together. Sometimes these relationships last in time and friendships are born and the Lord makes us fellow travellers for a longer time, even if we are distant.

Even mature people, who had difficult times, have called on us if only to look for some listening and peace. We especially keep a fond memory of the moments when we hosted young couples who were about to wed or couples committed in their journey of faith: it is nice to see that there are people who really want to start a Christian family! Ours is the privileged place to let the beauty of every vocation develop freely.

Apart from our welcome activity, we also try to offer our contribution to parish life as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, by animating the Marian month and the rosary for the dead, as well as by taking part in the yearly visit to and blessing of the families.

We have a nice and frank relationship with our neighbours, who recall with esteem all the Sisters who operated in this community.

On occasion of the feast of the Sacred Heart, we have kept the tradition of gathering all together in our garden for the Holy Mass and spending together a simple moment of conviviality and sharing. Indeed, this is an “enlarged fraternity”, in which our Sisters of the Viole community regularly take part. We often meet them, not only during retreats, but also simply to stay together and tell one another our daily experiences.

A sister has been making weekly visits to the Caritas welcome centre for a year now, with no particular task other than giving some of her time, listening, understanding and providing some animation and elementary catechesis to the two youngest hosts of the centre (Margherita, 5, and Paolo, who is almost 2) as well as attending Holy Mass, praying with people of all origins, sometimes with a very hard past and an hopeless present. This experience opened our eyes on new and discomfoting poverties and we certainly receive



from it more than what we give.

The presence of a student Sister at the Theological Institute in the last three years, apart from the unquestionable opportunities in terms of formation, has offered us the chance to build truly fraternal and friendly relationships with the communities of young friars on formation and with the sisters of the other Institutes.

The same atmosphere of mutual welcome and sharing can be felt also in the missions to the people in which some of us have taken part. We put in common our charisms, proposals and strengths and this makes every cooperation more fruitful. In Assisi you certainly breathe a special richness of Franciscan consecrated life and we pray the Lord to make us increasingly capable of sharing with all the Sisters of our Family the gift of being here!

We will sketch a programme for the new pastoral year as soon as possible, and we will put to your attention some events that you could suggest also in your parishes. In the meantime, we strongly invite you to come and visit us and assure you of our constant prayer to St Francis and St Clare, so that the Lord fills every one of

us with all His Peace and all His Good.



*The
“Porziuncola”
fraternity
of St. Mary
of the Angels -
Assisi*

FROM THE HOUSE OF FORMATION

PROVINCE "HOLY FAMILY" - INDIA RELIGIOUS PROFESSION OF

***Sister M. Lourdumatha Dola,
Sister Padma Bhupathi,
Sister Sunitah Varla,***

***Sister Victoria Kaitepalli,
Sister Sumathi Gurram,
Sister Roja Jada.***

CARMEL NAGAR -India, 19th June 2009

"Here I am Lord"



The day dawns with a beautiful music on 19 June 2009; though the nature was still pining for the monsoon showers which reduces the terrible heat, had not yet come, the Carmel nagar, and St. Joseph Novitiate has wasted in 'festal dress' and adorned with all her jewels, because six of her daughters are going to walk down the aisle today....not only the not only the sisters and the novices, but even the flowers and trees... and the whole atmosphere is in a festal mood to witness the heavenly experience of the first Profession ceremony.

Six novices, Lourdumatha Dola, Victoria Kaitepalli, Padma Bhupati, Sumathi Gurram, Sunitha Varla, and Roja Jada!, for them it is a day of great significance, a day which fulfills the dreams of a life time. The day which open a new thoroughfare... The day of that mystical Marriage with the Son of the Almighty God... for those who believes ... and lives it!

Born in ordinary families, studied in village schools, played the village games, they too laughed and cried like any one else, but did they ever think of a Noble and Royal event with so many significance, in simple but great! It is planned by the Lord, the Almighty God, who has called them to the heart of the church, as his living witness, even before they were born..... !

At the presence of their ecclesial and religious authorities, parents and relatives... they walked forward with firm steps, and pronounced their vows with clear and determined voice submitted their lives to God, through the hands of Sr. Maddalena Moro the Provincial Superior.

The Lord who called Peter, James, John; Francis, Clare and Agnes; Fr. Gregory, Laura Lerox., and many others, has called these young ladies by their names and asked them to follow Him; with a heart full of joy and the serenity which comes from above, they said Yes Lord !... here after you take my life, guide my steps, direct my thoughts, so that I may do Your Work.

19 June 2009, the date is written in golden letters in their hearts, the day which heaven came down to them, the day which they said, 'I want nothing else other than you..... My Lord...! Give me only your Mother, so that looking at her often, mirror of perfect virtues, I may allow those virtues to grow with in me, until I become a perfect resemblance of you'!

We rejoice with them whole heartedly, remaining in great admiration, in these Sacred moments which takes place in their lives..... but ours too...!

Sr. Mercy Jacob
Novice Mistress



**Province
"St. Mary
of
Angels"
Gemona**

**XII Provincial Chapter at
"St. Mary of the Angels"
1 - 8 July 2009 - Gemona**



THE MISSION: A GIFT - A COMMITMENT

After an adequate time of preparation by all the sisters, "St Mary of the Angels" Province opened wide the doors of the Mother House to welcome the chapter members. There were 27 sisters, including the ex-officio members and 21 delegates; the Chapter was presided by the Superior general, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, who came from Rome with the Vicar Sr Cecilia Subiabre.

After a day of intense reflection guided by Fr Luigi Guccini, a known expert of spirituality of religious life, the chapter opened with a celebration of intercession with the Holy Spirit. The sisters moved from the "ancient chapter hall" to the renewed main hall, where everything had been prepared with order and good taste to welcome Chapter members.

Every chapter member found at her appointed place the Gospel opened with a note reading that our



“Rule and life is the Holy Gospel”. The Superior general’s opening speech focused on some points which were essential for the Congregation. It was followed by the presentation of the programme and the implementation of its contents.

The reports that were presented to the assembly were very interesting. First, the report, rich in cues for spiritual life, by the Provincial Superior Luisangela Severin and the accurate account by the Provincial Treasurer Sr Dinamaria Contini. Then there was the presentation of some meaningful works of the Province: the Center for Missionary Animation, the “Sacred Heart” university boarding house in Udine, the

“Franciscan Sisters” rest home in Treviso, the “Sacred Heart” community in Niem and “Father Gregory” community in Maigarò, Central African Republic, as well as the “Mother House” in Gemona, a multipurpose building for the benefit of many sisters, also from outside the Province, and finally “St Mary of the Angels” school in Gemona, presented by the headmaster and two teachers.

July 4 was dedicated to the election of the Provincial superior and the four councillors. This important act was preceded by the prayer of adoration.

However, it was above all the numerous old sisters of the Province who daily offered their prayers and sacrifices for the success of the Chapter.

The newly elected Council is made up as follows.

Sr Luisangela Severin	Provincial Superior
Sr Annamaria Volpato	Vicar and 1st Councillor
Sr Marina Fusi	2 nd Councillor
Sr Chiara Ceron	3 rd Councillor
Sr Gina Tomadini	4 th Councillor



The Archbishop of Udine, Msgr Pietro Brollo, crowned the morning elections with his fatherly presence and his authoritative words. The work instrument, which had been prepared by the chapter-sisters, showed orderly the summary of the preparatory work made by all the sisters in the Province. The basic theme

“The mission: a gift - a commitment” was presented under three meaningful aspects: The Word enlightens life - The Word enlightens mission - The Word enlightens history. The Chapter offered to all the sisters of the Province many incentives for renewal. In her closing speech, the Superior General stressed the need to feed our faith, because only on a solid foundation of faith can an authentic religious life continue to flourish and be prophetic and visible for the world of today.



Our presence in the House of Rest “Bishop Crico “- Vedelago



The new and splendid residence for the aged at Vedelago have naturally involved us also the Sisters of the Kindergarden “Margaret Sanson”.

Invited personally by the president Alexander Gamba to Spiritual presence for the old people in the new residence, we all have felt called to a new mission and, we put ourselves with the 120 old people of the Aged Home.

In the Spirit of Saint Francis we dedicate ourselves in minority, humility and in Joy in the Pastoral

works of consolation among the old people and all the others those who are in need and are in the suffering, by trying to offer them our support especially in the spiritual and human aspects, “trying to help these people not to die before their natural death”.

In fact Fr. Umberto Miglioranza, who is working in the Aged Home of Castel franco Veneto, reveals that “ many old people who are in the Aged Home, even though physically still efficient , feel absence of their life because, they understand that they are cut out from the World, and they are with strict contact with the solitude”

It is very different the spiritual journey of our people here: they live the faith very intense way and their great desire of being alive is strengthened more in the moment of the Sunday Holy Eucharist, so that the Mass becomes for them the central point of their best meeting, awaited and above all well intimately lived.

We Sisters are present in the Liturgies, even to help the Priest to distribute the Eucharist in the different wards, where there are our old people who can not come down to the Church for the Mass, we animate the Holy Rosary, the Stations of the Croce, the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, etc.

By passing time with this reality help us to know them better and to accept the value of the their life which they had lived in the past and which keep them with many sadness in their hearts, because they have no one to tell all about them.

To them enough little attention and little patience to listen their stories or some time a visit of a child to make them more happy and understand the value of their life it self.

We the Franciscan sisters, we try to participate in their celebrations of various moment as: Birthdays, Christmas, Easter, Carneval, with the presence of Children of the Catechism and Confirmation and with songs, poems, dances, we make them to smile and to live all these moments of joy.



We have the awareness that the time dedicated to these people by the new mission God waits from us, as we read in our Constitutions: “The Franciscan Sister is called to Charitable ministry, it is full filled with compassionate love which she gets from the heart of Christ and help the brothers to understand the redemptive value of the solitude and the sufferings.”

Vedelago sisters.

Sr. Terlisa, Sr. Pierantonio, Sr. Elisa, Sr. Chiara.

Continue the **“YES”** of **ALPINI** to **SOLIDARITY**



Once again, it is the Central African Republic, a State situated in the heart of Africa and considered one of the poorest of the immense African continent, to beg help from the generous Alpines, the Italian elite mountain soldiers, of Gemona.

Everyone knows that those who “knock at an Alpine’s heart” always gets a ready and joyful reply.

The Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who were founded in Gemona back in 1861 and are now present in 21 countries on different continents, know that too. Over there, in the torrid Central African savannah, where the villages of Niem and Maigaro are to be found, the Alpines of Gemona have been helping for several years to build schools and welfare facilities, thanks also to the contribution of many people from Gemona, who support these works, both through “long distance adoptions” and spontaneous shows of solidarity.

This year, the Alpine Francesco Gubiani has spent two and a half months in these missions to help other volunteers with urgent masonry works and other needs.

With the typical style of the Alpine, who never surrenders in the face of difficulties, Francesco has given his best by experiencing, day after day, the scorching heat of an implacable sun, but with his heart full of the awareness that every drop of sweat increased the hope for a different future for many people left alone and forgotten by the so-called “great ones”.

And to the many children who were toddling around him joyfully asking for candies, Francesco gave a really sweet smile full of love, the love that only the Alpines can give, because their own life is GRATUITOUS and SINCERE LOVE.

In 2009, as in the past few years, the Alpine hat came to Central Africa, a telling symbol of humanity and solidarity, demonstrating to a land which is still torn by civil wars that only by abandoning selfishness can something new and nice be realized in this world.

The Alpine radio amateur Sebastiano Gimillaro is the one who keeps alive the thread of fraternity and friendship with the volunteers and the mission in Central Africa.

For 15 years now, on Tuesdays and Fridays at 8 a.m., he has been switching on his magic buttons and greeting his volunteer friends and the missionaries in Niem and Maigaro, conveying and gathering news on their health and on the progress of works.

“THANKS”, our Alpine friends, you are a great support in this big adventure that we have undertaken together, hand in hand, because we believe in the power of LIFE and LOVE.



Sr. Chiarfrancesca Cappelletto

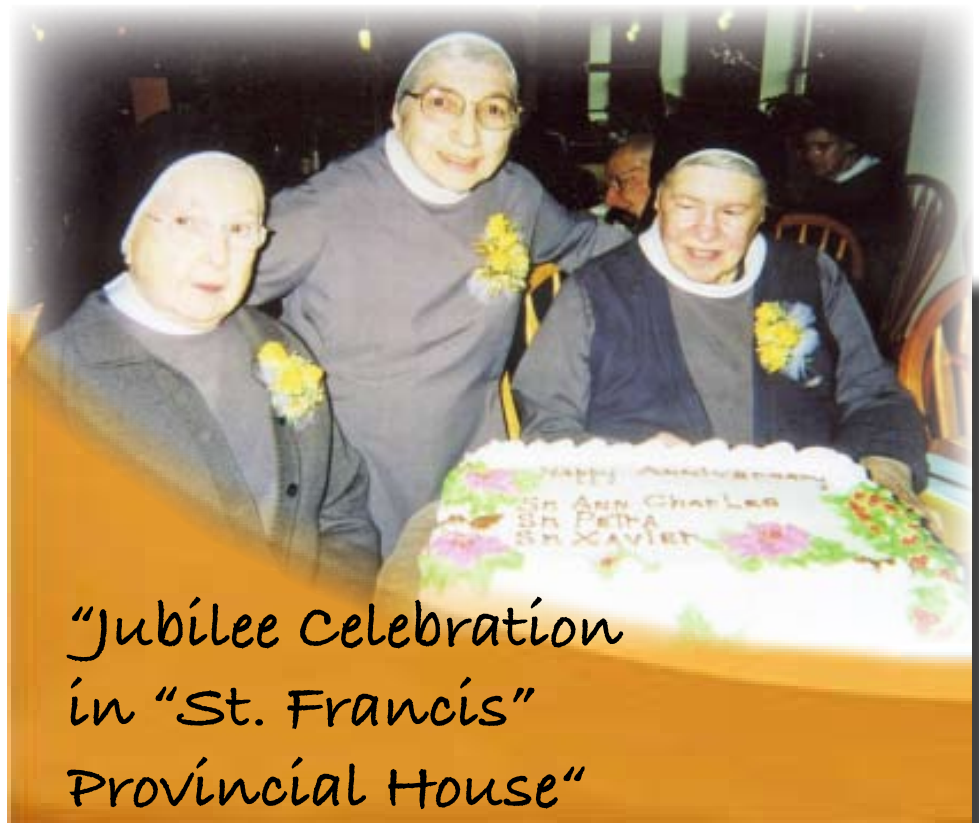
From our Missionary World
 Pace e Bene

Province
 "St. Francis"
 USA

With gratitude to God for His great gift of the Call to serve Him in a special relationship of communion, our three Jubilarians remember with joy the day in which, very young age, in 1948, climbed for the first time the steps of the

Convent of Mt. St. Francis, to begin and to fulfill their response to the divine call. Our thoughts go to our four companions who are already enjoying their reward in heaven. Here are our three jubilarians in the commemorative picture of their 60th anniversary among the FMSC: AR. ANN CHARLES, FROM IRVINGTON, NEW YORK, SR. MARY XAVIER SANSEVERE, FROM UNION CITY, NEW JERSEY AND SR. M. PETRA ZANGHI, FROM SOUTH PHILADELPHIA.

It was very well prepared and participated the thanks giving Mass, celebrated by our Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Charles Reinbold, in our Chapel in Mt. St. Francis; dedicated to Saint Margaret of Cortona. At the Celebration, united with our



"Jubilee Celebration
 in "St. Francis"
 Provincial House"

three Sisters to share the songs of praise and thanksgiving for the miriads of blessings of material and spiritual benefit they received during these long period of their consecrated life, were present our Provincial Superior Sr. Anne James and all the sisters of our local Community in Peekskill with the Superior Sr. Ann Patrick and many other dear ones who came to greet them. After the Solemn Mass all were invited to our Dining Room to taste and enjoy the "Feast Day Dinner" and in fraternal Agape, then to continue with the company of the sisters, families and friends to Congratulate our three courageous Franciscan Sisters.

**Province
“St. Louis IX”
Francia**



XIII Provincial Chapter

“St. Louis IX”

21-26 april 2009

*“Called,
Summoned
and sent ...*



*to live
in communion
the mission”*

This was the theme of the Chapter that gathered, at the Provincial House in Le Mans, from 21 to 26 April, the 17 delegated sisters, at the presence of the Superior General Sr Emmapia, the Vicar Sr Cecilia and the Councillor General Sr Paola.

The Chapter was solemnly opened right on 21 April, the happy anniversary of our Congregation, with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration presided by the Bishop of Le Mans, who, with his authoritative word, gave a particular ecclesial meaning to the whole capitular meeting.

The chapter sisters, after the preparation required from all the sisters of the Province, gathered the suggestions offered in the answers to the questionnaires and drew up the work instrument in the days

that preceded the Chapter. The discussions on the various proposals and requests were extensive and particularly constructive and bearer of hope.

The sisters of this Province, so tried by the lack of local vocations, have mostly talked about what the Church and the world expect today of religious life in such a secularized country. As a revival instrument, they pointed out: the importance of the Word of God in life, the desire of fraternal dialogue in community, mutual welcome and the appreciation of the gift of every sister. It is with conviction that all the chapter sisters have expressed their wishes for a strong renewal that, with everybody's commitment, will certainly give vitality to “St Louis IX” Province.



The elections were held on 24 April, the anniversary of the birth of our Founder, the Servant of God Father Gregory who, invoked together with our Foundress, the Duchess Laura Leroux, watched over the works of the Chapter.

The newly elected Provincial Council is made up as follows:

Sr Elisabetta Varikkakuzhyil	Provincial Superior
Sr Armelle Costa	Provincial Vicar
Sr Marialuigia Borsato	2 nd Councillor
Sr Emmanuella Piccolo	3 rd Councillor
Sr Paolina Mookenthottathill	4 th Councillor

After the chapter work had ended, the Provincial Superior, with the outgoing Council, offered all the sisters in Le Mans, including those who had not taken part in the Chapter, a pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial.

With strong devotion and love for the Sacred Heart, we were able to live moments of intense prayer and enjoy the meaningful places where Jesus appeared to St Marguerite Marie Alacoque, revealing to her “the Love that has loved men so much”.



**Province
“Mary
Immaculate”
Rome**

**From our Missionary World
Peace Bene**



**XIII Chapter
of Province
of Roma
“Mary
Immaculate”
26-31 December
2008
Rome**



“ Yesterday’s passion... today... for the future” : from 26 to 31 December, the 24 chapter sisters of “Mary Immaculate” Province debated on this well-presented slogan in the Provincial House. The Superior General, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, accompanied by the Vicar General, Sr Cecilia Subiabre and by the General Councillor, Sr Paola Dotto, presided over this meeting, which is so vital for the Province.



The challenges of the present time and the problems of our globalized world urgently require from us the passion to live the present, in view of the future perspectives that Divine Providence incessantly devises. Our chapter sisters dwelled on the work instrument that summarized the questions and problems raised by the sisters of the Province.

On 29 and 30 December, after moments of intense prayer of adoration, the election of the new Provincial Council took place. The chapter sisters elected:

Sr Ermenegilda Cavin
Sr Rosaria Iacobucci
Sr Daniela Boa
Sr Concettaria Barison
Sr Antonia Costa

Provincial Superior
Provincial Vicar
2nd Provincial Councillor
3rd Provincial Councillor
4th Provincial Councillor.



**Province
"St. Anthony"
Latino America**



XII Chapter of the Latin American Province

"St. Anthony"

18-25 January 2009

The 34 chapter sisters came to Santiago in Chile from 5 different countries. On the morning of 13 January, they were joined from Rome by the Superior General, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, and the Vicar, Sr Cecilia Subiabre. The joy of the encounter, however, was accompanied by the grief for Sr Olivia Sartor, who was about to leave us forever. Indeed, in the afternoon, comforted by the presence of the superiors and of many sisters, Sr Olivia went serenely back to the House of the Father; from there, she certainly prayed God for her sisters who were gathered for the Chapter meeting. The chapter sisters discussed serenely and dynamically about the themes of

the instrumental work that had been prepared based on the material that the sisters of

"St Anthony" Province had sent to the Provincial House during the period of preparation for the Chapter.

The logo expressed the basic theme quite meaningfully: "Called to be sent ... to live and serve in communion". The intense ten-day work resulted in the sketching of the guidelines for the provincial formative programme for the

next three years.

On 23 January, the 115th anniversary of the death of our founder, Fr Gregory Fioravanti, Servant of God, was celebrated in fraternal joy.



That special day was chosen for the election of the new Provincial Council, which is made up as follows:

Sr Ines Pavan	Provincial Superior
Sr Antonina Turrina	Provincial Vicar
Sr Roxana Zapata	2 nd Provincial Councillor
Sr Mirella Venturin	3 rd Provincial Councillor
Sr Marcela Uribe	4 th Provincial Councillor.



The Provincial community, which numbers about sixty sisters these days, lived very meaningful moments of celebration for the inauguration and blessing of a new building annexed to the Provincial House and used as an infirmary.

The closure of the Chapter was made particularly solemn by the celebration of the jubilees of religious life: the 50th for Sr Cecilia Subiabre and Sr Rosamaria Porato and the 25th for Sr Gladys Chavez.



We feel in our heart the need to give thanks to the Lord for their religious vocation, which is a “gift and mystery”, and for the joyful fidelity with which these sisters responded to the gift. The Bishop, Msgr Alejandro Goic, President of the Chilean Bishops conference, who presided over the Eucharistic celebration, pointed out that the jubilee celebration was an event that instilled gratefulness and was filled with fraternal joy.

Inauguration of “Our Lady of Lourdes” infirmary - Santiago - Chile



“St Anthony” Latin American Province is made up of sisters that are relatively young. This is why the Province had not considered having an infirmary so far, but Sr Fabiola Marcuzzi’s long illness, and later that of Sr Olivia Sartor have made us aware of the need to set up an adequate place for the care and cure of old sisters and sisters who must undergo medical treatment.

Therefore, Sr Inés Pavan, the Provincial Superior, and her Council, considered that this was the right time to build a Provincial infirmary. Sr Ines, thanks to her experience as Superior General, a time during which she was able to visit several infirmaries of the Congregation, had for this infirmary a very special attention for every detail, so that the rooms would be comfortable, welcoming and practical for the sisters, especially the oldest ones.

They deserve all the respect and consideration, since it is they who have paved the way of the mission in Latin America, as they have passed on with their life the charism and traditions of our Congregation.

We hope that this infirmary will be a place of encounter for different generations, a serene and welcoming point of reference, where the old and sick sisters are an open book, and where every young

sister, with Franciscan simplicity, can hold lovingly and caringly the hand of the sisters that are tried by illness, committed to the service of the genuine Franciscan spirituality and taking maximum care of them, as an expression of gratitude for what they have been for us.

The infirmary was built next to the Provincial House, linked to it by a corridor in order to facilitate the communication between the infirmary rooms and the wide halls that are used for meetings, retreats and reunions.

The infirmary was inaugurated on 18 January 2009, starting day of the Provincial Chapter, and it carries the name of the Virgin of Lourdes. The inauguration ceremony was attended by: the Superior General, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, the Vicar General, Sr Cecilia Subiabre and Sr Inés Pavan, the Provincial Superior, together with the sisters of “St Anthony” Latin American Province who had arrived to take part in the Chapter. In addition, there were the architect, the engineer and the workers who had worked to implement that dream. The infirmary was blessed by Father Rogelio Wouters, Provincial Minister of the Friars Minor.



We are already here in Tijuana, Sr Elena, Sr Francesca, Sr Gabriela and Sr Zarina, and this is our new mission, where the Lord wants us to be today to open new roads of evangelization. Our days are spent at school. Every day, Tijuana's simple people come to us with their peculiar greeting. We work in two Franciscan schools and give Religion lessons and cooperate in the youth pastoral at "Cristóbal Colón" school. Both schools are relatively close to each other, but their infrastructure is not very adequate and the classrooms are uncomfortable. The teachers are numerous, but there are few pupils. This is our work environment and it is here that we place all our will, creativity and optimism, hoping to see better future times for the people of this frontier place.

Here is some information about the town and the environment...

Tijuana is the main town of the Mexican State of Baja California, separated from the US city of San Diego by an imposing wall, built to prevent entry by illegal immigrants, especially Mexicans and people from Central America, who are directed into the US territory from the southern border. The wall is also called "el bordo" and divides physically the town from San Diego's outskirts. Unfortunately, as is the case near every separation wall, there are dramatic stories about immigrants.

According to the data from the International Boundary Commission, Tijuana is the most frequented city in the world, with about 205 million people crossing illegally the border every year.

Here crime means drug trafficking, kidnappings, murders and, recently, shootings between rival drug gangs, smugglers and the Mexican police. The main reason for car thefts and trafficking is the proximity between the two cities of Tijuana and San Diego, and this makes it possible for traffickers to cross the border and sell all their goods.

This is the social situation in our dear Tijuana. People encourage us and tell us that the area where we stay is safe. And that is where we are, among people, evangelizing and living right here!

Our mission “ad gentes” is beginning to change and today it does not only deal with geographical concepts, but with every people’s social, psychological and cultural changes. That is because the Church is built if there are men who proclaim the Gospel of salvation and do it with a mandate, in the name and with the grace of Jesus Christ.

How is it possible to preach without being sent?

No one can do it, if one has not been sent by Jesus Christ, who is the “first and greatest evangelizer” (*Evangelii nuntiandi* 7).

Our Congregation, in the name of Jesus Christ, sent us to this mission in Tijuana, this border town where Christians and non-Christians from many places in the world flock en masse with their big American dream: “crossing the border”. And here we are, aware that our mission is dedicating our life and preference to the poorest.

Whose mission is it to evangelize?

The Second Vatican Council gave a clear answer: “The whole Church is missionary and the work of evangelization is a fundamental duty of the people of God”. Our congregation of Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart has well understood this, and this is how we face the challenges of mission in difficult places, guided by Providence.



MEXICO ... A proposal for the youth of today



Lord, what do you want me to do?

In the small coastal town of Guaymas, Mexico, there is the house of the postulante of the Friars Minor, where the first vocational retreat with the young people from Tijuana took place. The slogan of the meeting was "Franciscan Youth Easter". We, Sr Gabriela, Sr Zarina and the young Cristina, were invited by the Franciscan friars to help during this first meeting.

After a very long trip through the Baja California desert, we arrived at our destination, Guaymas, a simple place, where we were welcomed by the friars from the formation community, who showed us the meeting place, the open-air chapel for the celebration of Holy Mass, the kitchen, the refectory and the small houses (cabañas) that have been equipped as dormitories for the 44 young people coming from

different places for the meeting. We cooperated in everything we were asked and were able to do.

With the typical Franciscan simplicity, among songs and dances, a joyful and fraternal atmosphere with the young people arose almost immediately. Brother Miguel, the organizer of the meeting, had prepared an adequate environment so that in this special week the young people could reflect on the Easter Mystery, especially the Glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the mystery of our faith, which invites us to feel

always accompanied by God in our life in order to be able to walk everywhere.

The most intense days of prayer started on Holy Thursday with the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacrament of reconciliation and the traditional liturgical celebrations.



For the young people, this all meant a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

The Easter vigil was celebrated very solemnly and with the active participation of all. At the end of the ceremony, the young people lived with joy the feast of the fraternal meeting with the brothers coming from different places:

Guamuchil, Los Mochis, Mazatlan, Tijuana and Medicafe.

There was nothing special, but there was the fun of being together and the joy of fraternity, despite the fact that they were so different and came from distant places. They all shared the joy of feeling pardoned and loved by Jesus, who had called them to offer that holiday week to take part in that meeting and live “his Easter” with Him.

The question that Francis once made: “Lord, what do you want me to do?” will certainly have another meaning for every youth after this unforgettable experience. They undoubtedly were the protagonists of the meeting. Many of them have dispelled their doubts about their future, others will keep looking for the will of God in their life.



For those of us who accompanied the young people, Brother Hernán, Brother Juan Carlos, Brother Henrique, and us, Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, that was an unforgettable experience. The young people approached us very spontaneously to talk,

discuss, ask for some advice and, above all, to be heard. We were always available to them, with our witness of joyful and enthusiastic young women, convinced that our consecration is a gift for the Church.

The Church reveals herself to young people also on such occasions, when we are called to be a light for those who seek to live a Christian life and get rid of many prejudices that today’s hedonistic culture imposes on them, thus destroying their expectations.

We thank the Lord for allowing us to live this wonderful experience with the young people, because it is through such fraternal meetings that we can get to know the youth’s culture, it is by living with them that we can understand how they are and what they think, and this enables us to evangelize consistently, by understanding their world and without being pushy.



From our Missionary World
Pace e Bene



Apostolic Region “Saints Martyrs of Uganda” Cameroun

“The love of Christ the Redeemer calls us
to proclaim the Word
to witness with their lives”



On 9 June the 5th Chapter of “St Martyrs of Uganda” Apostolic Region was officially opened at the Regional House in Nkoabang, Cameroun, at the presence of the Superior General Sr Emmapia Bottamedi and of the Vicar General, Sr Cecilia Subiabre.



**V Regional Chapter of the Apostolic
Region “St. Martyrs of Uganda”
9-14 June 2009 - Nkoabang**

On 13 June, which was dedicated to our special protector St Anthony, the election of the new Regional Council was announced. It is made up of:

Sr Fabrizia Zanettin	Regional Superior
Sr Beatrice Bifouma	Regional Vicar
Sr Mary Lukose	2 nd Councillor
Sr Giovanna Craighero	3 rd Councillor
Sr Dorothee Ngassouga	4 th Councillor

The celebration of the Regional Chapter right in this month dedicated to the Sacred Heart gave us the opportunity to renew our commitment to fully live the spirituality that flows from the pierced Heart of Jesus Christ Crucified.

The Chapter meeting benefited from an atmosphere of openness and communion in every apostolic area in which the sisters are operating, especially the service to the poorest and most derelict brothers.

Every sister joined in constructively, by expressing much hope and love for our dear African Continent.



The Celebration of the Regional and Provincial Chapters of our Religious Family is, for our Congregation, a particular time of grace which renews in everyone the “Missionary Vocation”, the call that, as expressed by the theme of this Chapter, “calls us to announce with the word and witness with life the Gospel of Jesus Christ”.

Dialogue and sharing between the chapter sisters brought clarity and enrichment to explain the most important points of the final deliberations.

After the long preparation required from all the sisters of the Organism, the capitular sisters, in the days that preceded the Chapter, worked in teams to sum up the assessments and suggestions gathered in the questionnaires, in order to draw the work instrument.

It was quite interesting to see how “the Mission” is considered: it is Grace supported by the Word of God, which fortifies in difficult times and gives the joy of living in the spirit of faith after the example of our Founders and of the first sisters.

What particularly emerged was the desire to live Consecrated Life radically within a fraternity that prays with a strong participation and experiences the Eucharist daily as the source which constantly renews our life.

The Apostolic Region gave priority to the need of permanent formation and Vocational Pastoral, which should be well organized in all the missions.

The African Church is preparing for the Synod of Bishops and for the second Special Assembly with the meaningful theme:

“The Church in Africa at the service of reconciliation, justice and peace”, with the inspiring subtitle: “You are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:13-14). It is a strong urging for all the Christians in Africa, but especially for us religious and for our communities, which must increasingly become the salt of the African land and the light of the nations. During his recent visit in Cameroun, the Pontiff reminded us that we are special witnesses of Jesus Christ and that it is our main duty to make the Invisible visible.



PERPETUAL VOWS

Sr. Renée e di Sr Pascaline

CAMEROUN - Africa, 3 January 2009

The ceremony of Perpetual Profession of our two dear sisters, Sr Renée and Sr Pascaline, took place in the parish church of the Nkoabang mission, the seat of St Martyrs of Uganda Apostolic Region.

During the suggestive celebration, prepared with care in all its moments and characterized by the symbols that are typical of the African culture, the two sisters

were really happy to consecrate their life to God forever. At the moment in which the two young sisters, moved and pious, pronounced their Vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, all the attending sisters, together with relatives and friends, who accompanied them, undertook to support the two sisters by constantly remembering them in their prayers.



Those were the words that one of the Sisters said, also on behalf of her companion:

“On this day, 3 January 2009, I am living once more an important event, which will mark my existence forever. I confirm the “yes” of my first vows by the perpetual vows. I pray the Lord to grant me, day after day, the grace of a constant desire for conversion so that, through my actions, I can be the perfume which expands in the house of the Lord and attracts souls to Him.

Lord, I give you thanks forever!”.



Pastoral works at Gari-Gombo



On Saturdays, from 8 to 12 am, Sr Elisabeth, on request from the priest of “Good Shepherd” Parish in Gari-Gombo, takes the responsibility of forming the young women to familiar and social life.

After a 30-min. theoretical course, the young women start practising cooking, sewing and embroidery according to the programme set up for that morning. As regards cooking, the dishes are local or from the various regions of Cameroun, as well

as from other countries in the world. During

each lesson, the participants learn a typical dish and, on alternate Saturdays, they sew up cloths or embroider.

The number of enrolled young women is increasing and this encourages us and testifies that the teaching is positive and that we enjoy the support of the parents, who gladly send them.



MORALS COURSE AT THE GARI-GOMBO HIGH SCHOOL

This time, our sisters have been asked by the Dean of the Gari-Gombo High School to offer young people morals courses. Since we must acknowledge that Christian values are waning, a morals course seemed useful and opportune to call the young people’s attention on the meaning and responsibility of life and to achieve an integral human development.

From the opinions that have been heard, it appears that the courses held by the sisters have been quite useful, especially in the case of weddings or precocious and unwanted pregnancies. Thanks to their explanations, we have noticed, little by little, an improvement in the students’ awareness of life realities. They wish that in the future the sisters will be available as much as they have been during the 2009 school year.



St Thérèse of the Child Jesus is welcomed joyfully in Cameroun and in our sisters' community in Kribi



On 8 February 2009 the procession, led by the Vicar General, Msgr Jean Omer, and by the parish priest Jean-Claude, the Bishop's representatives, entered our church carrying the relics of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus. The reliquary of the Saint was placed in the FMSH chapel accompanied by prayers and songs of praise. At 8 pm there was the first Eucharistic celebration, followed by a vigil of veneration, testimony and prayers with the teachers, "St Francis of Assisi" chorus, and the local authorities and some faithful, who stayed with us to keep vigil until early next morning. The vigil ended with a symbolic "rain of roses".

The second and last celebration was held at 7.30 am and presided by the education Secretary, who celebrated together with three other priests.

In "St Mary of the Angels" school's courtyard there were also the pupils' parents, the pupils and a good number of faithful. At 11 am, St Thérèse left us for the Diocese of Douala.



**Province
“Holy
Family”
India**

From our Missionary World
Pace e Bene



**INDIAN HOLINESS
EDIFIES ALL OF US**



12 October 2008 was an unforgettable day for the history of the Indian Church.

Indeed, in St Peter’s Basilica in Rome, Pope Benedict XVI canonized the first Indian Saint: **Sr Alphonse of the Immaculate Conception.**

The joy and gratitude of all our Indian sisters was unimaginable, and they wish to offer us a concise biography of the Franciscan saint, sure as they are of her example of sanctity!

Sr Alphonse, known at home as “Annakutty”, was born in Kerala on 19 August 1910. She experienced the cross since her youngest age, first by being left an orphan when her mother died, then by being raised in turn by different relatives. For a long time she was fostered by a very

strict aunt who, owing to her despotism, was instrumental in forming Alphonse’s virtues. At 12 she was already determined to consecrate herself to God. Patient and strong, she was able to oppose with a holy boldness the repeated attempts by her aunt to have her engaged; she even mutilated one foot to escape this entirely.

In 1928 the young woman was oriented by a Franciscan friar to enter the Congregation of the Franciscan Clarisse Sisters in Kottayam.

Quite soon, however, she was struck by a very severe illness, which provoked terrible pains, that she bore heroically by uniting herself to the sufferings of the Heart of Jesus Christ. After her perpetual profession in 1936, the pains grew and with them also her generosity, even her joy to



suffer, to become more similar, as a victim of love, to her crucified Spouse.

Always afflicted by pain, she walked for ten years the path of holiness founded on the perfect adhesion to Love, which led her shortly to the top of all virtues.

On 28 July 1946, with the smile of innocence on her lips, Sr Alphonse died serenely among the sisters of Bharananganam, leaving them the direct witness of a life totally marked by the most authentic following of Jesus Christ, in St Francis' footsteps.

So abundant and prodigious was the spreading of her holiness, that she immediately became the object of a sincere national veneration.

That is the reason why pope John Paul II decreed the beatification of this young Clarist, and approved her public cult in Kerala during his apostolic journey in that State in February 1986.



The canonization cause soon met with other wonderful signs of her powerful intercession with the Father, so much so that the highest authorities of the Church, the Holy Father first, were induced to declare her universal cult

To her, the first women Saint of India, we wish to entrust the work of all the Indian sisters, especially those who operate in the national territory, often fraught with perils, threats and plain hostilities, which put to the test their fidelity and above all the courage to witness fearlessly their faith.





*From
Changlang,
the latest
indian
mission*

**“Faithful to the Word of God
and to the charism
we respond to the reality “**

CHANGLANG



CHANGLANG is an Indian town with a population of 6,394, the chief town of the district of Changlang, in the federal state of ARUNACHAL PRADESH.

The state borders North with the Chinese region of Tibet, East and South-East with Burma, South with Nagaland and Assam, and West with the Kingdom of Bhutan.

The territory is mainly mountainous, as it is largely made up of the southern ramifications of the Himalaya chain and slopes down from North to South and from East to the West. In the mid-northern area rise the Mishimi Hills. The main river is the Brahmaputra, which flows from North to South in the central area. The Dibang river, which flows southward towards the Brahmaputra valley rises in the Mishimi Hills. In the eastern area flows the Lohit river, first southwards, then westwards towards the mouth of the Brahmaputra. The main river of the western area is the Subansiri, which flows towards the Brahmaputra valley.



After these brief indications to help the situation of our remote mission, let us learn other interesting details from our courageous missionary sisters on the spot. The first year from the foundation is just about to finish and the mission can already show the first consoling results.

The sisters, grateful to the Lord, think back with joyful enthusiasm to the work carried out in all pastoral activities, with excellent results in the school, with classes up to the 3rd grade, as well as in the parish, with adults taking their First Communion and being confirmed. The most generous work of the sisters takes place above all in four villages secluded in the mountains, which are covered with vast and luxurious tea plantations belonging to a few lords, at the service of whom the inhabitants of the villages, who are mostly illiterate and ignorant, live and toil in extreme poverty.

It is moving to sense, from the tale of the sisters, the extent to which they have become part of the villages, the sympathy with which they describe the characteristics of the people, who are dignified in their poverty, patient in their persistent condition of poverty, faithful in their tenacious industriousness, and loving of beauty and order, as it is possible to notice from their clean bamboo huts. It is on those village families that the attention of the sisters is focused. They are anxious to build at least a small and simple hostel (they will call it "Assisi", like their community); it should not set itself apart from the humble local dwellings, but be capable of welcoming for now at least 20 to 25 girls, so that the work of cultural promotion, which is so necessary to relieve the po-



pulation a little, could be started despite the extreme poverty. Then, there is no doubt that Providence will do the rest! Meanwhile, they enjoy the support of the Changlang parish priest, who is in turn glad for their presence and careful to help them in every small initiative as far as he can, but certainly quite fraternally. Even Miao's Bishop, Msgr George Pallimpparabil, during his Easter visit to the parish, spent words of praise for the services given by the sisters, encouraging them to continue and even increase their work in the villages, but also to take care of the dwellers of the town of Changlang, which needs to be evangelized and consolidated in Catholic faith. Nonetheless, the activity that the sisters carry out among this population had positive results. This actually happened on the occasion of the above-mentioned pastoral visit, when hundreds of people came to the Easter Holy Mass from the surroundings but also from very distant places. The enthusiasm and commitment dur-

ing the preparations were great, the participation of young people was laudable, and there was above all the joyful satisfaction to see that a numerous group of children, accompanied by their parents, after being duly prepared, came for the first time to receive First Communion and Confirmation. After reading this wonderful testimony, there is nothing

else we can do but thank the sisters Saiji, Kamala, Valsa and Sandya, and assure them of all our solidarity in terms of prayer and affection, so that they can implement in the best possible way what they have at heart for the spreading of the Kingdom to the brothers, among whom they have been sent by the Lord in order to show them the path to holiness.



*“We have made to you, Lord,
and our heart has no peace
until it rests in you.”
(St. Augustine)*



**SR GEMMA VOLPATO
OF JESUS EUCHARISTIC**
Lucia Volpato
Born in Pezzan d'Istrana
on 19-05-1914
Died in Gemona
on 22-12-2008

This morning, 22 December, the community was singing the Magnificat, voicing Mary's hymn in the days that prepared us for Christmas. Sr Gemma's

mind was still clear and she joined the choral singing of her sisters with her heart. In a very weak voice, she reassured the kitchen lay staff who went to visit her: don't worry, as soon as I feel better I'll come back and help you! But Sr Gemma had already given all of herself, her life's baggage was made, full of the works of charity requested, as a final exam, to enter the Kingdom. So, after the sisters that had gathered around her bed prayed the "Angelus", to the sound of the midday bell, Our Lady accompanied Sr Gemma to her eternal home.

Lucia Volpato (Sr Gemma) was born in Pezzan d'Istrana, in the Italian province of Treviso, in one of those solid Christian families where vocations to consecrated life find their natu-

ral habitat. Indeed, in 1938, at the age of 24, she entered "St Mary of the Angels" Convent in Gemona to become a nun and make herself available to the Lord and His project of love.

In 1941 she pronounced her "yes", which she then repeated daily to the Lord for a good 67 years, giving a testimony of generosity and faithful love. On the day of her religious profession, she wanted to be called Sr Gemma of Jesus Eucharist,... and it was a life programme: her mission developed in the sign of simplicity and humility, just like the grain which is buried in the clod, sure that only this way will it be able to bring fruits of salvation and holiness for itself and for others.

For all her life, Sr Gemma was ready to carry out any office

To the other side

in any house: she served in 12 different communities before she was brought to the Mother House at the age of 81. But even there, she kept offering her services in the kitchen, with generosity and sacrifice, until a few months ago when, aged well over 90, her legs could no longer carry her and Sr Gemma had to offer the Lord even this last sacrifice: not to be able to help the sisters in the kitchen.

Sr Gemma never thought that she would receive such a beautiful gift on Christmas Eve, the great gift that Jesus wanted to give her with His call: Come, faithful bride, come into my Kingdom to touch with your hands the “Word of life”, now that, once the curtain of this world is raised, Eternal Life is made visible to your eyes and shrouds you forever in the eternal embrace of love and peace... I, Jesus, was born on earth so that you could be born in heaven!



**SR OLIVIA SARTOR
DI GESÙ BAMBINO**
Elvira Bruna Sartor
Born in Paese (TV)
on 29-12-1929
Died in Santiago (Ch)
on 12-01-2009

Sr Olivia was born on 29 December 1929 in Paese, in the Italian province of Treviso, which in those years was a fertile soil for many priestly and religious vocations.

Her parents, Angelo and Regina, raised Elvira Bruna and her brothers lovingly. Her family was the first school where Elvira learnt the Christian values and virtues which one day, on 29 September 1953, led her to say generously “yes” to the Lord, who called her to serve the Church as a Franciscan Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart.

Blessed with a particular artistic sense, Sr Olivia used this gift for all her life with a lot of creativity, in order to spread the images of the Virgin Mary, St Francis and the Sacred Heart of Jesus through her craftmade reproductions made of straw, plaster or paint.

She worked for many years in the field of education, both as

a headmistress and a teacher, standing out for her humility, simplicity and good spirits. With her theatrical talent, she enriched the religion classes and catechism by staging plays that carried messages of goodness, love and forgiveness.

When illness started to undermine her body, Sr Olivia put her life into the hands of the Lord, dedicating time to silence, prayer and the simple life of manual work, thus bringing to light his beloved Sacred Heart. Her health did not allow her to work in the missionary communities, but the images that adorn the religious communities in Latin America show her presence. She will continue to be present in the memory of every sister who enjoyed her artistic talents.

Her last painting is a portrait of our foundress for the new “Laura Leroux” community in Tijuana, Mexico. It was the work which required the most sacrifice and pain from her because she lacked the needed inspiration to paint; she nevertheless completed her work, although she said that she had the feeling that something was missing. Her words to the Superior of the new Tijuana Community were the following:

“Sr Elena, I would like to hand her to you the way I left her. Keep her always in your community in a place of honour, because she was made with much love and with prayers for this community”.

God willed that, for health reasons, our sister did not go to other missions of the Latin American Province, but in His infinite goodness He made

her death coincide with the beginning of the Provincial Chapter, when a numerous group of sisters from the Province gathered into the Provincial House, so that she could say farewell to each missionary sister. On 13 January 2009, with the arrival of the Superior General, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, and of Sr Cecilia Subiabre, the Vicar General, Sr Olivia greeted us for the last time before her departure for the house of the Lord.

Sr Olivia remained in Chile evangelizing for 42 years.



SR REGINA ANGELA CASEY
Florence Casey
Born in Bronx (NY-USA)
on 11-07-1909
Died in Peekskill
on 27-01-2009

Sister Regina Angela was born in the Bronx on July 11, 1909. Given the name Florence in Baptism, she is the fifth child of John and Elizabeth Casey. Amid nine brothers and sisters she learned to be sensitive to the needs of others, a trait for which she is to be remembered throughout her life.

In this Irish Catholic home prayerfulness flourished. It is noteworthy that her father, a New York policeman started each day by reciting the Rosary on his knees. It was one of these mornings in his forty first year that God took him to Himself. Truly, as Pope John II has said: "The home is the nursery for vocations".

Florence attended the Asisium Business School in NYC and worked for two years before entering our Franciscan community on December 8, 1929. A year later on February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, she received the name Sr. Regina Angela placing her under the special Franciscan title of Our Lady of the Angels.

Professed a year later, Sister worked with the children in St. Joseph's Home in Peekskill. Most of the life would be spent working with children.

Her first mission was Butler, NJ where she spent 19 years making many lifelong friends. On November 18, 2006 Sister attended the 125th Anniversary of St. Anthony's School and was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the Christian lives of so many people to whom she ministered. She served in schools along the Hudson – Verplanck, Croton, Cold Spring, Yorktown Heights as well as the Assumption and St. Joseph's High School in Manhattan.

Sister responded to the need for a librarian serving at Franciscan High School in Mohegan Lake for two years. Sister returned again to Assumption School as CCD coordinator. Before her retirement she trained lay teachers to take over the program which she had begun.

Well could she boast of the impact she had on the "little ones", many of whom are priests, mayors, doctors, coaches, pilots, (the list goes on). It is her faith and trust in Divine Providence that kept her strong. Each day she would tell God that if He helped her she would be alright.

Sister's favorite saying when things got a little challenging should serve as a reminder for us all: "Don't worry, the first 100 years are the hardest".





**SR DOROTEA GEMIN
OF THE NAME OF MARY**
Born in Ospedaletto
d'Istrana (TV)
on 30-01-1914
Died in Gemona
on 23-03-2009

Today, the Word of the Lord filled us with hope and joy: "I am about to create new heavens and a new earth!"... This promise came true for Sr Dorotea, who was called to enter definitively the new heavens of God's eternity, in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of everlasting life and joy.

Sr Dorotea, Agata Gemin, was born in Ospedaletto d'Istrana, in the Italian province of Treviso, back on 30 January 1914, in difficult times of poverty and hard work for the families, who had to meet with dignity the requirements entailed by keeping their household and growing up children. However, it is right in such a familiar environment, warmed by mom Caterina and dad Luigi's love, that Sr Dorotea's vocation was born: in the prime of her youth, she decided to donate herself to the Lord and, on 14 April 1939, at the age of 25, she entered the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona, preceded in 1934 by her cousin

Sr Achillea (who has already passed away) and followed soon afterwards by Sr Rosalinda.

The religious profession, which took place on 26 June 1941, was the start of her quiet and laborious mission as a cook at the service of children or old people in the places where obedience called her. As a good missionary, she also accepted to offer her services outside her Motherland: indeed, for about ten years, she performed the same task in France.

In 1989, transferred to our home of the Oasis in Gemona, she dedicated herself mainly to gardening: flowers and plants give a festive touch to the home and the school.

Nine years later, she was retired in the Mother House and prepared herself, through prayer and suffering, to encounter "sister death" and enter the garden of heaven where, now, she can thank, praise and bless the Lord forever.

On the eve of the solemnity of the Annunciation, we would like to ask the Virgin Mary to take her hand and accompany her before God's throne. May she pray the Lord to grant the gift of holy vocations, capable of putting themselves at the disposal of Divine Providence in order to carry good and love everywhere in the world.



**SR LUDOVICA SALERNO
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**
Concetta Salerno
Born in Tursi (MT)
on 26-05-1939
Died in Lido dei Pini (RM)
on 04-04-2009

"I thank the Lord for giving me the gift of vocation... I cannot express the joy that I feel... I clearly confess that during the time I was in the religious house, including the time of Novitiate... I have found no difficulties, not even my health conditions, and, with the Lord's help, every burden will become light..."

So wrote Sr Ludovica on 13 August 1958, when she was nearing her Religious Profession, well aware of the poor health that she had always had to deal with, but resolute to follow the Lord.

She was born in Tursi, in the Italian Province of Matera, from Gaetano and Giulia, and was brought up humanly and Christianly, with the consistency of gestures and genuineness of life of simple people. She learnt to measure herself with the limitations imposed on her by her personal situation, which would mould her shy and reserved character. At 17 she was a postulant in Saffi Avenue, where, after the year of novitiate, she completed her religious formation. In the following years she finished her studies and la-

ter obtained, in Centocelle, the degree of elementary teacher. In the group of sisters who taught the many pupils attending the school at no. 150 of Tor de' Schiavi street, she kept her discretion and shared, more with the expression of her face than with words, a statement of life and mission.

Affable and kind with her pupils and their parents, she was able to gather their secrets and keep them with sensitiveness and discretion.

This was her style, both in the Centocelle school (1968) and in Saffi Avenue (1980), where she underwent formation in the first years of her religious life; in "St Elizabeth" Institute in Piazza Pitagora (1984) and in the "Asisium" General House (1994). She went back to St Elizabeth (1999) for a period of treatment, and she held the position of secretary until 2003, when she was sent by obedience to Lido dei Pini. Her health, however, was getting increasingly frail, and periods of stability alternated always more frequently with periods of weariness and extreme weakness. The anaemia that had been afflicting her since she was a child compromised some bodily functions and forced her into hospital several times and to undergo continuous treatment.

Despite this, Sr Ludovica managed to express her tenderness to the children who, sensing that their affection was reciprocated, asked for her. Even in fraternity, her presence was quiet, made of waits, looks and eloquent silences.

The last crisis caught her at the hospital in Anzio, where she had been sent for the start of a dialysis programme. The unexpected epilogue, on the evening of 4 April 2009, left us bewildered.

We commit her to Mary, so that she may welcome her in her arms and present her to the Father of mercies.



SR MARY XAVIER SANSEVERE

Born in Jersey (USA)

on 05-06-1930

Died in Peekskill (USA)

on 11-05-2009

Sister Mary Xavier, the second of six children born to Samuel and Julia Sansevere was born on June 5, 1930 in Hoboken, NJ.

Her association with Franciscans began at the early age of four and as she grew older she felt that the seed of her Franciscan vocation was planted in her at that early age. When she was five years old the family moved to North Bergen, NJ.

Since the public school was across the street she attended that school until the age of 10. Her parents decided that she was old enough to travel the one mile distance to St. Brigid's. But tragedy struck when her brother, Patrick was killed crossing the street to first Friday Mass on a rainy day.

The big question was whether or not for Marie to continue at St. Brigid's. Her mother's deep faith assured her that God would take care of her, and He certainly did! Not only she, but her three sisters and brother also graduated from

St. Brigid's. The only Catholic High School in the area was Holy Family in Union City and it was there that Marie continued her education, walking a mile and a half to and from school each day since there were no buses available. Here is where she met the Franciscan community of sisters which she would someday enter. Here is where that little seed grew! And so, after graduation from Holy Family, Marie began her life as a Franciscan sister, a life she cherished for over 60 years.

Sister Mary Xavier taught in St. Anthony's in Butler, Assumption School in Peekskill and Our Lady Queen of Martyrs in NYC. But it was her many years in St. Joseph of the Palisades in West New York, teaching Science to Grades 5 through 8 that brought her "stardom". She was a dynamo Science teacher and had her students doing projects unthought of. She was one of the best! The many students whom she taught can attest to that!

After many years teaching Science, 15 to be exact, Sister's health began to ebb and she returned to Peekskill. At Mt. St. Francis she was the sacristan and also spent untold hours with the 50/50 Club. Her quiet ways reached far and wide.

She always strove steadfastly and conscientiously to observe the Rule of St. Francis. We can be sure that she followed her Master in carrying the cross and doubtless saved many souls by her patient endurance of sufferings. We will lovingly remember this patient Sister.

The Mass of Christian Burial was held on May 14, 2009 at 10:00 AM at Mt St. Francis with Father Charles Reinbold, chaplain officiating. Interment took place in the Sisters' Cemetery on the grounds of Mt. St. Francis.

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