



INDEX

In Communion with the Church

- With the YOUTH in Krakow - WYD 2016 p. 2
- The missionary mandate: PROCLAIM! p. 10
- The Jubilee of Mission p. 13
- The Closing of the Year of Mercy p. 15

Journeying with the Franciscan Family

- "The pardon of Assisi" in Chile p. 17
- March of the Albanian Franciscan Family p. 18
- The Franciscan message from Bologna p. 20
- Transitus of St. Francis in India p.21

Life of the Congregation

- On the Way to the XX General Chapter p. 22
- 100 Anniversary of our Foundress Laura Leroux
- 50th anniversary of the Foundation of the Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament - Lebanon p. 24
- The General Superior Sr Paola Dotto in canonical visit to the United States p. 26
- In Albania: Canonical visit of the Superior General and the beatification of the martyrs p. 32
- First Professions (Africa) p. 36
- First profession (Cyprus) p. 37
- Perpetual professions (India) p. 38
- Perpetual Professions (Italy) p.40
- 4th Centenary in Grotte di Castro of Our Lady of Suffrage. p. 42
- Closing of the year of mercy in the Vice-province in Africa p. 45
- Celebrations in Schools p. 47
- Youth Ministry: The joy and the power of perseverance (USA) p. 50
- Young and old... dream and prophecy ... (Trento) p. 52
- Being a "caress" of God ... for the poor p. 54
- ...and with the disabled: faith and light group (Bulgaria) p. 54
- In prisons (India) p. 56

Conventions

- V Seminar on the Formation of Educators p. 57
- On Economy: Fidelity to the Charism p. 58

Living in God

- Sr M. Florentina Manoni p. 60
- Sr M. Ellen Joseph Drury p. 61
- Sr M. Leonilde Billia p. 62
- Sr M. Giancarla Bettio p. 63
- Sr Francis Marie Connolly p. 64

With the YOUTH in KRAKOW - WYD 2016

“Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy”

has been the theme of the XXXI **World Youth Day held in Krakow in Poland on 25 to 31 July 2016.**

The Holy Father has chosen this theme, one of the Beatitudes, to show us the importance of Mercy, which is at the center of the teaching of Jesus.



Even the priests in the dioceses, in the process of preparation to this special event, have pointed out that this fifth Beatitude

summarizes the first two years of the pontificate of Pope Francis, in which he tried to show the love of the Church of God for all men and the need to be compassionate to one another.

The choice of Krakow is dictated by the extraordinary experience of Saint Faustina Kovaška, to whom the Merciful Jesus has revealed himself and in her and through her, the Divine Mercy has radiated in the world. In fact, in this Church St. John Paul II entrusted the whole world to the God of Mercy.

From our communities around the world, some of our young sisters have received the gift of being able to participate in this important and special ecclesial event along with youth from the parishes and dioceses where they work. Let us listen to their testimonies.

From Albania

World Youth Day was a global event in which took part with great enthusiasm and worthy preparation even the small Church of Albania and our mission Dushaj (Tropoja). Thanks to the fervor and the belief of our parish priest, Father Maurizio Cacciola who wisely knew to choose the young people and offer them a special occasion for openness, meeting, reflection on their own life choices and on the response to the Lord. The Community has chosen me, Sr. Vangie Salino, to accompany the group in which there was also our candidate Rina Pepkolaj who has not missed an opportunity to witness the privilege and joy of feeling called by the Lord to consecrate life.



We were part of the Diocese of Sappa group, 52 people in all. There were priests, Friars Minor Capuchin and Carmelite Friars, Sisters and young people, a harmonious concentration and variety of charisms.

We sisters had the task of guiding, accompany, monitor, and assist in the prayer the group that was entrusted to us.

From July 26 to 28 catechesis were held prepared by our bishops and to which we participated together. After the catechesis, each group had the opportunity to choose the place for personal reflection and prayer that ended with the Eucharistic celebration. While traveling through the streets of the city was a riot of joy, enthusiasm, and proclamation.

The slogans accompanying songs, alternated languages, but all were a single hymn to the grace of being young, of being of Christ and want to proclaim Him to the world.

Finally arrived July 31, day of the meeting with the Holy Father and the enthusiasm reached heaven: we felt listening to Jesus himself, through the Pope's word. What does Jesus tell us in this special meeting?

Something very special happened on the arrangement of the various groups for the celebration of the Pope. It has been really moving and I want to share it.

To us who had come from not a Catholic country, it was reserved a privileged sector as to all countries where Catholics live and bear witness to their faith as a small minority. We found it next to Turks, Arabs, Syrians, Israelis ... very near to the papal altar and from where we could follow the Pope very well, sign after sign, step by step.

We thought that outside that blessed fence the Turks, the Arabs ... are at war. But we have talked, prayed and sang together, we shared the only joy that united us: being the youth of Jesus and of the Pope, called to restore hope to a world that can no longer dialog and often knows only the weapons of selfishness that leads to death.

The message that the Pope addressed to young people, in His simplicity and clarity, it was a warm invitation to never give up, to get up after the fall, not to complain, to fight to win and defend the joy, the passion, the friendship that are values to be shared. "because life should be lived together in brotherhood and communion and in the name of the great human family."

"Do not close the best moments in life to yourself, but share them to one another as Jesus did who came to serve and not to be served, serve the poor, the sick. Forgive this you have to do, put themselves to the service of others. You lose nothing; on the contrary, you receive a lot."

We returned to our land taking to our heart the precious gift received and to be shared, aware that Someone who loves us more than any other on earth had chosen us to give us the gift of this experience that has to bear fruit.

Sr Evangeline Salino

From France

To participate in the World Youth Day was for me an experience of love and mercy of God, as for all the 270 young people who participated from our diocese of Beauvais. The strongest moments of this event were:

- * Seeing the joy of the pilgrims, “embraced” by the environment very welcoming, where they perceived God’s presence in their midst.



- * Knowing that we were all going in the same direction: to the encounter of Christ.

- * Feeling that despite coming from many countries, with different cultures and languages, young people had the opportunity to live a real sharing of mutual experience of belonging to the Church by the will to be followers of Christ

- * Listening to the Pope Francis’ message that speaks to all young people: ... *“Jesus is not the Lord of comfort, safety and convenience. To follow Jesus, we must have a lot of courage.”*

Pope Francis, also spoke of the conflicts around the world and he invited us to transform the walls into bridges.

The journey to World Youth Day ended with an indescribable experience of love and mercy of this infinitely great God, who allowed me to live this experience as a religious FMSC and feel part of the universal Church.

Suor Inés Portugal

From Lithuania

Our small group consisting of two buses of 116 people brought together the Franciscan youth of our small country, Lithuania.

The pilgrimage was organized by the Kretinga Parish where we work already for 26 years. In the group there was also our small or large group of little Heralds (small companions of St. Francis), and fifteen youth, older than the “heralds”.

Sister Julija, and myself accompanied them with the Minor and the Conventual Friars who travelled with us in the two buses.



It was a powerful experience for both the young and for us sisters and brothers. The Lord once again, has done great things in our souls and in our lives.

As we witnessed a mother of one of our young people, saying that after returning from the meeting, the son found the strength and courage not only to read the Bible every day, but also to defend his faith in front of the father who is a declared atheist.

Another young man, besides this, who now does not miss even a Sunday mass, or a moment of adoration in the parish.

Sr Danute

From Africa

In His infinite mercy the Lord has allowed me to participate in World Youth Day to increase my faith. My gratitude to the Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto, and her Council; to Sr. Beatrice Bifouma and her Council, to my Superior and the sisters of Sembe who have given me the opportunity to participate.



WYD take place in two weeks: the first called “missionary week” held in the host diocese, the second was that of the main celebrations (prayer vigils, Adoration and Holy Mass of sending with the Holy Father).

We, the young Congolese, lived in the Diocese of Tarnow. Living in foster families, we

had, among other things, the possibility to go hiking in Tarnow, in Plesna, to Zalipie, and to participate in the youth festival in Zaurada. We were welcomed very well. The second week was eventful. The joy of meeting the Vicar of Christ and all the youth of the world showed that we are children of the same Father.

We began the second week with an opening Mass celebrated by Cardinal Stanislaw, cardinal of Krakow, on July 27, 2016. The next day we welcomed Pope Francis. The Pope began his speech: *“Do not be afraid, God is great, God is good.”* He praised the virtues of solidarity, of compassion for the poor and the weak, the openness and the discovery of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

On Friday, we had the Way of the Cross of mercy. On that occasion, the Holy Father exhorted us to be courageous, joyful, to know how to personally decide our lives, to shake hands, to build bridges, to destroy the walls of separation, to trust in the Lord who has His joy to erase in us the traces of all evil.

On Saturday, we had adoration followed by the vigil prayer with the opportunity to confess with the Pope. On Sunday there was the sending Mass, during which the Holy Father insisted on the mercy of God towards man. As happened to Zacchaeus, Jesus approaches each of us to give us life. Let us nurture hope and we can become sowers of hope!

He also spoke of the two apostles of mercy: Saint Faustina and John Paul II. He urged us to imitate them and to become, in turn, the witnesses of mercy.

I was very struck by the joy, the spirit of festivity and the universal communion.

Glory be to God!

Sr Seraphine

From Cyprus

Some excerpts of the narration of the young Katerina Frangoudi:

On the morning of 18 July we started our journey from Larnaca to Krakow to attend the youth meeting with Pope Francis. We were thirteen people.

An excellent group, wonderful, that was united since the beginning and this was a prediction of how well we would have spent our days together in Poland. The group was composed of Maronites and Latins, we had become a family to the point that one was taking care of others. We lived unique moments in an atmosphere of mercy in which the Pope drove us.



Each in his/her own way was building the union and communion so that the experience could be unique and unrepeatable...

In one of the days of the second week, we took the opportunity to visit Auschwitz.

Although we could not visit the various rooms because of the flood of people who went there in those days, we experienced the same pain and we prayed for all the victims of human cruelty

Fourteen days have passed full of experiences, memories and teachings, unforgettable days not only for the meeting with the Pope, but because we have met some wonderful people with whom we have built strong relationships. Our faith has been strengthened, love has filled our hearts and hope is reborn in us. Thank you, Lord, for giving us this opportunity. We are ready to live again with joy every moment of this pilgrimage.



Young people from Bulgaria

Before I start with everything else, I would like to share with you my anxiety. Without the knowledge of my, I registered for the WYD. What I mean: for me it was the last year in the college study, where I had to take important decisions, but I still do not really know what to look for. That is why every time I said that I have to go somewhere the problems arose with the question: *“And have you decided about your future?”* I did not decide, and I really should not take part in World Youth Day. However, I had an inner feeling, something was pushing me from inside, I felt that I should not miss this opportunity. I imagined it would be something extraordinary ... As young people say in the world - “follow your dreams, do not give up.” I decided to listen to my heart, and God gave me courage. I left with the motivation of an extraordinary event for my life. Despite the suggestion not claiming to have the certainties and securities from material point of view, but simply to fit in everything it would be presented during the pilgrimage.



I read everything that has happened to us in a positive way.

For example, accommodation was in a school, where there were five tubes in the backyard in a tent for bathing. At the same time, we were next to the parish church, where a priest was available to listen to and enjoy with our youthful adventures.

Another interesting thing was eating; we had to wait at least 3 hours, but it was an opportunity to get acquainted, to learn the songs in different languages and tidy up the line made of several kilometers. We have experienced so much rain, so much wind, the sun, and even some hail. That is why they had provided us with waterproof and cloth to cover our head!

It is a nice experience to remind us that we have to see the positive side in every event, anywhere.

I relive the images before my eyes of squares and streets crowded of youthful faces and flags from around the world with songs of praise to God.

In Communion with the Church

Movingly was to look at other young people with sincere and joyful eyes, shaking hands without color prejudice and fear. More beautiful was that in this sea of young reigned order and respect. Here we experienced the serenity and peace that came from God.

We noticed and experienced that no leader, no famous person, no politician is able to bring together more than 2 million young people to a place in a city in a square, only God can make it.



Right here we can read this sign that good and love are stronger than evil and violence that sometimes discourage us.

We have shown to the adult world that it is possible to live and witness unity in diversity.

The most beautiful image was the waiting to meet Pope Francis accompanied by the songs, by emotions, by tears and prayers. When the Holy Father arrived, the silence won the noise.

During the vigil, million small lights made us remember that to live the faith we need to see the other's light next to us. We felt that from each candle, prayers of hope and thanksgiving to Jesus were coming out.

Really was an extraordinary experience that is helping me to answer the challenge of Pope Francis: *"do not be afraid to be merciful."* Actually when each of us is merciful, we become more attractive. In conclusion, I would say that we are truly "great" when we raise up again the other person.

The Pope has asked us the question: *"do you want to change the world?"* In one voice in different languages, we answered *"Yes."* He urged us to get up from the couch, put on the shoes, and go towards the other. We young we have to dream for a better world and be able to live in peace and true fraternity.

Young people of the parish "Sacred Heart" - Rakovski Bulgary-



The MISSIONARY MANDATE increasingly up-to-date and urgent: PROCLAIM!

October 12, 2016 in the University Urbaniana of Rome was presented the last letter addressed to all consecrated by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life: Proclaim. To consecrated men and women witnesses of the Gospel among peoples.



Four letters accompanied the journey of all Consecrated men and women in the Year dedicated to the Consecrated Life. Rejoice, Keep Watch, Contemplate and Proclaim: Four words, four verbs, they want to

be four exhortations, four challenges, four itineraries to reinvigorate this specific vocation in the Church, making it more visible and able to respond evangelically to the expectations of the world today.

The text of the fourth letter *“Proclaim”* concludes the path of reflection done with the Letters Rejoice, Keep watch, Contemplate.

It is an invitation to *“listen to the hopes and dreams of our contemporaries, taking their desires and quests seriously, trying to understand what inflames their hearts and what, on the other hand, causes them fear and mistrust or plain indifference, so we can become collaborators in their joy and hope”* (Proclaim, 4).

It was presented by His Eminence Cardinal João Braz de Aviz Prefect of the Congregation, Archbishop Secretary Mons. José Rodríguez Carballo, ofm,

Secretaries Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, O. Cist., Sr Nicola Spezzati, ASC and Father Xabier Larrañaga Oyarzabal, CMF, Rector of the Institute of Theology for Consecrated Life Claretianum.

Father Sebastiano Paciolla, Secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, briefly presented the letter: *“A single imperative verb that gives the title to the letter, the fundamental issue is that of mission. Who speaks ... it is the Congregation but echoing the Magisterium of Pope Francis. In the subtitle, “witnesses and people”, are words of reference but linked to the Gospel of Jesus. Consecrated persons are the witnesses of the Gospel among peoples.*

The text opens with a very brief beginning, that connects this letter to the three previous ones, with the intention of connecting with each other and to continue a journey of reflection, that poses to read the ‘Missio Dei’ as a mystery entrusted by Christ to His Church and confirmed by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Any form of consecrated life is called to give reason of its own hope, continuing to write its story with firepower.



There is no form of life that can withdraw from this call to Mission. The prologue is intended to outline the environment in which the consecrated life is facing. Three segments follow: to the

ends of the earth, the Church which “goes forth”, outside the gates. This letter remains open in its final horizon because it has not a conclusion. “It is the spirit the protagonist of the mission. Consecrated persons are bearers of a great treasure but in fragile vessels of clay and then we can work only with the grace of God. The letter urges us to analyze but not to stop there, go over, forward.

Monsignor Carballo, Monsignor Carballo, Secretary of the Congregation, with some short reflections helped us to grasp the focus of the letter: “The letter is the result of a synodal work even if a person has developed it. We cannot separate the proclamation from testimony.... We are not the protagonist of the proclamation,



but the Holy Spirit. You cannot think to proclaim the Gospel without accepting the spirit that moves us to go out.

The Church is a Church in mission and outgoing, and Consecrated Life, which is the Church is also in mission and outgoing. Go and proclaim the Gospel is not an optional but a clear mandate. To a missionary person is asked to be courageous and creative, we are in era of new evangelization and we cannot remain indifferent to this invitation. We cannot use old style or old languages; a big problem that we have as Church is that we do not allow ourselves be understood. People experience that: when we talk with the book or when we speak from the heart. We must be creators of new languages and

new styles, and thus requires a critical eye.

Another danger I see is the over-diagnosis: it is time to do something even at the risk of making mistakes. We are called to discover new methods that the Spirit suggests to us. The evangelizer must be outgoing, you have to go. Now too often we use the verb “coming back”, rather than “going”. The missionary must be a free person, without property: must get rid of convenience and self-reference, of sloth and chronic fatigue, worldliness. The evangelizer should be a spiritual person, who is led by the Spirit...

We must recover the centrality of Christ, otherwise we proclaim ourselves. Less church and more Jesus. The spirituality of the missionary is a holistic spirituality, there is too much fragmentation between the different parties; a unified spirituality, we are children of heaven and earth, it must take into account these two aspects; a dynamic spirituality that makes us to be mystics and prophets.

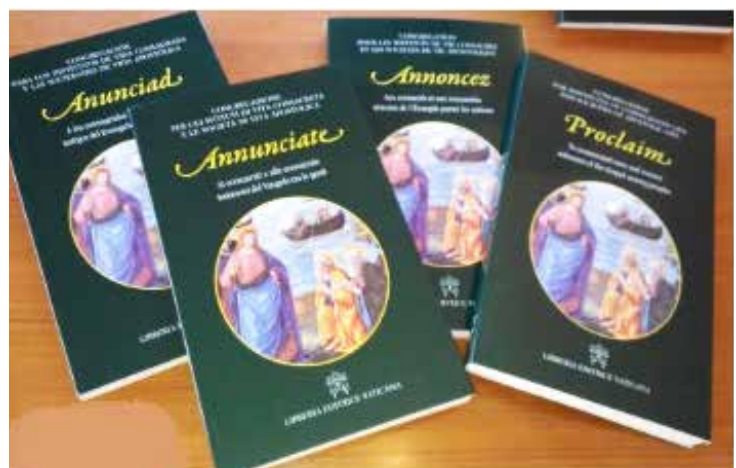
A spirituality of presence, of disciples and witnesses; we have perhaps too many teachers and few witnesses.

An apostolic spirituality, therefore passionate. A confrontational spirituality and different, Jesus did not come to bring peace but fire.

Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary enthusiasm and strength!”

Suor Nicla Spezzati, Undersecretary of the Congregation remembers the four main voices illustrated in four letters.

“The first voice: the vocation lived in the mystery



In Communion with the Church

of joy, which is a pilgrimage. The second voice invites us to peer into history with the eyes of a prophet; the third voice is the continuing care of the contemplative gaze. The fourth voice expresses a belief "I am a mission here on earth and for this I am in this world".

These words direct us towards the future: to train our gaze to the small signs and make choices in this regard, choices in the name of the small and the weak. Train the soul attitude to read into things.

Proceed planting seeds, it is not time to run on highways but break new ground.

The invitation to proceed together is said in all letters. It comes to discovering the responsibility to be a prophecy as a community, with humility and patience. We are not solitary prophets, but men and women of communion, able to work out together new signs also in times of persecution and martyrdom times.

We must learn the difficult art of the relationship with the different from us. The solitary paths have no future because they exclude us from the communion Church.

The call of all the letters leads us to generative thoughts and actions conjugated with faith ...



Generative thoughts, choices and actions create life and constrain a consumerist thought that consumes and plagues. The culture of complaint and depression is becoming the disease of our Institutions, which is a work of destruction, instead of the construction, which is always one of faith. Generative thinking is the origin of all our institution.

Secularity, the generational difference and the realities are the three areas where the letter invites us to live generativity. "

Padre Xavier Larrañaga, Rector of Claretianum University closed the meeting with these statements and challenges: "The text ... is a call to conversion, to assume an attitude of open-mindedness. It is not encased in fear of self-criticism. In our institutions, we risk to reason logically and producing documents on documents, but we move away from the people and from reality. This call to pastoral conversion recalls the creativity; we are called to recreate places and languages where people can find God. There are three words that sum up this: conversion, creativity and communion.

Conversion is an exodus, an exit from ourselves, do not expect to have everything clear to move. " The specified path address by the Church invites us to reflect deeply on our identity, our charismatic and evangelical fidelity in our path. We are encouraged to know how to discern horizons of hope and revitalization of our vocation and to live in the world as a prophetic voice.

The Jubilee of Mission: “Today, the Mission takes the face of joy”



On 28 October the Sanctuary of Divino Amore in Rome hosted the Jubilee Mission with over 900 people from dioceses all over Italy. It was not just a moment of celebration, but a day of celebration and meeting, to rekindle “the fire of the mission” and send a strong message to the local Churches in Italy, that they may go to the extreme “existential peripheries” of the world, according to ‘exhortation of Pope Francis. The occasion also wanted to remember the first 100 years of the Pontifical Missionary Union (PMU) and the message of its founder, Blessed Father Paolo Manna, a PIME missionary.

The program offered to all participants a reflection on a renewed missionary output, listening to testimonies, the Jubilee pilgrimage with the passage of the Holy Door, the celebration of Holy Mass and of the missionary sending to the departing missionaries from different reality.



From our congregation took part some Sisters of the General Council, Sr. Tiziana Tonini, Sr Georgina Vilongiyil, Sr Bernarda Alvarez, Sr. Augusta Visentin; as a representative of the ONLUS Sr Ermellina Callegaris and Ms. Sere-



na Catastini on behalf of the group of mothers engaged in missionary activities of Mission Tau.

From Latina was also present Sr Rosalia Vedovato with the group from the diocese.

During the morning prayer, Sister Elisa Kidane, a Comboni nun, commented the Gospel of Matthew (28: 16-20) inviting to have in our voice, the voice of Jesus, in our eyes, His Light and in our hearts, His Mercy. After the greetings of the Director of ‘Missio’, Father Michael Autuoro, followed the reflection of the Bishop of Bergamo, Mgr. Francis Beschi president of the Episcopal Commission for the Evangelization of Peoples and cooperation among Churches. Mons Beschi said first that “*Joy is not an ornamental dimension but a decisive choice of being missionaries. The mission is born out of joy and has the task of communicating joy*”.

In Communion with the Church

Then he developed his reflection around three themes: The book of the mission, the fire of the mission, the door of the mission.

Thus, he urged those present “Open the Book of the mission means finding an inexhaustible of

The door of the Mission. The door of mercy is identified with the Mission’s door. Equally, the Mission door can only be the door of Mercy.

We have to go through this door with renewed missionary availability, with conviction, joy and generosity. “

After the reflection of Mons Beschi, the assembly was divided into different groups to hear missionary testimonies along with seven thematic areas: welcome, heal, liberate, protect, reconcile, help and hope.

After lunch all the participants gathered in the courtyard of the ancient shrine for the Jubilee pilgrimage with the passage of the Holy Door and the celebration of the Mass presided over by Bishop Nunzio Galantino, Secretary General of the CEI, after which the “missionary mandate “ has been given

to the departing missionaries.

storytelling, experiences, representation of missionary faces. It is not simple nostalgia. It is really to insert ourselves, as we are, in the great missionary history. It means that we can nourish in us the apostolic zeal, remembering, re-telling the mission. The narration is required, such as the Gospel narration. It is not just telling a good story, but it is communicating an experience ... urging each and every one to “be today another Jesus Christ. You have to be able to say with St. Paul: “Christ lives in me”.

The fire of the Mission is the Spirit. There is no evangelizing mission without the power of the Spirit of God. Ours is a spiritual mission, which also has the density of a body, a gesture, a story, because it is first and foremost the mission of the Spirit. The place where you turn on this “fire” is the heart of man, the one in which Jesus wants to put his Spirit. Everything can be mission but will not be evangelizing mission if our heart does not turn on the mission of the Spirit. “.

The celebration was solemn and festive, in the joy of feeling the excitement and enthusiasm of the missionary Church today, despite many efforts, many challenges.

In all remains still the hope and the challenge that Paul VI had offered to all Christians and missionaries: “May the world of our time and of all times receive the Good News not from discouraged people, but by evangelizers who have first received the gift of the joy of Christ. “



The YEAR OF MERCY closes; hearts must remain open!

With the closing rite of the Holy Door in the Basilica of San Pietro and the solemn Mass celebrated by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square, on Sunday, November 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Christ the King, concluded *"the Jubilee Year of Mercy"*.

A year of grace that wanted to offer mercy and forgiveness to all people who live the faith in Jesus Christ.

In the Bull of Indiction of the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy on April 11, 2015 Pope Francis had suggested a year of special grace and had asked the Church to bring to every man and woman repeating with confidence and without pause: *"Remember, Lord, of your mercy and your love which is forever"* (Pope Francis *Misericordiae Vultus*).

The announcement on the opening of the Jubilee of mercy had raised in many people, wonder, joy, interest to deepen, live and organize specific events. We can say that during this year, the theme of mercy has been studied from many



points of view and texts were written more and new initiatives were born to make concrete mercy. Surely even the Sacrament of Reconciliation was felt and sought in a different way.

So much has given us during this holy mercy year. We could say that we enjoyed it to the full if the received mercy will be transformed into mercy donated through our lives in the events of daily life. Thus "the Holy Door closes, but the doors of our hearts will widely open," and so we will experience what the evangelist

Matthew says: *"Freely you have received, freely give."*

The experienced Mercy pervades life, transforms and cannot remain a parenthesis, a limited time, there are many testimonies that we have heard this year about lives saved by the encounter with God whose name is Mercy.



In Communion with the Church

The message that Pope Francis left to the Church and humanity is very clear. His homily words have insisted that *“the Holy Door closes, the true door of mercy which is the heart of Christ always re-*

mains open wide for us. From the lacerated side of the Risen One until the very end of time flow mercy, consolation and hope.

So many pilgrims have crossed the threshold of the Holy Doors, and far away from the clamour of the daily news they have tasted the great goodness of the Lord.

We give thanks for this, as we recall how we have received mercy in order to be merciful, in order that we too may become instruments of mercy. Let us go forward on this road together.

May our Blessed Lady accompany

us, she who was also close to the Cross, she who gave birth to us there as the tender Mother of the Church, who desires to gather all under her mantle. Beneath the Cross, she saw the good thief receive pardon, and she took Jesus’ disciple as her son. She is Mother of Mercy, to whom we entrust ourselves: every situation we are in, every prayer we make, when lifted up to his merciful eyes, will find an answer”.

At the end of the Holy Mass Pope Francis presented the Apostolic Letter - ‘Misericordia et Wretched’ - which intends to lead the Church and every Christian on the “ways” to continue to welcome and be “mercy” in the world today.

The jubilee ends but it is possible to continue to live mercy, keep the enthusiasm that involved us and that made us heralds of this great gift. May the Spirit, author of the paintings of God, hand of His wonders, accompany us guiding us with His breath in choosing the colour of Love with which God wants to continue to paint our world nowsday.



“Misericordia et misera” Lettera Apostolica di Papa Francesco



Feast of Portiuncula: “The pardon of Assisi” in Chile

In our school in Santiago de Chile “Santa Maria degli Angeli” was celebrated with solemnity the feast of the “Pardon of Assisi” with activities for each classroom of students.

Previously, students of all classes have prepared posters, banners with phrases about the meaning of forgiveness. All these signs adorned the classrooms, the corridor walls of the schoolyard, actually creating a real festive atmosphere.



The Students of the 4th Superior Class, have formed small groups, with children of preschool and with the material prepared for them, they tried to raise awareness of the significance of the Portiuncula.



The Students of the 2nd Superior Class, have achieved the same activity in the same way for the children of first grade.

The Students of the 43rd Superior Class, have built the shape of the Portiuncula in the central courtyard of the school, while a teacher briefly explained the importance of this festival.

During the morning prayer, the teacher invited students in each class to express forgiveness to a fellow who was offended; It was a very special and moving moment. Inside the school chapel he was prepared a small Portiuncula.

All morning and part of the afternoon, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for the Eucharistic adoration.

A sister led the prayer of the students who went in groups or spontaneously in the chapel to pray. There has been a surprising participation.

At the exit of the chapel, the representatives of the Center of students have handed each one a



balloon as a sign of joy for having been reconciled with God and with others.

In the activities of this day, all school staff, especially teachers participated with enthusiasm and collaboration.

The feast of the Portiuncula was a beautiful experience of forgiveness for the whole educational community.

March of the Albanian Franciscan Family “At the gate of heaven”

“The Mercy that loves” was the theme of the spiritual journey of the young Franciscans in Albania, for the Pastoral Year 2015-2016, which ended with the Franciscan march.



The Franciscan March, the proposal for a journey of ten days has been well received by young people who wanted to engage in a brief spiritual journey to give light to their own inner life. A “walking trip” through a physical and spiritual journey, which has as its ultimate goal the arrival in St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi on August 2, to celebrate the Feast of Forgiveness.

The March this year coincided with the eighth anniversary of the Pardon of Assisi at the Portiuncula, where 800 years ago, in 1216, St. Francis asked the gift of plenary indulgence for all.

It is the second year that the Franciscan Albanian Youth decides to join all the young Franciscans of Italy that on August 2 come from all regions to the place very dear to us Franciscans, St. Mary of the Angels.

“At the gate of heaven”, was the slogan of this Franciscan March in the Holy Year of Mercy.

On July 23, we started from the south of our country, from Bilisht-Elbasan, we passed through lands inhabited by

Muslims, Orthodox, Catholics, proclaiming everywhere Peace, and thus we were called by the people meeting us on the roads “People of Peace”. We reached Durres where we sailed and the next day we were in the land of S. Francesco.

During the day, 31 July, we have come to Assisi, we kissed the blessed land of St. Francis, and we joined the meeting festival, which is celebrated in the square outside the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels where all groups were welcomed, hugged and called by name by the organizers.

We were not many, but we represented the whole of Albania and the entire Albanian Franciscan family: Friars, Sisters, youth and secular Tertiaries. We felt at home. Everyone was trying his or her best. No one complained, even though the path sometimes was hard, sometimes we walked the whole day on the burning train tracks. Everyone felt responsible for the work that had been entrusted, and we found much willingness to cooperate. We walked all over about 170 km.

The March is the proposal of a physical and spiritual journey that brings us in



contact with the earth and its creatures, to make us rediscover the vital presence of the Spirit source of joy. We began this journey in the beauty and joy of sharing that goes beyond fatigue and contingencies, thinking at the Portiuncula. Each step was bringing us closer to forgiveness, at a special meeting with the Father of Mercy, a feast that fits well in the largest cradle of the Jubilee of Mercy. On August 2, that forgiveness which the Father gives to all, who experience in their lives the joy of being his children, shines through in all his greatness. Important elements of the journey were, in addition to the exhausting daily steps, the spirit of fraternity and simplicity, prayer and listening to the Word of God, sharing the little or much that we brought in the backpack of our existence, the confrontation on our lifestyle choices and ideals kept in our heart.

This year, we talked about various encounters in which Jesus offers mercy: the meeting at the Sepulcher door, at the door of the empty tomb, at the door of the temple.

Every day, young people were invited to reflect on a passage in the Bull of Indiction of the jubilee year of Pope Francis, the “Misericordiae vultus”, and to meditate on an aspect of mercy, which is His embrace, the concrete sign of God who comes to us.

Walking in the streets of life, recognize one’s own condition as creatures and look up to God the Father: the young marcher has experienced just that, along the journey, that sometimes was hard, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation which we celebrated, at different times, along the way. “A journey on foot” not only through Albania and to Assisi but also inside, in our heart.



Father Nunzio Catania OFM, the friar who is also the head of the Albanian Franciscan Youth, gave a lot of importance and time to each of us, along with the ability to make a profound revision of life, so that everyone entering the Portiuncula, might receive the plenary indulgence and sacramental embrace of God the Father. We have experienced the joy of forgiving and find forgiveness, to love and be loved, to console and be consoled, to rejoice and receive joy ... we felt within us the beautiful message of the hymn of this year’s March:

*“I want to start anew, through the gate of heaven,
And scream to the world scared and disappointed:
You can still hope, there is paradise!
I really want to start over, going through the gate of heaven,
Father, turns every sin in a smile
And let us all get to heaven! “*

Live the Gospel fully, in its radicality was the commitment that we made, in order to witness the beauty of fraternity, to share with the brethren this experience of grace, of light, of new life and love for the Church. May the Virgin Mary the “Gate of Heaven”, accompany us, to complete this journey we want to make.

Sr Lirie Brahaj fmsc

The Franciscan message from Bologna: STRENGTH OR FORGIVENESS

As so often it seems difficult to forgive but forgiveness is the place tool in our fragile hands to reach the serenity of the heart. Drop grudge, anger, violence and revenge are necessary conditions for a happy life. Forgiveness is a force that rises the person to new life and instills the courage to look to the future with hope.

Force or Forgiveness: this was the theme of the FRANCISCAN FESTIVAL 2016 which was held in Bologna from 23 to 25 September.

Some of us

Sr Stefania Bandiera,
Sr Marzia Ceschia,
Sr Francesca Fiorin,
Sr Natalina De Nobili
Sr Mara Lorenzet

attended the second day, Saturday, September 24: a beautiful experience in a city center with a Franciscan atmosphere!

Piazza Maggiore was in fact animated by numerous stand run by members of the Franciscan Family (religious and lay)

expressing creativity with many initiatives, for young and old. During the day there were various conferences and reflection proposals on issues of forgiveness, dialogue, overcoming of prejudice, with the possibility of having space for prayer, worship, listening and confession.

There have been theater and musical proposals, as good moments to meditate. We could observe a style of evangelization close to the people, a new and old style at the same time ... staying on the roads, in places of passage of people, to meet-welcome-share a Simple life message, as Francis and his companions did through the streets of the world of the men and women of their time.

Walking, we ourselves talked to many people and we perceived how to have a style of walking to intercept the others, in their directions and research: that of genuine fraternity, of a humanity that knows how to be close not to teach but to share the richness of one's gaze and hope for the world!

The street and the square were exceptional places of exchange, the more "evangelizers" the more spontaneous and fraternal!



Transitus of St. Francis in India

As all the Franciscans celebrate a ritual service on October 3rd, to remember the passing of St. Francis from life on earth to his place with God in heaven, the Franciscans from all over the Vijayawada diocese gathered together in our Provincialate, Holy Family, on 3rd evening.



St. Francis lived to serve God. Even death itself was welcomed by St. Francis. St. Francis gave his final lesson to his brothers to serve others always in humility, as Jesus taught..

At the moment of his death he stretched out his arms in the form of a cross, gave his brothers a blessing and welcomed "sister Death". St Francis fell asleep in Christ and his soul was taken to God.

Recalling all these events, with the candle procession, we started this

holy moment and it was very much heart touching to see that almost 110 Franciscan brothers and sisters from different religious families coming forward with the burning lamps in their hands.

We placed it on the altar and we had a beautiful prayer dance by our Students. As all entered in the prayerful atmosphere we presented briefly



the life, especially the last days and the death of St. Francis through a power point presentation. After this presentation Fr. Francis Kolli, Ofm Cap, gave a beautiful message and followed by we had fellowship meal.

As all were leaving the place after this beautiful gathering, this was our prayerful greetings to everybody: May God grant us peace.

ON THE WAY to the XX GENERAL CHAPTER



The Superior General Sr Paola Dotto has announced the **XX General Chapter, to be held from 6 to 30 July 2017 at the General House in Rome.**

The chosen theme is: FMSM in mission.

Let us renew our evangelical enthusiasm to embrace and give life, with the Heart of Christ Crucified and wants to be a "response to the urgent needs of the Church and of our international and intercultural family".

The chosen logo incorporates the painting of the chapter room of the General House:

The embrace of the colonnade of St. Peter's Square of Bernini gathered all those who follow St. Francis, attracted by the Love of Jesus Christ who from the Cross gazes at His Church and all humanity.

At the foot of the cross, the Good Samaritan (each sister) embraces, with the tenderness drawn from the Heart of Christ, a weak and fragile person. It is the missionary mandate that pushes us to go around the world, represented by the arc that encompasses the entire design and that, with the various colors, indicating the continents where our mission is extended.

Life of the Congregation

The words of our Superior General motivate this time of grace for our religious family:

“The announcement of the Chapter takes place at a particularly meaningful time: the Holy Year of Mercy wanted by Pope Francis. This event asks us to intensify the process of conversion, to allow ourselves to be moved, by the look of tenderness and mercy of the Father, to make a daily return to his embrace and, in turn, to reach out and to love with mercy every person. This is our first mission: our conversion and reconciliation to bring everywhere the “merciful face of the Father.”



... Together let us go on and entrust this time of grace also to Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, united with our patron saints. Our Founders, Laura Leroux and Father Gregory, who accepted, each one with one's own style, the missionary charismatic gift of the Congregation, may continue to nourish our evangelical enthusiasm.”

In this year let us dispose to know and accept the will of God especially through prayer, with the offering of sacrifice and the daily suffering, with personal reflection.

It is valued the contribution of each sister through the responses to the questionnaire that was sent.

Based on these answers it will be prepared then ‘Working Document’ of the Chapter itself.

We all feel engaged and involved in this important event of our religious Family, so in each one the evangelical enthusiasm may be renewed and we can all continue to embrace and give life, following the path indicated by our Founders, Laura Leroux and Father Gregory and the many sisters who have preceded us in living out the charism of the Congregation.

The memory becomes gratitude for our Foundress Laura Leroux

On April 3, 1917 in the Principality of Monaco our Founder Laura Leroux concluded her earthly life. The announcement came in the Mother house in Gemona on April 10, with a brief note sent by Ms. Antoinette de Mondarco that has lovingly assisted her.



*"I come to announce the death of the
Duchess Bauffremont ...
... She died in my arms,
provided with the holy Sacraments ".*

In this year, 100 anniversary of her birth to heaven: *"We want to thank the Lord together for having given her to us and for having handed to her the charismatic inspiration that led her to be the foundress of our Congregation. Let us pray with gratitude for her who accepted with determination the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and she researched, through various paths, the best way to concretize it.*

In this year we try, with joy and filial gratitude to take this opportunity to intensify their prayer for her and so that we can live with intensity and courage what the Spirit prepares for us."

(From the superior General's letter, Sr Paola Dotto)

She called herself "a simple conduit, a channel that is not even made of tin but of clay that breaks at every knock," (F2 p. 21).

We know that God's grace has used this simple conduit that precious in God's eyes, and necessary to the Divine Providence to reach its aims. (Fr Gregory)

To remember her must necessarily lead to feelings of gratitude to the Lord who chose and wanted her to give birth to our religious Family.

The memory of her makes us go over, with renewed sense of wonder, those "historical" events and choices that the divine hand of God the Father had guided.

- *The providential meeting in Venice with Father Gregory and the proposal of Laura for a new foundation. It was during this time that she told me that she was thinking of founding an Institute of Tertiary Franciscan Sisters, abandoning the idea of any other Order... The project was to found Tertiary Franciscan Sisters with the two-fold purpose of instructing poor girls of the places where they had homes and to give help to the Apostolic Missions. (MS Cap 1)*

- The choice of Gemona as the birthplace of the foundation and of our special protector: St. Anthony of Padua.

"She also wanted that the first house to be opened, not in a large city, but rather in a place out in the country and possibly where there was a shrine of St. Anthony of Padua ...

The Minor Observants had no other Sanctuary of St Anthony except of Gemona; the room where the Saint lived was kept, and in their Church up to the present time, there is still a chapel built by the Saint. Therefore I had to propose to the Duchess this place."

- The many young ladies who were attracted and touched by her enthusiasm and who have been those who have assumed and lived the charismatic gift of our being missionary in the Church and in the world.
- The event canonical opening of April 21, 1861, in which the archbishop of Udine Luigi Trevisanato invited to repeat in the *"joy of our hearts that it has proceeded from God, and that it is admirable to our eyes."* (HM Cap V)



Commemorating her, pushes us to grow in the eyes of faith and openness to "the ways of God" that are manifested in ways often incomprehensible and unusual but still mysterious and divine.

"To Perpetuate the memory of gratitude and blessing to God, returns as a natural reason for each Franciscan Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart, as she is induced to admire His Providence, that work the most beautiful wonders without looking at the poverty of those who are willing to receive His grace.

It is therefore a continuous hymn of praise to the Lord that, in all the folds of the complex earthly parable of Laura, expressed His face of a tender and merciful Father, so that everything, everywhere and always, is immersed, even "thrown in the deep sea of pure faith", as she herself, one day, was pleased to repeat to

her daughters" (Sr Antonietta Pozzebon)



Jubilee of the Foundation of the
MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT - LEBANON

On September 18, 2016 our sisters of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in Lebanon celebrated with great solemnity the 50th anniversary of their foundation. The history of this Congregation has a very deep bond with our religious Family that the sisters call us the “Mother Congregation.”

In fact in 1965 when this new Congregation was starting to be born, the founder Father Emile Geara, after so many fruitless search, he asked our Superior General of that time Sr. Tarcisia Bracale two sisters for the formation of candidates for the new foundation.

Two sisters were chosen and sent: Sister Nicodema Yemen as a formator for seven years, and Sister Josephine Vrahimi as vice-formator for three years.



All the sisters of this “*daughter-congregation*” are very affectionate to us with gratitude for what they have received, and on the 50th anniversary of the foundation asked the presence of our sisters.

The important event was attended by the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto, the Superior of the Province “Saint Elizabeth” Suor Angelica Hadjihanni, with Sister Josephine Vrahimi and Sister Armelle Kosta, the Superior of the Province



Life of the Congregation

“St. Louis IX” from France, the province where belonged Sr Nicodema who from heaven surely prayed and rejoiced.

Also present were the sisters of our community of Menjez in Lebanon. They share many experiences with the sisters of this congregation, supporting each other.

The religious ceremony was presided over by Patriarch Mons. Rai Bichazza with many priests and 50 sisters of the Congregation.

There was so much joy and emotion for our presence in the Celebration. When the function was over, all present could visit a beautiful museum where they relived the most significant moments in the history of their Congregation. Afterwards our superiors with Sister Beatrice Skorti shared with other guests a fraternal dinner.



The next day, their Superior General Sr Mona-Marie Bejjani with two other Councilors invited our sisters to a fraternal meal and allowing them to share various experiences and memories.

The atmosphere was so affectionate and spontaneous that all felt being one family. The general superior Sr Mona-Marie in presenting our sisters to various priests and authorities said with great

affection and esteem: “Mother Congregation”, expressing the joy of being able to continue a path that in the heart of God had its beginning and its realization.

May God bless and protect our two congregations.

*Sr Paola with the Superior General,
Sr Mona-Marie Bejjani*



THE GENERAL SUPERIOR SR PAOLA DOTTO

in canonical visit to the United States

From 24 August to 5 September, the Superior General Sr. Paola Dotto has visited the United States for the canonical visit to the Province of St. Francis and the community of “Our Lady of Libera”, accompanied by the General Councillor Sr. Tiziana Tonini.



The sisters of the American Province welcomed Sr. Paola and Sr. Tiziana with so much joy and also a lot of emotion. The big test of the death of the last four sisters from the beginning of the year was a really heavy pain for a province numerically shrinking and nuns almost all very old. Suffering that was perceived immediately both in the environment that revealed the “empty seats” and also in the faces of the sisters who recounted the moments lived with the sisters who are now in the Lord.



The meeting of each sister with the Superior General was experienced as a gift of the Lord, with deep gratitude and openness of heart.

The canonical visit was for all an opportunity to tell the story of their consecrated life as Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, their fears, their hopes and faith in the presence and providence of the Lord.

Two particularly significant moments were the meeting with all the provincial community, who with joy and hope listened to the words of Sr Paola, to her gratitude for their daily offering and to her love for this first little plant of our religious family.



Life of the Congregation

Another significant moment was the meeting with the Provincial Council just reconstituted. In fact, after the death of Sister Rose Cecilia, the members of the Council had to elect a new Councillor, Sr Lyssamma Sebastian, and the new Provincial Vicar, Sr. Clare Poothakuzhiyil.

Inside the Provincial house is Villa Saint Francis, which houses older ladies.



We have among us the gift of sisters of other religious families, who are very close to our community and share with our sisters, moments of fraternal life, of prayer, of celebration, such as joyful and painful events. The Superior General Sr. Paola has made time for a “Community” meeting with these sisters. The brief moment was experienced by all with deep feelings of spiritual communion, joy and gratitude.

Sr and Sr Paola Tiziana also went also to “Saint John” community in Fairview, where belonged Sr. Annamaria Not and Sr. Gloria Aranguiz. They offer their service among the poor people of the area: the immigrants who arrive in the United States and are in need of much material, spiritual, human support. It is definitely a work according to the “signs of the times” even if it has the limit of a small community.



Life of the Congregation

The time lived with the sisters was short but intense and began with the Holy Mass in the Parish along with the people who daily participate in the Eucharistic Banquet and revealing the presence of this great multicultural country as they come from different countries.

They were important moments for the personal dialogue with the Superior General and the community meeting.

A moment of prayer together in the small chapel of the community has concluded the fraternal meeting and the canonical visit to this community.



The sisters of the community "Our Lady of Libera" tell us how they lived the time of the canonical visitation

Sunday, August 28, 2016, we had the great joy of receiving Sr Paola Dotto for the canonical visit in our community "Our Lady of Libera" accompanied by Sr. Tiziana Tonini.

After the joyful welcoming to see each other again, we celebrated evening prayer at 18:30, in our little chapel, beginning the canonical visitation.

In worship, on our knees in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, we offered to the Lord this important moment in the life of our community.

To remind ourselves the meaning and purpose of the visitation, Sr. Tiziana, before the responsorial psalm, read the Article 93 of

the Constitutions and Sister Paula explained the practical way and the disposition to live this moment of grace. This introductory moment placed us deeper into the consciousness of the merciful love of God for us and the readiness to open when He knocks on the door of our hearts, in order to answer "Here I am Lord!"

The next day, Sister Paola started a personal encounter with each sister, as well as the consultation of the Community official documents.

Verification of documents lasted for two days in the time allowed also from our daily and apostolic activities.

The following days, we had two community meetings, the first to reflect on our pastoral activities before the meeting with Fr Carlo Fortunio, the parish priest and the last to end the canonical visit.



In summary, we welcomed and celebrated this event grace of canonical visitation as a gift of God through loving support and sharing of Sister Paola Dotto and Sr. Tiziana Tonini. In fact, we are grateful and happy for the future path of fraternal and apostolic life of our community.

We are encouraged to keep the spirit of discernment of God's will in every situation and the continued praise for our spiritual growth.

The Divine Providence offers all the necessities and the goodness of the Lord for us

always amazes us! In celebration of the Vespers together, in communion with the Church, we prayed for the Plenary Indulgence. May this little seed, planted with confidence and faith, bear abundant fruit!

"Our Lady of Libera", pray for us!"



Before departure Sr Paola and Sr Tiziana have returned to the provincial house to live a few more moments with the sisters of this community.

A very precious spiritual gift to the sisters of Mount Saint Francis Peekskill is definitely Fr. Charles Reinbold, chaplain of the sisters,

who always takes part in all the events and accompanies each with his exemplary presence and his discreet proximity.

Time to say goodbye is always very moving especially with these sisters who feel and live the hard uncertainty of the future, but that express always a profound faith in the Provident Presence of the Father and a confident abandonment in His Holy Will.



In Albania: CANONICAL VISIT OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL AND THE BEATIFICATION OF THE MARTYRS

Finally also for us, missionaries in Albania, the much desired and awaited canonical visit of our Superior General has come. A series of circumstances had forced Sr Paola to postpone it, but for us the delay was a reason to reinforce the desire to meet her to share with her our spiritual journey and development of our Mission in Albania.

Back in 1994, she was also present with the Superior General and Provincial at that time, to the meeting with Fr. Flavio Cavallini, on behalf of Fr. Gianmaria Polidoro, delegate of the General Minister for Albania. He arrived at the Generalate House and presented the proposal to open a missionary presence in this tormented land that had extreme need to awaken the faith latent for 600 years of Turkish rule. That regime had led Islamization and cruelly persecuted during the 50 years of communist rule, among the most ruthless of the world that had the audacity to declare Albania, the first atheist state in the world.

Sr Paola herself, first as Vicar Provincial and later as Provincial Superior, had supported the project with enthusiasm and with the profound conviction that the presence of FMSC Sisters with our charism would have been a gift of grace for this land.

She had visited the Mission, had followed it with that love and devotion given to those who are taking the first steps, always in attentive listening to what the Lord wanted to give answers to the many brethren who came out of the darkness of atheism, the best way to approach them and proclaim the Gospel.

She is coming back today as Superior General and she finds another Albania, a grown Mission, an organized and adult church transformed by the dedication and love of so many generous missionaries.



Sr Paola arrives in Tirana along with Sr Cristiana. The new superior of Scutari, Sr. Dila Vasijsa was waiting and she welcomes us and inform us, along the way, the joy of the Sisters. In Scutari, we find Sr Lirie with Rina, the young woman who is with us for two years and is now ready to start the initial formation in the Postulancy.

We are on the eve of a great ecclesial event: the beatification of 38 martyrs of the Communist regime, which will take place on November 5 in cathedral of Scutari.

November 4, the canonical visitation began with the invocation of the Holy Spirit, the morning prayers and later we participated in the Holy Mass celebrated at the Catholic cemetery, we visited the place where a plaque is dedicated to the martyrs and is close to the place where many were executed. After the shooting the bodies

were thrown beyond the boundary wall where the river Kiri flows that during the full would take them with the current, that is why do not exist the tombs of so many martyrs, and even any mortal rest. Here we meet various Friars Minor who came from Italy for the occasion, with other nuns and we prayed together. Meanwhile, also, our sisters of Dushaj came and the joy has been full.

Simply we listened Sr Paola; we updated her and prepared ourselves for the celebration the following day.

On 5 November, very early in the morning, we reached the Cathedral greeted along the access road by the faces of our Martyrs, the flags of the Vatican and Albania and few sentences uttered by them during torture or before the execution, to confirm their faith in God and their faithful love for the Catholic Church.

We have the privilege of being able to take place inside the cathedral where the celebration took place which also involved many missionaries who have now left Albania but who did not want to miss this event, faces very dear to us, generous and tireless people who have made a valuable contribution to the growth of the Albanian church.



At the end of the celebration, unfortunately two of our sisters Dushaj, Sr. Mary and Sr. Toline left to fulfill their pastoral duties. It Sr Sr Vangie remained to wait for Sr Lia and together then accompany Sr Paola in Dushaj.

The Superior General gave time and serenity to sisters in the personal encounter; precious moment to share hardships, hopes and joys of the Mission. She encouraged fidelity to the Gospel and to the charism, to the generosity and love to the poor, to always keep a look of hope for the future in the certainty that the Lord is always with us, inspirer and author of all desire and good work.

With great satisfaction, Sunday, November 6, we took part in the Mass in the church of St. Nicholas.

The Presider is Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Concelebrated the President of the CEI and the CCEE Cardinal Bagnasco, other Cardinals, the Archbishop of Scutari-Pult Archbishop Angelo Massafra OFM and thirty bishops from all over Europe, many Italians. Also participated representatives of the Orthodox church and Muslims.





Sr Paola had seen it in a hut built of poor sheet, where rain accompanied the celebrations with its “music” and “blessed” those present. This poor mission in this church was entrusted to us FMSC Sisters and did we feel in our place, on the edge of the peripheries of the city, among poor and simple people, descended from the mountains in search of better conditions and to give a more dignified future for their children.

Today the city has grown, the area is very populated, the hut has been replaced by a beautiful church, very well attended, but that unfortunately does not have a priest.

Only on Sunday is a Jesuit Father coming for Confessions and Holy Mass. We have a responsibility for this Christian community to which we try to give the answers for their growth in faith.

Sr Paola met the large group of the Altar boys that cheer the altar of the Lord, the catechists that the Sisters have prepared, the ladies of the Legion of Mary, true apostles of devotion to Our Lady and missionary in the neighborhood where they visit weekly, two by two, the sick at home and in the hospital bringing only the solace of prayer and their love for the Lord.

In the afternoon Sr Paola enjoyed the youth group “Jesus, my strength” gathered for their weekly meeting. They are simple, cheerful and interested in their formation and very helpful in the activities that the Church proposes. Sr Paola strongly recommends us to follow them

up, to announce the vocation of special consecration, never to be discouraged, not to let ourselves to be stolen the hope in times of disappointment or defeat.

In the evening, Sr. Lia arrived from Italy and the next day, together with Sr. Vangie accompanied Sr. Paola in Dushaj. Unfortunately the weather was bad, it rained all along the way, it was impossible to enjoy the view,



the lake was very large and almost entirely covered by trash that came down from the mountain.

But, on the arrival at Dushaj, the affectionate and joyful welcome of Sr. Mary and Sr. Toline erased the fears and uncertainties of the journey. Meanwhile, the weather did not improve, even it rained day and night, forcing the closure of schools throughout Albania because of the danger of flooding and so Sr Paola could not meet the children of the catechism and after school, and she could not visit the different villages where the sisters work. But it was not consider a loss because ‘in this way she had more time to dedicate to the Sisters personally and to the entire Community’.



They have been very important meetings in which we read together the story of this Mission in comparison with the Gospel and the Constitutions. We gained courage for future engagements, listening to testimonies of other Missions in the world. We enjoyed our beautiful religious family, and we were renewed in our love and will to be faithful and generous. During the long conversations, Sr Paola realized the serious pastoral commitment that bears upon the Sisters of this mission.

The field is very broad; it embraces catechesis, liturgical animation, and work with young people, even the service of charity to the poor, the formation projects of the women and the precious service performed in the clinic.

It encourages the sisters to read their mission among the poorest with a special gratitude to the Lord who wants them among the last witnesses of love and peace.

With a little effort, the sisters were able to gather the school Children who live closest to the Mission.



Despite the bad weather, they came joyful to pay homage to the Superior General with a very simple program, but sincere and spontaneous that Sr Paola liked and appreciated.

After five days in Dushaj, sr Paola went again in Scutari where she visited the Memorial Museum, a place of torture and the Diocesan Museum, which was opened for the beatification of the Martyrs, greatly appreciating the guidance in Italian of a young Albanian.

Also in this community Sr Paola had an important encounter with touching delicacy, simplicity and love the themes dear to her heart: fraternal life, sharing, love for the poor, the passion for the mission, the love for our religious family. With the gift of the image of the two Founders she has given us the duty to venerate them with deep gratitude, with the booklet "Proclaim", she urged us to constantly deepen our commitment to an authentic and joyful consecrated life in the Church.

But the greatest gift was her simple presence among us, her words spoken as a real sister, her teachings and her example.

Sr Paola still had a desire to visit the Sanctuary of the Mary Mother of good Counsel, special Patroness of Albania, of Scutari and in particular to cross even the Holy Door.

We went, we venerated the Mother and to Her we have entrusted our two Missions and Missions around the world. After the celebration of Vespers together, we recited the prayer for the plenary indulgence on the occasion of the Visitation.

On Sunday, November 13 Sr Paola took the flight to Italy.



First Religious Profession in Bamenda – Cameroon

“Certainly happy is the one who has had the grace to take part in this sacred banquet to join with every fiber of her heart to Him whose beauty is admired by all the blessed hosts of heaven “

(Franciscan Santorale, p. 265).

On August 11, the great Franciscan family celebrates the birth into heaven of Saint Clare. On this day, the family of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart celebrated a double feast with the gift of four new sisters who become part of the Congregation:

Sr. M. Brigitte of Divine Love,

Sr. M. Aliawé of the Holy Trinity ,

Sr. Maria Nailey of the Good Shepherd

Sr Maria Ita of Jesus Crucified,

who made their religious profession to follow Christ Jesus.



The ceremony was held in the Parish

“Queen of Peace” of the Archdiocese of Bamenda Ndjimafor.

The Holy Mass was presided by Father

Felice Trussardi, provincial superior of the Friars Minor Capuchin of Bambui.

In his homily, Father said that each of us has a mission to fulfill and encouraged the new sisters to serve God in all humility and simplicity, following the example of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.

The celebration was great and beautiful and we have enjoyed a lot with our dear sisters and their families.

We thank the Almighty for the gift of vocations in our congregation and to Him all glory!



First Religious Profession in Cyprus

"This is the day the Lord has made."

On October 2, I made my first profession: the memorial of the love of Him who has called me to say my "Fiat" to His love.



The Vicar Patriarchal, Father Jerzy Kraj, OFM., presided over the celebration in the parish church of Santa Caterina in Limassol. Concelebrated the Maronite Archbishop Mons. Youssef Soueif and several priests.

The sisters have prepared everything with so much generosity to make this day a memorable day of my life. Thanks so much!

The Holy Mass took place in calmness and harmony, where everyone, Latins, Maronites and Orthodox have joined their voices participating in Holy Mass, singing and praying for me. I felt strongly the presence of God, as well as that of the sisters present

and absent of all our communities, the Joseph nuns, my beloved mother, the 38 friends who came from Limassol, Nicosia and Larnaca, to participate in my joy.

I would like to thank all the people who helped me, supported and accompanied in my formation, especially Sr Angelica Hadjihanni, provincial superior and her council.

I wish to express my gratitude to all the sisters who have contributed to my education with the word but above all by the example of life. My thanks go also to all the young sisters who have inspired me in my journey and I hope that their life is a lamp that illuminates and gives hope for the future of our Congregation.

Pope Francis said to all the young people at World Youth Day in Poland: *"When the Lord calls us not to think of what we were, what we did or stopped doing, on the contrary: at a time when He calls us, He is looking to what we can do, all the love that we are capable of share. He always bets on the future, about tomorrow. Jesus puts you on the horizon, never to the museum Because Jesus always looks lovingly at all as to the young in Mark 10:21 "Jesus, looked upon him loved him ...".*

God has shown His love from me and gave me the privilege to be His bride, to embrace Humanity and to be His collaborator in the work of redemption, as our Holy Father Francis who wanted to be the brother of all.

For this with great joy and gratitude to the Lord, I **Jaida Sr Maria of the Child Jesus**, thank all of you with great affection and I promise my prayer.

May the Lord give you peace, and all good ...!

You are my only good, the heart of my life, my everything, oh my spouse!

Sr Maria Jaida Millard



In India: forever Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart

"I will praise the Lord with all my heart; I will tell all His wonders"

August 11th 2016 was a memorable and a great joyful day for our religious family Franciscan Missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart especially for our Holy Family province India as we three sisters namely

Sr. Sophia. M. Paul, Sr. Lucy Gandham and Sr. Padma Bhupathi uttered our whole heartedly "yes" to follow Jesus poor and Crucified.

The solemn Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Most. Rev. Thelagathoti Joseph Raja Rao, bishop of Vijayawada along with other priests.



The core of the message of the bishop enlightened our minds to lead a meaningful religious life. He said that God calls unworthy servants and often these servants do not recognize it. God's story is bigger than ours and we hold our stories within God's life and weave them into the wide open future. The call is the immense love of God towards us and He gives us the courage to work for Him. We must be like the grain of wheat. The grain of wheat was ineffective and unfruitful as long as it was preserved in safety and security.



Life of the Congregation

When it was thrown into the fertile ground, and buried there as if in a tomb, it bore fruit.

Yes, when we bury our personal aims, ambition and by surrendering our own ways to God's ways we begin to become effective instruments in the hands of God. Finally he reminded us the slogan of Pope Francis "where there are religious there is joy" so he awakened us to be joyful and have a smiling face always.

In the presence of a large gathering of priests, religious, relatives and the faithful we made our perpetual commitment to the Lord. We specially asked the assistance of God and all the saints to carryout faithfully the demands of our consecrated life till the end.



We thank our Mother General Rev. Sr. Paola Dotto and councilors, our Provincial Superior Rev. Sr. Gracy and councilors and all those who supported us to commit our lives to God and for His service.

Sr. Sophia, Sr. Lucy, Sr. Padma



Sr M. Neelima Dakkamadugula Sr M. Suneetha Pentamala FMSC for ever

"So I will sing praise unto thy name forever," (Ps 61:8)

The expected and anticipated day for which we Sr. Neelima and Sr. Suneetha were eagerly desiring and waiting for to say our Solemn 'Yes' to the Lord forever is finally here 10 December 2016.



It is welcoming us to taste and see the tender love of God towards us and to sing a song of gratitude with joy for choosing us as instruments of peace from the time of our birth. Our vocation to a life of consecration is a gift freely given by God. It seems from God's utter generosity and love. Therefore, we have nothing to offer Him except the joy of our belonging to Him. At this moment, we remember the words of the Lord "freely you have received and freely give".

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Mons. Guerino di Tora, bishop of the Nord Area of Roma, in the church of generalate house. There were also present many priests, sisters of our religious family, brothers and laity.

During the homily the bishop inspired us and encouraged us with his rich words telling that the work of the consecrated person is to respond to God's love with love and to have the intimacy with the Lord and to experience Him personally.

Once we experience Him we cannot remain closed within ourselves in order to reach others and to share the taste of Jesus.

While we prostrated surrendering ourselves totally at the foot of the altar of the Lord

we experienced the Lord's blessings showering upon us through the prayers of all the Saints in heaven and of all other who were present in the Eucharistic celebration.



Life of the Congregation



We are also strengthened by the prayers of our sisters from the different parts of the world and of our parents.

This is the day we cannot forget in our lives as we offered our total self to the Lord by pronouncing our evangelical vows of obedience, poverty and chastity in the hands of our Superior general Sr. Paola Dotto who received us in this religious family to be permanent members of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and to serve the Lord in

the footsteps of St. Francis.

We are really special in the eyes of God and we are very grateful to His call, to Sr. Paola Dotto superior general, her council members, our provincial superior Sr. Gracy Thurutupallil, her councilors, to our formators and all the sisters.

We surrender ourselves fully for His service believing in His words: *"I am with you I will keep you wherever you go... for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised to you."* (Gen 28:15).



Our Lady of Suffrage in Grotte di Castro



4th Centenary of the coming in Grotte di Castro of the Sacred image of Our Lady of Suffrage.

This year marks the fourth centenary of the arrival in Grotte di Castro of Our Lady of Suffrage. The story tells us that back in 1616 by Father Angelo Ronciglione, humble but stubborn popularizer of Marian devotion, brought from Rome to Grotte di Castro “a beautiful wooden statue from the street of the lake that connected the village to Bolsena. Such was the crush of the population moved to welcome the statue, that many fell from the unstable cliff but, miraculously, nobody was hurt. This miracle and the many others that followed attracted pilgrims from all over.

Given the constant flow of visitors not only was named a Chaplain with a mandate to deal with the people coming, to celebrate Masses and sing every day the Litany, but with the donations collected, it was decided to erect a new, more elegant and sumptuous temple of the existing one. On

12 October 1698 the card. Marco Antonio Barbarigo, bishop of Montefiascone and Corneto, consecrated the sacred building in honor of Our Lady of Suffrage and St. John the Baptist.

Way back in May 23, 1728, it began the religious tradition of bringing the sacred image in procession along the streets of the country. The feast of Our Lady of Suffrage is celebrated every year on September 8th.

At every ten years, instead it expected the traditional “coming down.”

The sisters in the Community of Grotte di Castro tell us the celebration

With great joy and enthusiasm, we waited for the feast of Our Lady. The “coming down” of Our Lady of Suffrage one of the most heartfelt celebration of the entire community of Grotte. Almost the entire village was decked at the 4th centenary of the coming of Our Lady; feast that was solemnly opened September 8, 2015.

We are truly fortunate to be here in this birthplace of P. Gregory and be able to feel, enjoy and participate with the people to this feast.

For the preparation we had the pilgrimage of Mary (peregrinatio Mariae). The statue of Our Lady of Suffrage blessed by Pope Francis was brought from house to house. Going into every home we got to know the reality of every family and this was a deep and intimate relationship with the people of Grotte. For the preparation of the feast we had nine days of novena. The preaching was held by Father Gianpiero Montini (OFM) Capp. from Viterbo. It was a very nice way to prepare ourselves spiritually for this celebration..

September 4 the youth of Grotte prepared a re-enactment of the arrival at Grotte di Castro of the statue of Our Lady of Suffrage in 1616 and it was very moving. Finally came the day of the descent of the Virgin Mary; September 7 in the sanctuary in the morning at 7.00 am the people were already lining up to take the place.



Life of the Congregation

It was wonderful to see all people: seniors, adults, youth, and children.

The church was packed and that vision provoked a deep and profound emotion.

The mother of Jesus was about to come down from her throne to visit her children ... It is difficult to express the joy of seeing Our Lady coming down. At 11:00 am the well prepared statue on a carpet of flowers began to fall slowly from her niche to the altar. The faithful shouted saying "Viva Maria"evviva ... they were singingpraying ... even many were crying for joy to see the Lady descend among us.



Some men from the inner ledge of the Church threw colored tickets with a prayer and a message that went down like rain on all people. It was great for everyone. The children were all busy to collect the cards.

On the evening of the same day Bishop Msgr. Lino Fumagalli, celebrated Holy Mass, during which he conferred the mystery of acolyte to the seminarian Michele Contadino, a native of Grotte.

On 8 September we had the visit of Cardinal Angelo Comastri, the Pope's vicar for Vatican City who celebrated the solemn Pontifical Mass. He is really a humble, simple person.

The message he left to the community of Grotte has been that we must learn the style of the "Yes" of Mary.

Both for the event of the descent of Our lady and the Solemn Pontifical Mass came from the General House and the General Council of the sisters to share the great feast, thinking with emotion that our Founder Father Gregory must have lived and enjoyed this great celebration as a child or young boy.





Various celebrations followed throughout the month of September.

The day September 10 we had the visit of the general commander of the Police army.

18 September another moment of grace was the 13th journey of the Fraternity of the Confraternity of the Lazio region. There were more 1500 brothers and sisters. The bishop celebrated the Holy Mass in the Municipal gym. After the Holy Mass with rain and a bit of sun, the pilgrimage to the sanctuary was made. In addition to the religious celebrations at the shrine, there were concerts, with Alessandro Brustenghi OFM, and many witnesses of faith.

One of the most beautiful testimonies was that of a painter and world-renowned dancer Simona Atzoti, born without arms, which involved many present with her joy for life and her strong faith. The meeting had as its theme the title of his book "What are you lacking to be happy?" what are you really lacking? Nothing, we are created perfectly by God. We are happy for so many things. Our duty is to thank the Lord and live a happy life every day. Her testimony made all of us to reflect deeply.

On September 25th ended the celebrations of the 4th centenary with the Holy Mass. In the afternoon, amid songs and prayers in a crowded Basilica, it took place the Ascent of Our Lady of Suffrage.

Our prayer to the Virgin Mary while she was climbing slowly towards the niche has been and is that she will always remain in the hearts of all and accompany with her motherly love, the path of each person.



Closing of the year of mercy in our Vice-province "SS. Martyrs of Uganda"

Let us thank God for this special time that the Church has offered us to meditate and relive the mercy of God who loves us so much and wants us to learn to be merciful toward our brothers and sisters who are on the journey with us.

The theme for this Jubilee chosen by the Holy Father, Pope Francis, for our meditation during this year "*to be merciful as the Merciful Father*" has become a real encouragement as we are all invited to receive and give this mercy to others.

In this context our Vice Provincial Superior, Sr. Beatrice Bifouma, and her Council, urged the sisters in their respective communities to organize themselves to live better this year through various activities with the implementation of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Then they decided to organize a special day at the level of Vice Province to allow us to live and to close the Jubilee year.

A Triduum of Prayer in every community preceded this closure with the possibility for the sisters to ask forgiveness to each other.

On November 12, 2016 in the morning we found ourselves in Nkoabang and at 7 a.m. Then the procession formed of the postulants, novices and sisters got in the way for the great pilgrimage, having as destination the shrine of "Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows" by Akono (a beautiful church for its architecture) in a locality situated 75 Km à Yaoundé. It was a day dedicated to prayer, with a conference on the Mercy and the works of mercy, confession, the passage of the "Holy Door" and a charitable visit to the elderly rest home in Trasburgo held by the Sisters of the Cross, Sisters of same parish.

We arrived at Akono, at 09 a.m., we were welcomed by the parish priest, Father Elisee Abe Amanga, a



Claretian Father who was waiting for us and he guided our day. We started with a lecture entitled: "Mercy and witness" chosen by the father to help us to live this important time of the jubilee year because it is not enough just to practice the works of mercy, but we have also to witness them in our lives.

And in this sense that the Holy Father cited Pope John Paul II who said:

"The world does not need words, but our witness."

Considering our program, he continued telling us that we are well-rooted in the ecclesial spirit, reminding us that the Church has always opted for the poor, and especially us, SFMC, we

should engage in turn to better identify and conform ourselves to Christ through our charism as our father St. Francis of Assisi, to know what we must be and do our ministry, knowing that our first apostolate is the community in which we share our lives.

- To welcome with good each sister who is assigned in our community, give her the advice needed to succeed in her mission.
- Have a visit to a sick sister.
- Helping those in need ...

This is the testimony that will make of us the true disciples of Mercy; we should be proud to be women disciples of mercy, proud of our identity, because each congregation experiences a particular aspect of the life of Christ that we must return to the world.

Father also urged us to read and re-read the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 15, especially the parable of the Prodigal Son who always invites us to conversion and the acceptance of others. In his lecture, the Father also explained the symbol of the Holy Door telling us that it is Christ. To a pilgrim, to cross the Holy Door means conversion; each of us has to say: *"Here I am, Lord, stand before you to start a new life and live an inner transformation."*

Concluding his presentation, Father invited us to discover every day the true face of Christ, of the Merciful God "slow to anger and full of love" and to gaze on Mary, Mother of Mercy.

After we have received the sacrament of reconciliation to be cleansed and forgiven; so, united in the spirit of faith and in procession we crossed the "Holy Door" by singing the hymn of Mercy and receiving the blessing of the Father. In addition, we will be counted among the "saved" of our time; secure of having received the plenary indulgence given to the pilgrims of the Jubilee of Mercy.

After the Mass, the crowning of our beautiful day, we headed in procession, singing, to the house of the elderly called "Sarah".

This visit to the elderly, abandoned by their relatives, has been a source of joy and consolation: it was truly a mutual warm welcome, expressed with the chants, prayers, presentations, the Rosary of Mercy, and the exchanges of fraternal and joyful conversation and with simple refreshments.

Everything was a symbol of communion. It was a happy moment in the company of these elderly people who do not expect anything but their last day of life. Beyond the spiritual and moral relief, we have brought them material help with our simple gifts in memory of our passage in their homes. Then we returned to the parish to have a snack together, gesture of sisterly love before our return to Nkoabang.



It was 3:30 p.m. when we thanked the Lord for this beautiful day and this year offered by Pope Francis, His humble servant. You are holy, Lord God, who do great things, wonderful!

The Sisters and the young people in formation in the Vice-Province of the "Holy Martyrs of Uganda".

Some celebrations in schools

In Chile

On 14 October, it was an unforgettable day for the educational community of the school “Saint Mary of the Angels” having made the pilgrimage to the Shrine “Mary Immaculate” of the Conventual Franciscan Fathers, in the “La Granja” to celebrate the Jubilee of Mercy.

This important activity, was prepared in a short time, more than a month and a half.

They worked with enthusiasm the delegates of the pastoral ministry, the sisters, teachers, collaborators of education and students.

At 19.30 we were all gathered there in the atrium of the Parish; each class of pupils had his banner indicating the class.

All groups have prayed and sang with joy. The entire staff of the school was present; it was attended by many parents and students, it was



felt an emotion environment, a lot of enthusiasm, faith and joy. The parish priest Father Mauricio Bridio recalled the conditions necessary to receive a plenary indulgence; he prayed the prayers of the Church to be made at the entrance of the Holy Door, before crossing it and then continued the celebration of the Holy Mass with a style of profound closeness to all those present.

People were so many in the celebration that the Church has become too small to accommodate all the participants. After the Eucharist, out of the church, the people thanked for

the opportunity given to them to live this spiritual experience rewarding and motivating to start a conversion path.

In Lithuania

It is the tradition of Kretinga Franciscan High School to celebrate St. Francis with a week of celebrations that involved the whole school community.

This year's theme, Jubilee of Mercy, was: *"When the Lord gives me to experience His mercy."*

The celebrations began with an afternoon of formation for teachers of the Franciscan School.

Cardinal mons. Audrius Backys, archbishop, presented with brotherly attitude, on the theme mercy.

Sunday afternoon October 2 the entire city of Kretinga was interested in the race organized to support the eatery of the poor that the Franciscan friars maintain for 25 years. Sr. Danute participated with enthusiasm.



During the week in the Franciscan High School, each classroom had a specific task to accomplish: the little ones they have become aware of the biography of a saint, others have made a contest, still others are interested in the life of the Franciscans in Kretinga.

The big ones had to find places in the city where spiritual and corporal works of mercy are performed and spend time with people. To do this they went to the hospital, the soup kitchen where they

peeled potatoes and helped set the table.

In the cemetery, they prayed at the tombs of the Franciscan friars. They entertained with the police to know how they are practicing their spiritual work "admonishing the sinners."



Then they went to the preparation of the city's daily newspaper that

did a workshop on the beatitudes; in the library of the city have met people who live in a community rehabilitation.

The classes that have won, had the joy of a "free" trip-pilgrimage on the footsteps of the Franciscans in Lithuania.



In Bolivia - Santa Cruz

This year for the Feast of All Saints we wanted to reflect together on the holiness and humanity of St. Francis. Monday, October 31 on the eve of All Saints, Sister Carmen Callizaya, together with the parents of the third year of elementary school “San Francisco,” presented the show “Francis of Assisi: The Holy jester of God” of Salome Adroher Biosca .

The other two primary classes performed two songs from the life of St. Francis.

The first was referring to: “*Francis and the Wolf*” and the second: “*Saint Francis and the creation.*”

The occasion of the feast of All Saints was the reason to emphasize the Franciscan values to be cultivated, rejecting the negative values from the external environment. The preparation practices with children were strenuous enough but the efforts have paid off, and the children giving the best of themselves, they offered a good representation of the characters in each scene inviting everyone to reflection.



Closing of the ‘Year of the Jubilee in Santa Cruz -Bolivia

On November 20, 2016, the feast of Christ the King of the Univers, the Franciscan Family of Santa Cruz had joined in the Chapter of Mats: the friars, the sisters from various congregations of the Third Order Regular and Youfra (Franciscan Youth). We had two conferences, the first of Father Bogus Czurylo, OFMconv, and the other of Sister Mónica Canedo from the “Angelines” nuns. After having heard and examined our being Franciscan, we traced the possible lines for the activities of the new apostolic year.

Thus, to conclude we shared lunch, and then we arranged ourselves to go on a pilgrimage to Santa Cruz Cathedral for the closing of the Holy Door of the Jubilee of Mercy.

Here were gathered all the parishes of the different vicariates of the “Archdiocese of Santa Cruz de la Sierra”. The priests with our bishops concelebrated the Eucharist in the atrium of the Cathedral, with a massive participation of the people and the solemn closing of the Holy Door. After the Holy Mass in front of the crowd of the faithful, the Archbishop of Santa Cruz, S.E. Msgr. Sergio Gualberti closed the Holy Door as a symbolic act of the closing of the Jubilee of Mercy. The message in his homily stressed the love and forgiveness received in this Year of Mercy, that instituted by Pope Francisco, was a year of grace bestowed on many

faithful through the celebration of the principal mysteries of our salvation.

It ends this special time of the ‘Holy Year of Mercy with great joy and with a commitment to “extend” it in our lives.

Christ King of the Universe invites us today to be crucified with the poor of this world and to be witnesses and humble servants of the Kingdom.



“Our Lady of Libera” - Franciscan Sion Youth Group ***The joy and the power of perseverance***

Since our arrival in the US, in February 2014, the new community “Our Lady of Libera” consists at the beginning by Sr. Clare, Sr. Hortancie and Sr Ana Ruth and now with Sr Sophy tried to respond with joy, generosity and simplicity to different pastoral needs. During these two and a half years, we are involved in in our parish “Holy Redeemer”. We work in the sacramental ministry, in the animation of the Eucharistic celebrations, in visiting the sick and elderly, in the catechesis of adults, etc.



One of the strongest commitments that we are taking as a religious community has been the youth group “Zion” already followed by four years by a married couple. Our parish priest Don Carlo Fortunio, has asked the community along with the couple to continue the formation

and accompaniment of young people.

When we came into this service were 25 young people between 14 and 23 years (boys and girls) a fairly enthusiastic group although little persevering to attend the meetings: continuing the journey we realized it was hard to have a continuous process, with a formative dialog.

Even the age difference was a detail to keep in mind when proposing the activities. Having got to know and deepen the group’s situation at the end of the pastoral year, we decided to create a new project for Youth Ministry. Taking into account the age and responsibility of the members we propose a formation with Franciscan style.

For this, the group was renamed “Franciscan Sion youth group.” We have achieved a leadership workshop for 10 young people with whom we wanted to take the road that had been made. It was not easy, but the perseverance and the fraternity that has developed among the young people, it was our goal and gradually increased the sense of responsibility and the need to give more structure to the meeting.

We have created a set of guidelines that has given meaning to our being together from the beginning of the meeting until the time to say goodbye at the end of the meeting itself.

Now those 10 young people are an important pillar for the new community that began last September of this year, and managed to influence others differently.

Now we are happy to have 25 young people aged 13-18 very brave, consistent with a healthy disposition of wanting to grow as a community.



Our current formation project with them has the aim to:

- Strengthen in every young person the self-knowledge and self-esteem as a person.
- Find in the person of Francis of Assisi, an exciting way of encounter with oneself, with Christ and the brethren.
- To rediscover and value the Word of God as a light to our path of disciples of Christ.
- Discover the talents and put them at the service of the parish community.



These main objectives will be worked out in our weekly meetings every Friday.

(One Friday a month, we have music workshop and singing, crafts etc.).

Our purpose is that their human and spiritual forces can be at the service of our parish, the family, the school. They are the future for a diverse, happy young people who love their life as a gift of God, themselves and know how to respect others.

This experience with our young people has made us more mature in understanding the urgency of our mission to young people who need to accept and understand the wonderful treasure of the Gospel values and that we have to sow with great faith.

If we expect from them perseverance, we ought to bear this in our mind especially in difficult times, and fight alongside with them for a happy and coherent Christian youth. May St. Francis of Assisi, whom we chose as patron, guide and intercessor, accompany our youth, bless our meetings, and help us as leaders to convey the love of God and the joy of serving the brothers. We want to have happy young people, builders of peace and goodness, love and universal fraternity.

On September 17, we started the Pastoral Year “with this youth group” Franciscan Sion “through the a formative and recreative outing to the lake” Spruce Run Recreation Area “State of New Jersey, with their leaders and with the three of us sisters.

This day was organized to help young people who are already part of the group and their new friends to meet, learn and gain confidence and affection with each other. It was a day of prayer and fun.

With Franciscan spirit, we started with a moment of prayer with the whole beauty of creation, to praise our Creator and thank the opportunity to share our faith and each other presence. The various activities (prayer, sharing, and games) have reached the intended purpose and it was a day of true Franciscan fraternity.

We are very grateful that the Lord has given us brothers and sisters, and we will walk together joyfully to celebrate our faith that we want to grow in the Franciscan style of joy, peace and goodness.



Young and old... dream and prophecy ... following the invitation of Pope Francis

The desire to bring together two apparently distant generations came from three reasons: the first two are from the speeches of the Pope; one addressed to all consecrated, where the encounter between generations has more relevance; and one made for the Diocesan Assembly of Rome where the Pope spoke with enthusiasm to the young. Here are some quotes: *"It is good for the elderly to communicate the wisdom to young people and is good for young people to collect this wealth of experience and wisdom, and take it forward."* And, Bergoglio says, *"even in consecrated life one lives the encounter between the young and the old, between compliance and prophecy"*.

Therefore, urges the Pontiff: *"Do not let's see them as two opposing realities, rather than let the Holy Spirit inspire them both, and the sign of this is the joy: the joy of watching, walking into a rule of life. The joy of be guided by the Spirit, never rigid, never closed, always open to the voice of God that speaks, opens, leads."* A "covenant" between generations for the sake of their religious orders and of the whole Church.



Rome, June 16, 2016, Pope Francis, speaking at the inaugural assembly of the Roman diocesan convention, has focused attention on the fate that binds the young to the old and the ability to dream together.

Taking up the song of the prophet Joel, he said:

"The old men shall have dreams and the young men shall see visions. ... in the dreams of our elders often lies the possibility that our young people may have new visions, may once again have a future ... They are two realities — the old and the young — that go together and that need one another and are bound together."

This is the time to encourage grandparents to dream. We need the dreams of grandparents, and to listen to these dreams.... this is the time in which grandparents must dream.

It is important to encourage them to dream, to tell us something. ... It is the time of grandparents: may the grandparents dream, and the young will learn to prophesy, and to bring about with their own strength, with their imagination, with their work, the dreams of their grandparents."

These words together with the "third reason", that is to have heard them while we were living the Jubilee of Mercy, have encouraged us to do something concrete to create an encounter between the two generations.

So with the youth ministry of this portion of the Trento diocese where is our fraternity of Drena, we thought of *"24 hours of mercy."* A day of life sharing day in which it was planned a visit to one of the realities of charity in the area: the elders House of Rest, the diocesan Caritas and Migrants and the testimony of two young people in the recovery center for drugs addicted people.



Life of the Congregation

We found ourselves in the early afternoon with about fifty youth to introduce the activities and then we split into groups and went in different realities. In the rest home, after a brief introduction on the present reality, we visited the various departments and the elders, and operators have offered to young people their testimony.

Paola, a young woman who has lived this experience and who is already a volunteer, gives us her testimony. Thinking of the experience and the elderly that I got to know, through being a volunteer, I would say that stand beside them, in any psycho physical condition they are, is beautiful because every time it turns out that deep look, gazing deep, that still wants to know ... despite a life behind.

In their silence, it is possible to see a lifetime that passes only through a gesture, a look, in a few but deep words. In everything, they express the desire to tell a whole life story that was beautiful although difficult. Sometimes you can notice the lost look of a person that does not remember who he/she is because is in an unfamiliar place and does not recognize who is there at his side. You can only be there, gently, respectfully.

I think the sweetness of a caress that only a hand full of wrinkles can give you. I also think of how much solitude, melancholy, how many tears for the past memories, but I also think of how a simple gesture can make their faces shining with a simple, deep smile. From them you can learn that you do not need big things, but that small, those that remain inside, are the true joy.

A nurse gave her testimony explaining how, over time, has become for her a core value the accompanying to death with dignity.

Help the person in the last stretch of life to what she calls the “coming back home”. The trip of a lifetime brings each of us to have a luggage, not of things (because those that one goes into a nursing home are just a few!), But of experiences, memories, feelings that often need to be entrusted to someone, left like a spiritual testament. This “last will” not always need words to be written or said; sometimes it takes voice through gestures, looks or tears that we should know how to welcome, this is our professionalism, know how to welcome all the person, all their needs.



To young people this experience of direct contact with the reality in which we were about three hours, offered many ideas which then have had the opportunity to share in the group work and to turn in prayer during the Mass of the day.

At other times during the year, we also took the children of catechesis to make some small gift to grandparents and best wishes in the festivities with some singing and their unmistakable joy. This experience will continue so that this bridge between generations can enrich all.

Sister Barbara, Paola and Gianna

Being a “caress” of God for the poor

Last year on the occasion of the feast of St. Elizabeth, of whom our community brings its name, the Holy Spirit has enlightened us to address the poor, opening a soup kitchen for them every Thursday and have lunch together to give them attention and possibility of dialogue.

The same day for the opening of this activity on the feast of St. Elizabeth we invited 15 people of the Parish who were living in difficult economic situations.

This years the group has grown and every Thursday 25 people come for lunch with us, and 20 others people, relatives or volunteers, bring lunch in their homes.

We tried to answer the continuous appeal of Pope Francis to help the poor, always looked for and loved by Jesus.

This is also our specific vocation and our Franciscan charism. Thank you with all my heart the Divine Providence which never abandons us.



The “Faith and Light” group

The group consists of people with disabilities, called by the name “Faith and Light”, was created two years ago in our parish of Rakovski in Bulgaria.



Life of the Congregation

It is a group of 15 people accompanied by their parents. Priests and we sisters we meet them every Wednesday in the parish hall.

The purpose of these meetings is to get together, talk, share the meaning of their lives and give them the opportunity to develop their talents according to their ability. The various jobs they are able to create are used for charitable purposes. This activity provides them a chance to feel useful and integrated in the parish community.

The day ends with a shared lunch together with much joy and singing. There are also moments of playing time, short pilgrimages on the mountain and trips around.



It is very nice to be together with them in simplicity because they feel loved and therefore also have the desire to share their problems and express the joy of being together.



Prison ministry in India

“In the end, it is not the years in your life that count; it’s the Life in your years.” (Abraham Lincoln)

Jesus gave to the whole world the message of His divine love and that of His merciful Father.

Though He Himself was God, He died on the cross to save all of us from our bondage of sin. To find life one needs to have a deep understanding and acceptance of every situation. In today’s world everyone is busy with their own selves and have very little concern about others.

The struggle of every individual continues and the challenges of poverty, jealousy, envy, ego, pride, hunger for power and position, dissatisfaction bring misery in people’s lives.

In the prison, the prisoners are always struggling against the evil forces and often express that they are not able to win over any evil by themselves because they are in their clutches and victims of such evils.

Today, in this situation Jesus has called us and sent us in to this world to proclaim release to the prisoners (Is 61: 1).

Keeping this message in mind we the sisters and the candidates of Holy Family Province, India, take part in the prison ministry very actively. We visit the jail occasionally and conduct prayer services and preach the Word of God to the inmates belong to different faiths. After that we get into dialogue with them and they share with us their problems.



We listen to them very patiently and we assure them our prayers. They love us so much and very happy to have our presence with them.



Some important occasions we conduct cultural programmes and games for them to make them happy and feel at home.

In order to give life to others we have to go out of our way to help and give them new life and hope. We are very happy to do this ministry and to offer our time, prayers and sacrifices to make them better persons in the future.



V Seminar on the Formation of Educators

The Catholic school has a specific identity that distinguishes it from other state and secular schools for its educational project, for its evangelizing mission, for the anthropological horizon that intercepts the more profound needs of society today.

These essential elements have been the subject of reflection, discussion and dialogue in **'Formation Seminar of educators'** organized by the Commission of the Unions Education and UISG USG, on the 11 e 12 November 2016 and with the theme: ***"The sustainability of the Catholic school today"***.



They were attended by the General Councilor, Sr. Bernarda Alvarez and the Secretary, Sr Augusta Visentin.

In the meeting, it was noted that the Catholic school, especially today, is called to fulfill itself as a 'laboratory', as a place of creation, experimenting and looking for a new culture: the culture of encounter, of trust, of hope, reconciliation and peace.

Mons. Vincenzo Zani, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, highlighted the essential elements of every Catholic school at any latitude, in any cultural context: the Christian inspiration, the integral and ongoing formation for all members of the school according to processes of humanization and

accompaniment, intercultural acceptance, the atmosphere of fraternity, of humanizing sharing with all members of the school, the creative fidelity in deep respect for individuals or groups, openness to current needs, and work in networks.

The exchange of experience among representatives of Catholic schools, from different countries of the world, has been particularly fruitful and enriching, has helped us to grasp once again that the comparison with other organizations helps us to highlight the essentials, the communion among those who share the same educational project of the Catholic school beyond the cultural differences.





Fidelity to the Charism

On the days 25-26-27 November 2016 the Second International Symposium was held in Rome at the Auditorium "Antoniano", organized by CIVCSVA and attended by the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto and the General Treasurer Sr. Emmapia Bottamedi.

From the title can be understood the importance and the aim of this event:

"Rethinking the economy Institutes of consecrated life in the fidelity to the charism".

The Cardinal Prefect of the CIVCSVA, His. E. Joao Braz de Aviz, presented the speech of Pope Francis, as the very first message.. The Pope's message gave the guidelines for the whole encounter.

Numerous speakers and experts have also developed vast subjects with skill and linearity. It is impossible to summarize the vast and deep explored material. It is still of interest for all of us to grasp the demands that today challenge us seriously. So we try to express some ideas that will help us to be in line with the Church today.

Gospel, Charism, Magisterium are fixed points that leave no doubt about the sources with which to confront in order to undertake a renewed journey. Rethinking Economics in fidelity to these references is the pressing direction that we feel particularly significant in view of the next General Chapter.



It is time of renewal for the whole Church that asks to live synodality that, for Congregations, means collaboration among the realities of the same congregation and among the different Congregations.

The economic outlook has to be revised and rethought according to the charism so as to rediscover the lines of it that needed to be reinforced and the lines, perhaps, to be abandoned.

The deep social crisis, which also involves the religious life derives mainly from the denial of the primacy of the person; the economy, for example, not always gives priority to the good of the person.



Economy and consecration have to live together; both are part of a whole in close collaboration that is a blessing of God. We are called to a process that requires prayer, discernment, dedicated time to come to an evangelical economy, the only one that befits our consecrated life.

About the activities, in a deep analysis supported by prayer, you can figure out which of them are to be preserved, to be strengthened and those that do not respond to the charism are to be eliminated.

Nevertheless, pay attention always carefully - the Pope says - to the voice of the poor and he reminds us that Francis was converted when he kissed the leper. Our activities must express the Franciscan charism, which is living reality actually available to grow by inspiration and creativity.

The sisters, especially the young, are able to understand which structure makes the charism alive and what instead is an armor that covers and hides the charism.

Whenever a new young enters the institute, the charism is renewed; on "from the stump of Jesse" aged that looks a dead trunk, born a bulb that renews the plant, is the charism of the young and the charism given to her by God.

Planting new signs, walking on new paths, sometimes against the common sense, suggests the Pope, and again, always cultivate generative thoughts which draw near the poor. All this becomes innovative and attractive to young people.

Later questions concerning canon law and civil law were addressed. It is highlighted the need for the control and transparency of communication downwards and from below upwards. This attitude is a generator of mutual trust and excludes misunderstanding and mistrust.

Embrace the future with hope is the third goal of the Pope for the Year of Consecrated Life: In this regard, he also tells us that what matters are not the numbers or the activities, but the union with the One who loves us. For all of us in this year the encounter with Christ has to be renewed, and thus community life, the formation, the spirit of fellowship, service, and synodality will be renewed.

In this time of Advent resonate more than ever significant words that the Pope tells us: salvation is not coming from the powerful, but by a small child who should be welcomed in the poor.





**Sr M. Florentina Manoni
of the Eucharist**

NELLA MANONI

**Born. in Corinaldo (AN)
15-6-1935**

† in Rome 21 - 08 - 2016

Sr. Florentina (Nella) Manoni was born in Corinaldo (An) on June 15, 1935, by Joachim and Adele.

Just three days later, she was brought to the baptismal font and, then she grew formed, in human and Christian values, with the witnessing and authenticity of life of simple people, industrious and accustomed to sacrifice.

Soon she learnt to face the difficulties of the economic and social situations of the Marche families of the fascist period, which eventually shape her strong-willed and tenacious character, but solar and always characterized by an optimistic trace.

At fourteen, she was an aspirant in Rome, at the General House of Piazza Pythagoras, then in Centocelle, where she attended the opening of the high school, and then she was sent to Gemonna where she received the habit of a postulant.

After a year of novitiate, she crowned her religious formation giving herself completely to the Lord, on 2 October 1954. Soon was sent "on mission" in Veduggio (TV) with the task of supporting the sisters in the print shop, then a year later she returned to Rome, where in following years she completed her studies by acquiring, at the end of the curriculum, the teaching qualifications in every type of school.

She started teaching in 1961 in the "Mary Immaculate" school of Centocelle and there for 54 years, with all her apostolic labors, her organizational skills, her projects, with intelligence and availability, tireless in favor of students and their families.

With her friendly and welcoming tract, she knew how to create friendly relations with families who love and esteem her. Her enthusiasm prompted her to implement the initiatives that are proposed, often organized meetings, times of prayer, pilgrimages to Marian shrines, ready to collaborate in everything that could be useful to the improvement of the educational service.

Lover of beauty, with a soul of a poet, Sr Florentina knew to catch its manifestations and values in people she approached, enjoying deep in the reference to other Beauty. Behind the seemingly sure look, Sr. Florentina has always revealed an open, simple character, at times almost shy, but tenacious and

eager to relate important feature for the life of fraternity she embraced.

Her mission continued with perseverance until the health, always a little precarious, became more fragile and, in 2015 she stopped the active teaching activities.

However, the last year she played an invaluable service in the staff room always available at a moment of dialog, a counsel, a smile to help students and teachers who found in her "exemplary goodness"

(as witnessed by a group of pupils) valuable support.

On the morning of Sunday, August 21, 2016, the third hour, the Lord, finding her worthy of the encounter with Him, called suddenly to Himself. The next day, thanks to the tam tam of social networks, many students, teachers and families accompanied her to the last song.

May now, the Lord grant her singing in heaven her poems for Him.



Sr M. Ellen Joseph
of Our Lady of Mercy

ELIZABETH CATHARINE
DRURY

Born in New York
25-10-1926

† in Peekskill il 9-10-2016

Elizabeth Catharine Drury was born in New York City to Ellen Terlin and Joseph Drury.

She was the fifth of six children. She referred to her parents as a loving and devoted couple with a strong faith and reliance on Divine Providence, qualities that Sister Ellen Joseph carried with her throughout her long life.

Elizabeth attended Our Lady of Mercy Grammar School and Mt. St. Ursula Academy in the Bronx. She received a BA from Good Counsel College in White Plains and upon her graduation she taught for four years in St. Angela Merici School.

During this time Elizabeth felt that God was calling her to religious life as a Franciscan.

Her aunt, Sr. Marcella, was a member of the FMSC community and was a strong influence on her choice to live out her vocation as a Franciscan Sister.

This call became a reality in September of 1941, when Elizabeth entered the community.

After her first profession, Sister Ellen Joseph taught in Our Lady Queen of Martyrs School in New York City until 1952 when she was assigned to teach at the St. Joseph's Branch of Cathedral High School in Greenwich Village.

After nineteen years, Sister served at Queen of Angels Convent in Peekskill as a staff member for the retirement house for the Franciscan Sisters.

In 1979 she returned home to Mt. St. Francis where she gave community service and worked with the Lay Associates until her retirement from full time responsibilities. Her strong faith and her gracious acceptance of God's plan for her allowed Ellen to continue to minister to those around her, even as her failing health and her reliance on others forced her to change her active lifestyle.

A thoughtful word, a sincere smile, and her encouraging spirit were her gifts to those around her as she patiently waited for the "miracle" for which she prayed: to be in her real home in heaven.

In Sister's file we found a paper on which she explained why she came to the FMSC Community.

In her own words: *"I grew up as a prayerful child. The FMSC attracted me by a spirit of simplicity and joy. I desired to help others in need, especially the children."*

Sister Ellen Joseph, please intercede for all of us so that we, too, may bring to a hurting world, the spirit of simplicity and joy!



**Sr. M. Leonilde Billia
of Mary Mediatrix**

ELENA VERA BETTIO

Born in Codroipo(UD)
22-5-1926

† in S. Daniele del Friuli (UD)
12-10-2016

"Walk in the Spirit ... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control ... If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Gal 5-6)".

It is the word that has been offered by the liturgy of the day when Sr. Leonilde Billia has been called by Christ to eternal life where the words of the Scripture became true *"He who sows in the Spirit will, from the Spirit, reap eternal life."*

We believe that our sister has already inherited eternal life united with her deceased loved ones and to the FMSC family in heaven!

Sr. Leonilde was born in Codroipo on May 22, 1926, the first of four sisters and a brother. Her parents, Arduino and Ada Cosivi, in baptism had chosen to call her 'Elena Vera'. Just in this deeply Christian family environment and proved by the immature death of the only brother, Elena found out and answered the call of the Lord entering in the Convent at the age of 20 among the FMSC sisters in Gemona del Friuli: it was 1 April 1946. In the day of her entrance into novitiate, May 27, 1947, for her great devotion to Our Lady, she took the name of Sr. Leonilde of Mary

Mediatrix and, after a year, her dream of being a nun was achieved by the religious profession that took place on June 2, 1948. At this point she began her mission that manifested the characteristics of her good character, understanding and always joyful especially with children.

She was sent in different communities, from Carnia to Rome, from Marmore (Terni) to Latina. With her sewing diploma, she could train girls and young to that art very useful in those time to help families.

... But the time that absolutely cannot be forgotten are the thirty years spent in the school "S. Maria degli Angeli" with the service of 'doorkeeper' or better as *"Guardian Angel"* ... So youth and children saw the presence of Sr. Leonilde! ...

For every problem, it was enough to speak to her and she could find the right resolution with her smile, her ready humor and maybe with a good chamomile. In the most difficult cases, she soothed and calmed, brought back peace and joy, that joy that she nourished into her heart through the 'encounter with the Lord from whom she learned how to be *"merciful in the likeness of the Father"*. The joy, "fruit of the Spirit" as well as her open character, growing up, and it was possible to see and experienced it in the simplicity of her daily mission!



In recent times, in the infirmary, her health was slowly fading, until it had to admit her to the Hospital of St. Daniel.

Her loved ones, especially her sister and her nephew Priest Don Giovanni Driussi (to which she was particularly fond), have accompanied her in the last days of life until, on October 12, Sr. Leonilde passed from earth to heaven.

So the Word of God, Sr. Leonilde, is no longer a future promise of inheritance, but the fulfillment of the Christian fate:

"In Christ we have obtained an inheritance ... because we have received the seal of the Spirit of our inheritance" (Eph. 1).

"Sr. Leonilde pray for your loved ones and intercede for all graces and heavenly blessings. You who have so much loved the youth invoke from heaven holy priestly and religious vocations for the Kingdom of God.



**Sr M. Giancarla Bettio
of Calvary
ANNA BETTIO**

Born in Treviso 12-8-1918
† in Peekskill 31-10-2016

Sr. Mary Gian Carla of Calvary (Anna Bettio) entered into eternal life on October 31, 2016. Sister was born in Treviso, Italy. After her profession Sister was sent to America on November 11, 1938 and worked at St. Joseph's Home in Peekskill in the Boys' House until 1941, then at St. Joseph's Villa until 1946.

From 1946 – 1949 Sister worked in the kitchen in Peekskill, then was responsible for the Priests' House until 1951, at which time she went to work

at the Kennedy Home in the Bronx. Sister returned back to her cooking duties in the kitchen at Mt. Francis until 1962, when she was assigned to help in the Novitiate until 1972.

The next seven years found Sister at St. Leo's School in East Paterson, NJ. In 1977 Sister Gian Carla came back again to Peekskill and was in charge of the Clothes Room, where she spent many, many hours making habits and repairs for all the Sisters. Sister also helped out in the kitchen again until the Province turned over the kitchen to an outside company. The last few years of her life were spent in the Sisters' Infirmary, where Sister spent her time praying, keeping in contact with her long time kitchen helpers, crocheting, and enjoying time with her longtime friend, Sister Rose Cecilia.

Sister Gian Carla will be remembered as a quiet, prayerful person. In a letter sent to her a few years ago, a former boy from St. Joseph's Home wrote: *"I came through a rough life because of people like you."*



You always showed kindness and concern for the children and always had a happy word to give to others. Thank you for your service and for making at least one child feel special."

We thank God for her kindnesses and concerns for us, too.

Sister lived peacefully and went into the arms of God the same way: she lived out her final day on earth and at 11:20pm took one calm, final breath and went home.

Her wake will be held on Wednesday, November 2 at Mt. St. Francis, 250 South Street, Peekskill, NY from 2-6:30pm and her funeral Mass will be on Thursday, November 4 at 10am, followed by burial in the Sisters' cemetery.



**Sr Francis Marie
of the Holy Name of Jesus**

MARGARET CONNOLLY

**Born in New York 7-9-1911
† in Pekskill 18-12-2016**

Margaret Connolly was born in New York, NY to Margaret Murray Connolly and Michael Con-

nolly. She was their only daughter and had three brothers: Mike, Pat (Brother Matthew of the LaSalle Christian Brothers), and Jimmy. Margaret attended Holy Name Elementary School on West 97th Street and the Assisium Business School.

After graduation she worked for one year in the Corn Exchange Bank on Wall Street and entered the Franciscan Sisters in March of 1931. As a postulant, she was assigned to secretarial work in the office of St. Joseph's Home. When she became a novice in 1932, she received her habit and the name Sister Francis Marie of the Holy Name of Jesus. Her group was the first to be completely cloistered for their canonical novice year – no visitors or contact with home and no contact with the children of the home.

After her first profession, Sr. Francis Marie was assigned to St. Joseph's Home, 1933-1936 and in schools at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs in Manhattan 1936-1940, St. Anthony's, Butler, NJ 1940-1947, Sacred Heart, Highland Falls, NY 1947-1948, Holy Angels, Little Falls, NJ 1949-1962, St. James, Totowa, NJ 1962-1963, The Assisium, NYC 1963-1969, Holy Family, Union City, NJ 1969-1970, and St. Matthew's, Hastings, NY 1970-1975. Sister also served as Provincial Secretary 1975-1981 & 1986-1997, Records' Manager, and Archivist 1981-2000, when she moved to the Sisters' Infirmary.

She received a BA in History from Ladycliff College and certification as an Archivist from the National Archives Institute in Washington,

DC.

Francie will be remembered for her consistent gentle, loving, and caring ways and her total dependence on God's plan for her.

She was already ready for a good laugh and was a great sport (Who else would ask for a hot dog with sauerkraut and a beer to celebrate their 104th birthday?).

What a tribute to hear so many people say that they never heard a harsh word from her. Up until the day of her death, she was concerned about all her sisters, her family, and her friends. As she celebrated her 100th birthday, she said:

"Family, friends, food, freedom... my religious community and most of all the faith nurtured by my parents who supported my vocation are among the hundred-fold blessings and gifts with which my heart is filled with gratitude today."

There is no doubt that Sister Francis Marie is enjoying the countless blessings of heaven. I am sure she is exploring the eternal kingdom and remarking "Well, you don't say! How about that!"

Please continue to inspire us from your new place in God's kingdom, so that we can carry on the history of this community as perfectly as you have left the workings of the past for us.

Thank you, God, for 105 years of love and blessings for the world.

