



## INDEX

### ***In communion with the Church***

- *Consecrated life and the challenges still open:  
“ New wineskins for new wine”* pag. 2
- **Conventions:**
  - \* *“Get up, go and do not be afraid.  
Vocations and Holiness: I am a mission* pag. 4
  - \* *“They are just children! Not slaves!”  
The cry against human trafficking.* pag. 6
  - \* *“St Clare and the privilege of the high poverty:  
To live poverty at a time of precariousness and fragility”* pag. 8

### ***Life of the Congregation***

- *United in memory and in prayer ... for our Foundress* pag. 10
- *Visit of the Superior General to Büyükada* pag. 12
- *First Professions in India* pag. 14

### ***From our missions***

- *At the Asisium... a special re-presentation of the “last supper”* pag. 15
- *Feast day in Asisium: The pilgrim Our Lady of Fatima is among us* pag. 17
- *“Pink Courage” Stories of women who help other women* pag. 20
- *At the school of the aged* pag. 21
- *Card. Dieudonné Nzapalainga visits ‘Maigarò’* pag. 22
- *The Providence... showed as Gratitude* pag. 24
- *In Harissa to celebrate the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima* pag. 27
- *Meeting of European Scout Guides in Italy* pag. 28
- *Children’s Week in Tavannes (Switzerland)* pag. 29
- *From Lithuania: Living the Mission... in Prayer* pag. 30
- *“Five bread two Fishes” : an After-School Project* pag. 32
- *“Born from the water and the Holy Spirit”* pag.33
- *Contemplate and Announce!* pag.35
- *The Mission of Education in the School* pag. 37
- *Family, the essential engine in the education of children* pag. 38
- *“Encounters with Christ” for the students* pag.39
- *How to renew our missionary enthusiasm?* pag.40
- *Something new In the Vice-Province “Ss. Martyrs of Uganda”* pag.42
- *Apostolic activities in some missions in India* pag.43

### ***Living in God***

*pag.45*

## Consecrated life and the challenges still open: “New wineskins for new wine”

“We feel the need for a new beginning of consecrated life,” said Card Joao Braz De Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, opening the meeting for the presentation of the newly published Congregation Document: “*New wineskins for new wine*”.



The Document presents the guidelines of the Congregation for Consecrated Life and has as its icon the passage of the Gospel of Mark 2:22: “No one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins”.

In addition to Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation, the Archbishop José Rodríguez Carballo, Secretary of the same Congregation, Father Sebastiano Paciolla, Fr. Bruno Secondin, theologian Fr. Pierluigi Nava, Lecturer at the Pontifical Faculty of Education Sciences “Auxilium”, Fr. Lorenzo Prezzi, Director of the Magazine ‘Witnesses’ have given their reflection.

The General Councilor Sr. Bernarda Alvarez and the secretary Sr. Augusta Visentin also attended at the presentation of this document in the “Magna aula” of the Pontifical Urbanian University crowded above all by religious.



Sr. Nicla Spezzati, Undersecretary of the Congregation and Moderator of the Assembly, clarified that the Document is the result of the reflection in the 2014 Plenary and of the debate born in the events organized within the Year of the Consecrated Life. Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla emphasized that it “is an extremely simple book in reading and difficult to apply. It is not a process that ends with the revision of the Constitutions, but it accompanies the vitality of the life of the whole Institute.”

## In communion with the Church

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*In the document, the word “Reformation” re-emerges frequently, and the Cardinal reiterated, “We are at a time of reform in the center of which is Christ’s person.”*

*The Secretary, Mons Josè R. Carballo, continued: “If we want our charisms to remain up-to-date and our lives talk to the people of today, we need to find new structures ... It is not possible to reconcile new wine with obsolete structures that do not say freshness and the beauty of our charisms, but rather make them confusing and invisible. It needs mental openness to imagine prophetic and charismatic ways of following Christ, in the light of the challenges of Pope Francis for a continual reform of the Church. He added: “It is urgent to practice the spirituality of communion, changing relational patterns ... Consecrated life is called to a conversion of structures .. to follow with hope the direction marked by the Second Vatican Council and listen to the Pope’s invitation to be audacious and Creative, rethinking structures, style and methods”.*



Fr. Bruno Secondin has traced the long process of wine production, with references to the images of the Gospel, to point out that the path required today to consecrated life is a challenging process for the care of ‘new wine’ in ‘appropriate wineskins’. A process that is realized through the centrality of the following of Christ, the rediscovery of the charismatic and prophetic function of consecrated life, the appreciation of humanity and the dignity of the person.

Fr. Lorenzo Prezzi concluded by highlighting the climate of freedom present in the document that must characterize more and more the consecrated life today.



*Get up, go and do not be afraid.  
Vocations and Holiness: I am a mission*

*ROMA, 3 - 5 January 2017- National Vocational Convention*



The National Vocational Convention, with which the organizers were committed to make the 750 participants from all Italian dioceses and a diocese of Albania elaborating and deepening the theme of the year: **“Get up, go and do not be afraid.”**

**Memory of a formative experience**

The National Vocations Convention is the most important time that the National Office for the Pastoral Care of Vocations organizes; a beautiful opportunity of formation and meeting throughout the national Church that in freedom, like the seed widely spread by the sower, announces the Gospel of the vocation.

These are the participants and protagonists of this three days, called to experience the theme - the slogan “Get up, go and do not be afraid”: the regional and diocesan office directors of vocational pastoral with their vocational teams, rectors and formators of seminars , vocational animators and formators of institutes of consecrated life, novices, catechists and pastoral workers.

Our Congregation was also present with a small group: Sr. Bernarda Alvarez, Sr. Stefania Bandiera, Sr. Natalina De Nobili, Sr. Treesa Peedikaparambil, Sr. Gigi Mookenthottathil, Sr. Gina Desamparato, Sr. Petrona Chore, Sr. Francesca Fiorin and Sr. Mara Lorenzet.

This triad: “Get up, go and do not be afraid” marked the daily vade mecum:

1. The initial moment, introduced in dialogue by Bishop Nico Dal Molin, Fr Andrea Destardi and Sr. Francesca Palamà, “warmed the hearts and minds” of the participants who were called to



let themselves be provoked and stand by that God who created us, has loved us and now through this word He says and expects that we too live this “Get up, go and do not be afraid”.

2. The next moment, the theme: *“The Word, the words and the heart of the Witnesses of God”*, was developed by Ylenia Fiorenza and Fr. Emilio Salvatore with the methodology of the dramatic biblical lectio, on the book of Jonah.

## In communion with the Church

The experience took shape through the theatrical pieces, which traced faces and made glances revealing fragments of holiness hidden in everyday life. The attitude that could help each of us to become more aware of our being called and of our own escape from the calls, was the wonder of something unexpected.

3 “Church and vocations: the time of prophecy, mission and hope”; instead, it was the theme of Fr José Tolentino Mendonça’s report. The creative language of the speaker, the unpublished images taken by the profane lay world of hagiographers and explorers, have allowed us to look at the One who calls us because He loves us. As Bonhoeffer



Dietrich wrote, “no one possesses God so much that he does not have to wait for Him anymore. Yet he cannot wait for God who does not think that God has long been waiting for him.”

This expectation, says Fr José, goes through the journey, the itinerancy lived as explorers who have the courage to trace new paths.

4 “Witnesses of a Church marked with fire for the Mission”. It was the subject of the debate, carried out with the methodology of the round table. It was coordinated by Dr. Facondo and participated by Bishop Ottavio Vitale - Sr. Alisia Vacas Moro - Odette Giuffrida - Stefano Rossi and Barbara Baffetti, preceded by the passage of the witness from the diocese of Viterbo to the churches of Puglia who will attend the 54th World day of Prayer for Vocations the next May 7, 2017



5 Significantly engaging were the vigil prayer: “From the well to the sandals” and the concert: “The live life” of “Gen. Verde” in which we were called to re-read our encounter with the Lord, the only one who knows how to penetrate into the depth of our heart and give us true answers to our thirst for happiness. We allow ourselves to be lead wherever each disciple is encountered by Jesus in daily contemplation and in sending.



6 Great joy gave the meeting in the Vatican (Sala Nervi) with His Holiness Pope Francis, joyful and disarming witness that confirmed each one of those present in listening and living out the mission without fear “Get up and do not be afraid.”

***“They are just children! Not slaves!” The cry against human trafficking.***

ON 8 FEBRUARY, SAINT BAKITA’S DAY, IS THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION ON THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING.



For this event, on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, a seminar was organized by UISG and USG, in coordination with the Consecrated Life Dicastery, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, the Academy

of Vatican Sciences, Caritas Internationalis (IC), the International Union of Catholic Women’s Associations (WUCWO). Together with the Working Group against human trafficking of the Commission for the Justice and Peace, the International Union of General Superiors (UISG / USG). All the General Council members participated to this seminar together with Sr. Cristiana Basso who was in Rome as a member of the Coordination Committee for the next General Chapter.

The seminar presented reflections on the trafficking of people entitled: *“They are just children! Not slaves!”* The Speakers were representatives of the Promoting Committee of the World Day of Prayer and Reflection on the Trafficking, in particular Sr. Gabriella Bottani, Talika Kum Coordinator, Cardinal Tunkson of the Pontifical Dicastery.

A very interesting morning with many challenges and testimonies of commitment to trafficking and refugees.

Sr. Gabriella Bottani, smc Coordinator of the Organizing Committee of the World Day of Prayer and Reflection on Trafficking in Persons, clearly outlined the gravity of the problem.

*“Officially, slavery was abolished two centuries ago. However, we have never had so many slaves in the world as today. The phenomenon of trafficking of persons, the 21st-century slavery, has its own characteristics that differentiate from the historical one: first of all, the illegality. Element of continuity is essentially the economic factor, which finds in the exploitation of human an illegal source of profit.*

*To define the trafficking of people I borrow the basic elements of the United Nations definition. They are actions: recruitment, transportation, transfer, acceptance or hosting; means: threat, use of force, other forms of coercion, kidnapping, fraud, deceit, abuse of power or a vulnerability position to give or receive money or benefits to obtain the consent of a person who has authority over another for the purpose of exploitation.*

*In addition, the ways of trafficking, which are always forms of exploitation: exploitation of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, labor or forced services, slavery or similar practices, and removal of organs.*

*When we talk about children, that is, of all people who have not yet reached the age of 18, the means are irrelevant, so that the crime of minors is enough to prove the exploitation. Trafficking in persons is “one of the most painful among the open wounds present in our world,” as Pope Francis recalled on November 7th.*

*The trafficking is an open wound for the whole society, not just for the people who directly suffered the violence of this crime. It is all about us, facing us in the deep relational crisis of our time.*

## In communion with the Church

*The grim mentality of the indiscriminate exploitation of all resources and human life is like a whirlpool that sucks and perpetuates violent and dehumanizing relationships that destroy society and life.*



*This year we want to focus the issue of trafficking in the perspective of children, girls and teenagers. In recent years, statistical data, in fact, indicate a worrying, gradual increase of under 18s among increasingly trafficking people. These account for 28% of the total of victims, of which 20% are female and 8% male.*

*The continents presenting a greater proportion of children, girls and teenagers among the victims of trafficking are Asia, Africa, Central America and Caribbean.*

*Boys, girls and adolescents are trafficked as adults, for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, degrading and dangerous jobs, forced marriages, traffic of organs, for criminal acts, begging and illegal adoption.*

*Some are born from parents into slavery for debts, and even since birth, they are linked to this debt, and since the very first years of life have been subjected to the same slavery situation: as in Ghana's gold mines or of colt in Congo. Kids and girls are the present and the future of society. They remind us that our humanity needs to counteract the culture of exploitation by taking care of human, life and earth. We need to cure the wounds of indifference, violence, exploitation”.*

On this day, the Promoting Committee, renewing its commitment to work together against trafficking in human beings, calls for everyone to promote programs and projects that take care of our children and teenagers, acting above all on the causes of trafficking.



***“ST CLARE AND THE PRIVILEGE OF THE HIGH POVERTY:  
TO LIVE POVERTY AT A TIME OF PRECARIOUSNESS AND FRAGILITY”***

It is the subject of reflection offered by **MOREFRA at the Conference organized in Assisi from 5 to 8 April 2017**. A topic of present and interesting interest proposed to the 97 sisters of the General and Provincial Councils of various Franciscan Congregations (including ours) who responded to the invitation.

To the reflections set on selected topics for a comparison of “poverty and economy”, echoed the workshop of the groups formed by the members of the assembly itself.

The convention began with the biblical *Lectio* on Noemi and Rut’s story, whose history of emigration, shortage, and constant surprises makes our Institutes marked in so many ways by “famine”. The most obvious is the numerical one: to become few, a little rest, to experience economic poverty, above all in supporting the works, the perception of having no future...

The challenge that Rut offers us is always to trust God who always accompanies the path of life and makes Himself known as Providence. Rut, even in the most tragic moments, chooses to remain faithful to her story, embraces it, takes it personally ... with all that it brings with.

This testimony could be useful for us who know our situations of insecurity and a current history that is difficult ... a story, however, from which Rut teaches us not to separate ourselves, but on the contrary to embrace with determination and courage ... It implies that you are constantly on the road, knowing that God is doing everything right. (Sr. Ombretta Pettigiani fmgb)



Even Saint Clare, looks like a person on the go, attentive to the daily events of her life.

Following, like St. Francis in the footsteps of Christ, she discovers her life “cleansed” from all that belongs to the world and embraces “evangelical poverty” by making it the ‘unique privilege’ that allows

her to a total and liberating “disrobing” to embrace Christ.

In fact, living the Gospel for Clare as for Francis, means to follow Christ poor and crucified: it is only for Him that it is possible with courage the disrobing, self-emptying to be filled with Christ. In the Rule and the Testament, this choice of Clare for poverty is transparent: the purpose of this option is only the belongingness to Christ. Thus, the charism that Clare has received from the Spirit defines her identity in the Church. (Fr. Marco Guida ofm)



## In communion with the Church

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Today, speaking of poverty, our Institutes are not only referring to 'material goods' but also and above all to the ability to live by 'putting in common our existence', sharing the fraternity and making available to everyone what is needed for the life of all.

Today's culture is about sharing, justice, development, human rights, but then the rejection of immigrants emerges; we speak of fraternity, but individualism reigns; we speak of peace, but we live the separations. S. Bernardino of Siena emphasizes that "*the common good is God who is common to all*". This is the first good to share. (Fr Nicola Riccardi ofm)

Certainly, you cannot separate the believing place from life. We need to establish a new way in our testimony and in our service that must reflect, through poverty, the life of faith. The first form of poverty, of course, is sharing with the brothers (and sisters in the community): Jesus himself showed us when He "emptied himself" to share His divinity, His being Son with our human nature. The true good moves me to care for the good of others: the common good comes in charity. Unfortunately, today we are witnessing a season of profound influence of the economy on faith: capitalism has also entered the Church and the religious Orders: Temples (or Institutes) full of goods and empty of life! Even the faith of consumption does not help us to walk in our lives outside the temple. Therefore, even the beautiful secularity of the road dies! (Prof. Luigino Bruni)

Some of the questions that emerge from this simple synthesis can be good for all of us as an evaluation of our life and wise discernment to seek true and creative choices that are in line with our vocation:

- What are the idolatries present in our lives that prevent the primary choice of Christ?
- We profess poverty; what privileges do we find in our communities that certainly the poor and common people do not have?
- What fears do we face in dealing with the future with the resources we have and what choices are we making (personal and community) to respond with the spirit of our charism to the present needs of humanity?
- How to handle the 'current crisis' of our Congregation so that it is the occasion, invitation and stimulus of creativity and hope?



## United in memory and in prayer ... for our Foundress

*On April 3, 2017 was the centenary of the death of our founder Laura Leroux of Bauffremont. We remember her person, so attentive to welcome the good opportunities, to throw the seed of God that is sprouted and flowered and gave birth to our Family of Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.*



The mysteries of God are unfathomable in the history of every person; where God passes through, there remains a trace of light that suddenly bursts and comes to life; that light, in the sensitivity and intuition of our Foundress, has been welcomed in a gesture of fervor. This is how our Institute was born, in the place she desired and in that historic time decided by the Divine Providence Plan.

Let us pray and sing to the Lord as we celebrate the “*One Hundred Years*” of the Birth to heaven of our Foundress Laura Leroux. Let us thank Him deeply for making fruitful the “*charismatic*” seed of our Religious Family flowing out of her, who defined herself as “*a simple conduit, a channel that is not even made of tin but of clay that breaks at every knock,*” (F2 p. 21)”, but a simple instrument that God, in his Providence, has chosen.

*We will end with joy the celebration of the centenary year on July 5 at the opening of our 20<sup>th</sup> General Chapter and then with the presence of all the Chapter members. Through the remembrance and prayer this year, our entire Franciscan and Missionary Family feels stronger and united in living the communion of fraternal life, in strengthening universal prayer, in enhancing the belongingness of our Congregation, in the awareness of a deep faith in the Providence of God, bearing in mind the purpose of our Founder ... to be*

### FRANCISCAN TERTIARY SISTERS FOR THE APOSTOLIC MISSIONS”.

On the occasion of the Anniversary of our Foundress, let us also thank all the Sisters of our Congregation: the first sisters who have lived and transmitted the charism with heroism and fidelity; to all our sisters who are in paradise and who have written a beautiful story of fidelity to the Lord by leaving us a path to follow; to all the sisters, missionaries and Franciscans spread throughout the world who bear witness to Christ Who is walking with us and never leaving us alone.

### From our Foundress ... an heritage to be guarded and handed down

There are written legacies, attested by notarial acts, but much richer are the non-written legacies, lived, handed down generations to generations to guard the identity of a family. What is the memory of our Foundress Laura in us? What has she left us that we cannot miss? Revisiting our history accompanies us to see Providence overflowing from a fragile vase, from a simple earthen vessel, yet to be instrument of grace for many... How grateful we should be to Laura, her uneasiness and her troubled search, and how much praise we should give to the Lord for what He wanted to do, not “despite the fragilities of Laura,” but with them!

Our story is a continuous celebration of the Grace of a God who does not look “what man looks” (1Sam 16: 7), but sees beyond, provides and remains faithful. What did God look at in the heart of the Princess de Bauffremont? Certainly - we can go to say - the desire for a full life, the desire of Him, no matter how much consciousness. He has gathered in Laura the contradictions of her “rich” and “poor” days, as He has gathered each of us into the voids of our existence, where we felt the

need for more and more. In the “misery” of our heart, God has paid off with a free and demanding love ... and it was for each of us an “unexpected” event, an astonishment.

*The first legacy* that our Foundress has left us is the desire, the passion, the dream. In her quest for excitement, creativity, sketchy desires, insights seeking other paths to travel, in uneasiness that only human eyes could see as instability - if not volubility - the Lord found a womb to make fertile a dream wounded by failed attempts, missed approvals, unfulfilled promises. The dream of this young woman has been tenaciously guarded by Him ... for each of us, Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.



*The second legacy* given to us by our Founder is the precariousness as grace and constant restitution, such as the expropriation of guarantees, human security, as a contemplation of God’s Providence.

Laura was rich, known in the environments that matter, yet the work she sensed, was not founded on wealth. It was unable to reassure itself in the availability of material goods, but poverty has molded faith, the Cross has demanded concreteness in the fidelity of love and has continually oriented the story to the evangelical requirements and to the radicality of St. Francis. What providential spiritual pedagogy we can grasp in all this! Which evaluation criteria are entrusted to us - as charismatic words! -for today!

*The third inheritance* of which we are the custodians is the missionary enthusiasm that was received by the wise and faithful tenacity of our Founder Father Gregory Fioravanti. It has been realized over time on so many paths, in so many spaces, where in poverty and pain there was a need of eyes that would recognize the Cross and the possibility - just evangelical - of a Love that also lives the margins to redeem and save each person. It is the original intuition of the Foundress to send to the people, the great apostolic horizon that gives each Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart the physiognomy of a woman on the go, open to the novelty of the encounter, confident and urgent in bringing peace and goodness, called to choose the poor at first. Missionary, wherever they are, as it is said by our Constitutions (No. 59).

To be missionary it is not just to move, it is a lifestyle: a passion without attachment, gift, but also acceptance of what everyone else can teach, of being happy in our going, belonging to the Lord and to a family and not to works, successes and human accomplishments. All this passes by and in time it is transformed ... but the journey does not have to stop, eyes need to train to see, discover, explore with the intelligence of the heart. We are called to stay on the road as the apostles, to help and educate, to raise each person in the dignity of his/her life ... If we carefully defend this heritage so dynamic and never locked ... there is always room for the future! *“Leave everything to the good Jesus Who wants to use this to purify your soul from the dust of the secular world.*

*Humble yourself before that teacher of penance, our seraphic Father Saint Francis, and ask Him perseveringly for his true spirit, and his love for the cross “(Congregational Sources II, 27).*

The Foundress tells us in these words the safe casket where the precious inheritance, of which we are responsible, can be guarded not as an heirloom of the past, but as a life wander to which to draw on daily: prayer and wisdom coming from the Cross.

So, by walking, from grace to grace, we find ourselves not only small, fragile, little, elderly, diseased, vacillating, but especially minor, always open to the unbreakable possibility of obeying Love, as we are, with all that we are ... because we contemplate the wonders of grace in fragile earthen vessels.

## Visit of the Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto, To the sisters of Büyükada - Turkey

From 24 to 29 March 2017, the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto went to Turkey for the canonical visit to the “Sant’Antonio” community, a house dependent on her, in Büyükada.

Sr. Zita Gutang, Sr. Gigimol Mookkenthottathil and Sr Miriam Oyarzo welcomed Sr Paola with such joy and exultation.

The encounter of these days with the community was a time lived as a gift of the Lord, with deep gratitude and openness to share the journey of the presence of the community in these 20 months here in Turkey.

Büyükada is the last community reopened by the General Council and therefore the visit of Sr Paola was the occasion to tell and share the path of life as Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Muslim land.



The brief “history” of the Büyükada community is full of hopes, of faith in the presence of the Divine Providence of the Lord. It is a fraternity that walks trusting and entrusting its own apostolic and joyful presence to the Lord.

The smallest possible steps the sisters can do in this beautiful land become expressions of love to all the people who come closer.

The sisters, grateful for the visit of Sr Paola and the sharing of these days, are happy because certain that their presence has a significant value, they deeply believe in the missionary sending that the Congregation entrusted to them and trust in the testimony of their fraternal life.



## Life of the Congregation

The most important moments of the visit were: the Holy Mass celebrated by the Guardian of the Friars Minor Fraternity of Istanbul, Fr. Eleuterio Makuta, in the chapel of the community; the Sunday Mass in the Parish of San Pacifico in Büyükkada.

The Eucharist is the most important moment of the week for the community, for only once a week the priest can celebrate.

Only Sunday, March 26 came exceptionally fr. Antonuan Duma, the present parish priest, with a British friar friend, fr. George Smulski.



Sr. Paola, during her visit, also met the Bishop of Istanbul, Monsignor Rúben Tierrablanca, to whom she expressed the great joy of this

presence and the grace of having reopened this mission that is so important to the history of our Religious Family .



The canonical visit ended with a visit to the friars of the community in Istanbul. These brothers are always close to our sisters and they share a lot of experiences together; They could not therefore miss the expressions of gratitude and thanksgiving toward the fraternity with the wish to continue to witness God's Love with one's life and be always attentive to the presence of the Spirit.



## First Religious Profession – India

God is persistent in his calls. The call of all of us is to love God who has first loved us. We are called by God to His divine love and we are precious in his sight.

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, novices

**Prasantha Ekka ,  
Yesumani Kantipudi,  
Jayasree Kastala ,  
Suman Ekka  
Saritha Perumallappalli**

were consecrated to Christ through their First Profession of Vows as Franciscan Missionary sisters of the Sacred Heart. Let us all rejoice and pray for our newest brides! The ceremony was held in the novitiate house and the Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Rev. Fr. Baby Ellikkal, the Provincial Superior of St. Camillus fathers.



The presence of neighboring sisters, priests, sisters from our province, relatives and friends added colour to the function.

We are called to be disciples of Christ. Each of us has our own path to follow. God gave Moses a burning bush, Paul was knocked to the ground and heard the voice of God, Peter has a fishing boat overflowing with a great catch and the life of St. Francis of Assisi was a change of what was bitterness before his conversion into sweetness.

As we reflect on the call of these our sisters, we see that God was persistent with them.

Surrounded by the sisters from Holy Family province, family and friends they responded to that call publicly by taking the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

In the homily the main celebrant mentioned about the qualities of a good religious and each of us has a mission to fulfill.



He encouraged the new

sisters to have that Passion for God and Passion for humanity in their lives. He emphasized that the life of a religious must be Christ centered and we need to become real instruments of God's love to the humanity.

We congratulate them and promise our prayers and support. It was a day to sense the presence of our Founders Father Gregory and Laura Leroux and lift our heart in gratitude for their good life. We really felt the prayers and blessings of Mother General Sr. Paola and her Councillors and all the sisters of our religious family. It was also a day for each of us to ask how can we become more faithful to follow the call of Jesus in our lives and live out faithfully our vocation. We pray for the grace to follow Our Mother of Perpetual Help in saying Yes to the daily invitations that God brings into our lives.

**AT THE ASISIUM... A SPECIAL RE-PRESENTATION OF THE  
“LAST SUPPER”**

On 12 April 2017 at the theater of the Asisium Institute in Rome, primary school children attended a special event for its realization and the unusual composition of the “theatrical company”.



The idea is part of the didactic project titled “*A Jew named Jesus*”, in which the figure of the Messiah is presented, deepening his cultural and family background, his social life.

This initiative, however, has overcome the didactic aspect and has gone further: it has been addressed to families. For the first time, the sharing of the educational project was real and concrete.

Simone Bosio, a Religion teacher at the primary school, enthusiastically proposed the idea of performing the representation of the last supper of Jesus, overturning the cast: not the usual work of children for families, but a commitment of parents for their children.

The invitation has come to all children preparing for the first confession and communion. After the initial hesitation, one by one, the fathers and mothers went ahead. There was a need for a crew of twelve apostles, Jesus, Mary, the maids and the children of the apostles.



It was providential the right number of actors needed for implementation. Few practices have served to coordinate the show, however in those moments the group has taken shape and the spirit of sharing and aggregation has begun to materialize.

On April 12, the date of the “*Pesach*” celebrated by the Jews, the theater was “out of stock” to an unusual audience. Behind the curtain, the actors experienced the emotion of the adrenaline that paralyzes every part of the body before the stage. The teacher Simone presented the show with a few words broken by a clear emotion.

Finally, the curtain opened and a low table appeared at the center of the scene. One by one, all the apostles and ultimately Jesus, accompanied by his mother Mary, came out. The delicate atmosphere, underlined by a background music, captured the audience who carefully tried to recognize their father or mother among the actors.

This time, however, every child has recognized their parents in those faces: each pupil has experienced belonging to a community that is born with a dinner; the school and the family have finally merged and the dichotomy has dissolved.

The play followed a popular script by alternating pieces played in choreography and singing: the maids set up the table with traditional Hebrew foods presented to children in the audience who also “sniffed” the smells. Jesus washed the feet to his friends, broke the bread and instituted the Eucharist. The children of the apostles asked questions and learned from Jesus; Judas has lastly betrayed the Messiah ...



Everything was very faithful to the Jewish tradition and Biblical texts. What made the difference was the sharing spirit of this moment, it was the emotion that went through glances and gestures, it was the energy that comes only from the joy of belonging to a community that aggregates and forms. Applause and silence have been the witness of a moment that went beyond representation and didactics, which touched the spirit of each one. There was no idea of doing a theatre, but just sharing a message that is bigger than any other message.

We have experienced the joy of belonging to a community that puts the same ideal in the center. The wonder was in the eyes of those who was receiving and who was giving.

On April 12, our school celebrated the Holy Week experiencing what the Psalms proclaim to us: “*This is the work of the Lord, a wonder to our eyes*” (Psalm 117: 23).



### *Feast day in "Asisium": The pilgrim Our Lady of Fatima is among us*

In this centenary year of the apparitions of Our Lady in Fatima, a great event involved the religious community of the Generalate House and the Asisium School on May 22: the privilege and the honour of receiving in our chapel the exceptional visit of *Our Lady of Fatima*.

With devotion, joy, and emotion all of us, sisters and lay people, children and young people of the school, we welcomed the Pilgrim "*Our Lady of Fatima*", and prayed in the chapel invoking the peace and all the good of the Lord for the world and for all the families.



Here are two beautiful testimonies of this extraordinary day: of a teacher and a mother of the school.

*The doors of the Asisium gate open and hundreds of festive children spread flower petals at the passage of Our Lady of Fatima. It is an unexpected gift we received thanks to the initiative of the teacher Simone, with great enthusiasm from the community of our sisters and the availability of Don Dario Criscuoli, parish priest of S. Alfonso Maria de' Liguori, who at this time hosts the pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima.*

*"She is so beautiful, teacher, that she looks like a real person," a child tells me in the ear.*

*I live this moment through the excited eyes of my pupils who look for their mothers eyes and want them*



*close in this unusual circumstance. Then suddenly all those glances, children and adults, in a silence that becomes surreal, join and follow the short procession accompanying Mother's entrance into the church.*

*We also come in, greeted by the Choir's parents, led by the teacher Catherina and the sweet music of the organ. All pupils, from elementary to high school, accompanied by teachers and professors, participate,*

*in a festive but composed alternation, in individual and collective prayer.*

*The prayers that each child leaves at the foot of the altar enrich the flowers, which make a mat around the Blessed Virgin Mary.*



*I could see, in the eyes of the adults present, an affection re-found for Mary. Many approach her to touch her cloak and her eyes are shiny for silent prayers expressed and donated to her Immaculate Heart. Many, coming back, approach the confessional and wait for their turn in prayer. This is the miracle of Mary. Our Mother calls us to love and conversion in a simple way. Today we cannot have a lesson - I think in myself. Kids are cheerful and ask to draw. An experience rich in colours and light comes out. Then we write some thoughts on the day. Everyone expresses his/her feelings. A child cries because she does not want the Blessed Virgin Mary to leave, I try to comfort her when a companion approaches her and says, "Look, it's just the statue that goes away, the Madonna, the real one, is always with us."*

*Loredana Minnocci, teacher of the 1st class of primary School Asisium*

### ***Exciting! Finally, in our Asisium Institute, the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima arrives.***

*The air is full of thousands of emotions in this morning of May, eyes full of light, curious faces, hundreds of small hands clinging baskets full of petals, impatient "small legs" lined up along our boulevard, cheerful voices, so much joy ... Our Lady is coming! Children of our Primary and Kinder School are waiting with the teachers, their families, our dear sisters, and the mothers of the choir. All are here, truly all! Everyone is waiting. Then the great joy: she has come!*

*Hundreds of weaving hands greetings, white handkerchiefs, flower petals are scattered at her passage. The Choir of Mothers and the multitude children and youth gathered for this great time of sharing and joy, sing Ave Maria of Fatima. We are going to the church. On the threshold, the notes and words of Ave Maria Schubert, sung by Teacher Eleonora, invade us, overwhelming us; the emotion becomes so strong that tears begin to come down, out of joy. We follow the Statue of Our Lady laden with emotions, each one with his/her own luggage, light and heavy suitcases, joys and sorrows mingle.*



*Our Chapel fills with Humanity. The multitude is now a single body, one devotion. The Statue is placed at the foot of the altar. Classes, teachers, sisters, of all those who have intervened today, an uninterrupted stream of people who do not stop all morning, alternate themselves before the Blessed Virgin Mary. Everyone wants to homage her. The classes of students with ordered wonder come out in lines; the students from the High School and college join; every*

*child, every youth lays a prayer at the feet of the Blessed Virgin*

*There is a perfect light that surrounds her statue, Her face transmits Peace, Love, Mercy. The Chorus of Parents sing, we sing for hours. We do not feel tired, but joy, enthusiasm, love.*



*Our Heavenly Mother is among us today more than ever.*

*We are all abducted, awed, emptied and at the same time filled. Today there is only her. We live these moments with the intensity, the full awareness of Her Love and the Love of God that encompasses us. We are satisfied with His Grace. We remain in adoration. All of us!*

*The hours pass, and the given time is running out, Our Lady must resume her journey. Once again, the children greet and sing. By now, the procession is decomposed all tight around the Blessed Virgin Mary along the short journey.*

*Everyone wants to accompany her. There is joy and deep emotion. The statue is placed on the car that will accompany her to her own destination. Looking around can be seen tears and big smiles. Joyful emotion in everyone!*

*We get ready; the memories of the moments we are experiencing are already staring into the mind and heart. However, here is the last great excitement ... we manage to touch her with our hand, with a kiss ...*

*and the joy explodes once again, stronger*

*than before. The tears come down; the heart is swollen with Love.*

*Hundreds of hands keep waving a white handkerchief. The Statue goes away. Children start up to their classrooms, adults are reunited. The feelings felt throughout the morning are too strong. Each of these lucky unbelieving spectators will return to their daily life richer and more aware of the Love of Our Celestial Mother, grateful to all those who have made possible for the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to pass through our Institute.*

*Francesca Travaglini, a mother of the Asisium School, belonging to the choir*



## *“PINK COURAGE” Stories of women who help other women Istanbul*

On March 8, the Italian Institute of Culture in Istanbul together with the Cervantes Institute organized a day to commemorate the International Women’s Day.

“Pink Courage” was the title of this day where some women responsible for volunteering and religious NGOs were invited to tell their experience and share the effort and satisfaction of a life dedicated to helping other women, young, elderly, girls, women in trouble: souls, that despite wounds, fears, humiliations do not cease to look for a dignified life. Glowing examples of courage and resilience.



On this occasion Sr. Miriam Oyarzo, of the Buyukada community, told about her experience with women in jail especially foreign women, here is her testimony:

*I am Sr Miriam Oyarzo, fmsc and I live in Büyükada with my fraternity. Since 1 year and 4 months, I am visiting foreign women in jail at Bakırköy once a month to meet especially Spanish-speaking women, the majority coming from of Latin America. This is my service; fortunately I do not do it alone but with a team: Fr. Eleuterio, Sr Kayane and Pastor Ali.*

*We try to bring a message of HOPE among suffering, loneliness, despair, sadness and depression that these women live deprived of their freedom. They are aware that they have committed a crime and live this harsh sentence but try to create a new LIFE system within the prison despite the great difficulties they find, for example*

- *The language: not everyone can speak Turkish or English,*
- *Coexistence: to live with other people of different cultures and languages,*
- *Loneliness: it is the most frustrating feeling that they live,*
- *Without the communication: so many of them cannot communicate with their family,*
- *The inability to receive visitors: we are the only people they see from the outside.*



*In this time, I learn to separate the evil done by them (the crime) and the BREATH of hope that we try to give them, which must not be stifled by anything and no one ... when we go to them, there they say: you bring fresh air, clean, new and cheerful.*

*They are waiting every last Monday of every month: good, mercy, listening, caress, prayer ... and we listen*

to their never-ending demands: shoes, clothing, bible, rosary ... that are nothing more than a desperate crying to say to us: I EXIST.

As a woman and a religious, I feel a very strong empathy towards them. I no longer see women who are wrong but women who dare to go home. I know their stories; they have opened their hearts, they told me what brought them to do what they did, and I can read in their eyes their repentance, their fear and the void they feel ... not being free.

The first months I went to jail, I came home filled with confused feelings, and during the evening prayer the only thing I did, it was to cry, I could not even pray.

The first time I got in jail, during the meeting with them I held in my arms a newborn baby who after a few minutes fell asleep. Coming out from the prison center I could not remove out of my mind the face of the mother and the little girl. Returning home, my sisters, enthusiastic asked me how was the experience but, I could not talk ... and during the Vespers I broke out in tears, so that my sister told me: "If you come back this way every time it's better than You do not go anymore "; She was worried about me! After three or four months I was strong, not for me but for them ... I knew that getting back there, it was good for them but also for me.

Getting into jail is also a strong experience, crossing every door with the scanner system and plunging to the various controls, it makes me feel that it's where I have to be, giving hope and new breathing.

Our work does not only end on the day of the visit once a month, there are some of them who, after leaving the prison, are looking for us to have support, not just material but above all moral. Yohana is a Bolivian girl who is here with us, she often comes to see me at Santa Maria (Istanbul), to talk and to say that she is now free, who now has to learn to live as a free woman. We must accompany them because they have to learn to be FREE again.

Yohana, tomorrow will be able to return to Bolivia because she has finally finished signing and ending social work, and in a few days she will be able to re-embrace her family ... she will now finally rediscover her true life.

Thank you!

### ***AT THE SCHOOL OF THE AGED in Treviso***

A day of "school of life": we can call so the day that the students of the liceo St. Pius X of Treviso have lived in our rest house of Borgo Cavour with the elderly ladies.

Yes, they were the teachers, the old ladies, who welcomed them and gave them the 'lesson of life': to share experiences,

listen to young people's questions and give them compelling answers that serve to grow and mature, share games and Parties ... Everything is part of a daily life that young people would otherwise not experience.

The students came to know the ladies of the Rest House on January 26<sup>th</sup>. It was a very nice morning, the students showed themselves attentive and they listened to the memories and poems of the ladies.



Under the guidance of Fr. Francesco who accompanied them, they organized several games and brought a record player to listen to ancient melodies to the ladies. They have entertained them all morning, celebrating with us the birthdays of January.

Many wishes to Adele, Giuseppa, Mariella, Resi and Assunta !!! Ladies have been excited and waiting next Thursday when they will meet other students in the same school.

### CANTICLE of the AGED

Blessed are those who look at me with sympathy.  
Bless those who understand my tired walking.  
Blessed are those who speak loudly to minimize my deafness.  
Blessed are those who shake with warmness my trembling hands.  
Bless those who are interested of my distant youth.  
Blessed are those who are not tired of listening to my stories many times repeated.  
Bless those who understand my need of affection.  
Blessed are those who give me fragments of their time.  
Blessed are those who fill up my solitude.  
Bless those  
who are close to me in my suffering.  
Blessed are those who give joy  
to the last days of my life.  
Blessed are those who are near me  
in the time of my "passage".  
When I come into the endless life  
I will remember you.



## Card. DIEUDONNÉ NZAPALAINGA visits 'MAIGARÒ'

Great joy in the diocese of Bouar on February 18; the first *Cardinal Msg Dieudonné Cardinal Nzapalaynga*, came to visit this portion of his people. Some areas have experienced tensions especially in the Bokaranga area, which is 140 km north of Maigaro, where they burned the market and there were injured and even dead people.

Even at Niem and in particular in the Yelowa area, there have been difficult times. Many people have lost their homes and their poor possessions, so many for fear are moving to other villages by losing their families or relatives.

His visit wanted to be a sign of dialogue, respect, and peace.

In the various villages where he passed, he stopped for a greeting and a word of comfort. In Bokaranga he sought dialogue among the various armed groups, giving them time of listening and attention. Therefore, instead of getting to Maigaro at 4 o'clock p.m. as scheduled, he reached 6.45 p.m. People and even our youth have not got tired of waiting.



## From our missions

Upon his arrival, it was already dark; the machine lanterns signaled their approach. The Cardinal himself led the car and, once he came out, he was surrounded by a crowd that shouted with joy.

A strong voice called for silence. The girls were able to welcome the Cardinal with a welcome song and then a girl on behalf of all expressed her gratitude for His coming among us as a messenger of peace and reconciliation.

The Cardinal despite the heavy day, the dust of the road and the heat weather, has been able to offer a small message of hope by inviting the girls to study and to work hard for their good and for the country and inviting the people to seek goodness and peace. He then concluded with the blessing that was crowned by the song of the WYD 2016 sung by our youth. While the Cardinal tried to return to the car, many people tried to approach him and touch him.

I had the image of Jesus being surrounded by the crowds that wanted to see, touch Him, to receive a grace

An evening was reserved for the religious and priests who went to the chapel of the Poor Clares Sisters for the Prayer of the Vespers, presided by the Cardinal who in the short homily invited all to be like the prophets, men and women of hope who see, beyond the dark created by the war, the new rays of new daylight coming.



After prayer, we found ourselves in a convivial time where with simplicity the Cardinal shared some of his experiences of dialogue and peace seeking with concrete gestures that lead to the encounter with who, because of the weapons, makes us afraid.

They are often young without a goal, and

seek and ask fathers and mothers who know how to welcome them, wait for them. Our role is to be fathers and mothers for today's youth, for the people they are looking for, but without knowing where to go and asking us to be present despite their slips, their mistakes, and their falls. We must be the hand that makes them rise.

On Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, the Cardinal's visit ended with a solemn Mass at which our girls also participated with joy; they sang and danced waving the flower branch they had prepared with sr. Antonella.

At the Presentation of gifts, our girls brought a tablecloth from their embroideries.

A new seed of peace was thrown into the heart of the people; may, with the grace of God and the will of man, bear fruit.

*Sr. Alessandra Sartor*

## The PROVIDENCE...showed as GRATITUDE Mt. St. Francis - USA

On a morning in late October, a serviceman from the company which took care of the heating/air conditioning for *Mt. St. Francis* appeared in my office with news that 4 of our 8 boilers for the house were dead. He told NOT to turn on the heat in the Chapel, as the pipes were so old that they had rusted and the steam escaping from them was warping the wooden foundation of the chapel. In addition, we already knew that the back porch/roof on the first floor was holding water and leaking into the Records and Archives Rooms and had to be repaired soon.

I was told that these repairs were immediately necessary and the cost would be very high.

I had no idea how we would find the money to insure that the Sisters had heat for the soon approaching winter.

As I began to panic, Sister Antonia told me to *"Just trust God; He will make it happen if it is to be."*



I quickly composed a letter to send out to all the 4,000 people on our mailing list, sent it to the printer, and placed a copy of it on our Facebook page.

One of our Lay Associates help me set up a "Heat for the Sisters" account on YOUCARING, a place where we could reach out to others to make donations to help defer the cost of this huge project. And so this project quickly took off!

Soon the news spread, mobilizing also some news and radio news that contacted us and came to meet us. Before we knew what was happening, we were receiving letters, calls, donations, support, and lots of love and caring from everywhere.



So many letters came with a donation and wonderful tributes to the Sisters who helped these people somewhere in their past.

People who grew up in St. Joseph's Home thanked the Sisters for being the loving, caring mother that they never had; former students attributed their success in life to our Sisters who gave them a solid education and taught them about their faith while introducing them to Jesus.



## From our missions

Here are some of the many expressions of gratitude that have come to us:

*«My great grandmother was an orphan who was taken in by the sisters along with her sisters over 100 years ago. If not for the generosity and kindness of the sisters, my family would not have existed. Hopefully this small token of gratitude will be helpful in the effort to restore some comfort to the women who are doing God's work».*

*“God Bless you sisters for all the wonderful work you have done in God's name. I was a student at Ladycliff Academy and I would not be the person I am today without the education I received from you.”*

*“I went to 12 years of Catholic schools and never met people who worked as hard as the nuns. You were all often firm but loving and set an example for what it means to do meaningful work. I am a teacher and I try to live up to the examples that you set for me”.*

*“My grandmother ... spent time at St. Josephs in the late 1800's. She lost her parents. Even though she was Lutheran, the Mother Superior was a friend of her mother & brought her up to Peekskill”.*

*“God Bless the sisters for all the good works they have done throughout the years. They are truly inspiring and show what it means to live a meaningful life”.*

*“To all the good Sisters out there who give so much and require so little.>*



Among the many donations, the most meaningful for me was a plain unmarked envelope with three \$1.00 bills in it – a real sacrifice, as the widow the Gospel, from someone who had little themselves.

God was watching over us at every step of this experience, making us feel His presence and His Love through so many people. We had so many and touching experiences!

A local friend brought a man to the convent; he worked at a boiler company and this company offered to donate a boiler.

I received a call saying there was a problem with the donation: the company would not give the boiler directly to us because we were Catholic, and Catholics do not accept homosexuals. If we could find another non-Catholic group they would give the boiler to them, and they in turn could donate it to us. I told him I no longer would accept the boiler. This was a dishonest deal and I was not going to lie about how we got the boiler. I had no idea how I would get enough money, but I could not get it by closing my eyes to something that was sneaky.

The same afternoon, a man from our new company sent me a list of all the boilers and machines that we needed, and added that a different company wanted to donate the boiler for the Chapel. God really has a great sense of humor! I turned one down and got another one from somewhere else.

By the end of that day, I received a call from the original friend. When he told his boss I had turned down the free boiler because of my principles, they were so amazed that someone would do so that

they decided to give us the boiler directly. What a lesson for me to stick to what is true and honest and not be tempted to give in to the ways of the world.

It is now May. We have all our boilers and machines that are needed. We only lost heat for a few cold days this winter when things were still being fixed. We have met many new friends who enjoy helping us. Two weeks ago the work on our back porch/roof was completed and all the leaks are fixed (I hope!).

We have replaced a torn carpet and now are in the process of getting the Air Conditioning ready for the summer.

All this was done because of almost 2,000 people who helped us at our time of need. We never could have afforded these projects.

Those who helped us and we who benefitted from their generosity know the meaning of the Peace Prayer:

*"It is in giving that we receive..."* We have given our lives to God's service and we reap many blessings; others gave us what they could afford, and they receive the blessings from our daily prayers of gratitude.



In my thank you letter to each donor, I wrote:

*«In our Congregational Constitutions it states: "As pilgrims in this world, the sisters seek to live the Holy Gospel according to the example of Francis of Assisi and to preserve in their religious family those virtues which are inherited, namely: faith in the presence of God, trust in Divine Providence, abandonment to the will of the Father, and self-sacrifice, charity, and humility."*



*I believe I can speak for each sister when I say that the challenges of the last months have forced us to reflect on these virtues. No day goes by without us being grateful to God for leading so many people like yourself to reach out to us, not only with your financial help, but with the many, many warm notes of encouragement and prayer, suggestions, (quilts, heaters, helping hands, resources and even an electric fireplace!) that have truly warmed our hearts. >>*

*God is good!*

*Sr Laura Morgan*

## In HARISSA (Libano)

### to celebrate the apparitions of OUR LADY of FATIMA

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of Our Lady apparitions in Fatima, special moments were organized in Harissa, where there is the famous Marian sanctuary of Lebanon.

All the Franciscans of Lebanon with their various groups participated in the procession, in the Holy Mass and consecration of the Franciscan Family to Our Lady.

We, the Sisters of the Menjez community, also went on bus with thirty of our youth from St. Francis Mission.

The Basilica was full and it was moving to see the greetings and smiles of all of us. It felt that there was something that united us.

The Franciscan spirit animated the entire assembly. Even the Bishop of Latin rite was present (he is also a Franciscan conventual)



At the end of the Mass, the bishop thanked the Sisters of Menjez for being present.

Then there was the consecration of the Franciscan family to Our Lady of Fatima.

All returned to our homes filled with joy and grace!

For us it was a long trip of three hours so we arrived at midnight, but happy to have lived together the

Franciscan Spirit for a few hours, united in the love of our Mother of Heaven who always protects us and walk with us.

## Meeting of European Scout Guides in Italy

### Bulgaria

I am part of Bulgaria's Scout Guides Group and with the other members of the group we have had a wonderful experience of enrichment and twinning between the Scout of Bulgaria and Italy.

How did it happen?

We were driven to it by Pope Francis's words to young people during World Youth Day in Krakow, where he invited everyone to "Build bridges".

We then participated in the European Scout Formation Days in Slovakia last year.

Therefore, we have been able to create new knowledge networks and exchange experiences in youth ministry with the Scout Groups.



The pastoral interest in following the young people in the life of the local Church in Bulgaria has opened the way for new knowledge with the General Commissars: Marco Platania, Michela Bertoni, Don Paolo La Terra, Italian Church Assistant and Cataldo Pilato responsible for Contacts with Bulgaria.

The meetings with the Heads of Scout of Bulgaria and Italy took place in Bologna, Florence and concluded in Rome, with the aim of increasing relations among us.

Specifically, to give young people the opportunity to meet and make a journey of human and Christian values for their growth and for the good of the young people they meet along their journey in life. We hope that, with the help of the Lord, our activity will bring many successful fruits among young people.

*Sr Elka Staneva*



## Children's Week in Tavannes (Switzerland)

“The Children’s Week” is a relaxing week after Easter holidays, during which the children of Tavannes, Reconvilier and nearby villages find themselves on one hand to talk about Christian life, on the other hand to participate in several proposed laboratories under the guidance of a group of animators and volunteers. In agreement with all the local churches, this week is generally held in the premises of the Tavannes Protestant Church.



This year the theme of the meeting was: “LIVE your LIFE- IT IS EASTER!” and took place from 3 to 5 April. 120 children between the ages of 6 and 10 took part, accompanied by 30 volunteers, some of whom were young. If most children know what Christmas is like, they do not necessarily know what Easter is.

During the week it was about explaining to children the meaning of the Easter holiday, what is the Resurrection and how it can be experienced by Christians.

The theoretical explanation was accompanied by the practice of the five laboratories put in place: gymnastics, cooking, perfumery and free expression.



The children have moved and experienced the life during the laboratories.

The children’s week is organized by local churches: the Protestant parishes and the Catholic parish, the free Church, the Mennonite Evangelical Church, the Tavannes Evangelical Community, and the Bible Reading League.

“Like every year we, sisters, participated in this meeting: Sr. Teresa through her prayer and encouragement, Sr. Deephi and I, actively participating in the workshops. For us it was a beautiful and enriching experience. “ *“May the Lord be Praised”*



*Sr. Inés Portugal*

***From LITHUANIA:***

***Living the MISSION ... in PRAYER***

Convinced that the mission, as Pope Francis reminds us, starts from being “kneeling” and that the Lord always opens new horizons of announcement and presence, in the latter period we have had a chance to live with the young and with the parishioners of intense prayer and adoration times that took place in the ambience of our home.



At the invitation of Lithuanian bishops, in fact, we were able to organize twenty-four hours of adoration, praise the Lord for the gift of redemption, and to implore peace and harmony for the whole of humanity. It was an intense time of grace and blessing that united us around Him Bread of Life and Light for the world.

It has now become a tradition in our lives of fraternity and parish to spend the afternoon of the second Sunday of the month in the presence of Jesus the Eucharist for adoration. The incessant and numerous succession of parishioners participating in it, testifies to the thirst for God and the transforming force of the Eucharist.



It is also a tradition the monthly Eucharistic adoration that brings together the young people of our parish in our chapel and tradition too is the time of adoration that families spent on Wednesdays in our chapel.

These are moments of great spiritual intensity, great encouragement and strong testimony to our community.

Starting from the experience of the “Kairos” retreat,

a group of young people in the cities of Klaipeda and Kretinga felt the need to meet twice a month to share experiences, pray together and spend in joy and simplicity the Sunday afternoon. Then these young people have asked to organize the night Eucharistic adoration, an engaging experience that has touched and is deeply touching each other’s heart.

We are infinitely grateful to the Lord for these precious gifts, for all the people who have found and find in our community a place of prayer, gathering, listening and sharing.

The Lenten Season was very intense with spiritual encounters with whom we participated or where we were the animators. We would like to mention some of the most significant.

We welcomed the youth of Klaipeda’s figure for a weekend- spiritual retreat based on the current reality and the importance of the Lenten for St. Francis and for us today.

Eight youth led by Friar Carlo Bertagnin OFM and Sr. Beniamina, in a climate of gathering and

silence, have allowed themselves to be confronted by the Gospel and the Franciscan Sources and committed themselves to create room to God in their lives.

A group of thirty five adults adhered to the invitation to prepare for Easter holidays by participating in the “TEC” a retreat animated by Sister Danutė and Sister Julija in collaboration with the chaplain of the school. Meeting point: The youth hostel that is located a few kilometers from Kretinga.



In addition, young people have come up the next weekend to

reflect on the importance and true meaning of love. Here, young Catholic engaged couples, and married couples committed in the parish life, priest and sister Julija have witnessed the different ways of experiencing the gift of self and the primacy that Christ has in their lives. Eucharistic celebrations, penitential ceremonies, adoration vigil, chants, games, group workshop, honest sharing have made the weekend more meaningful and enriching that the everybody has called: extraordinarily surprising and rich.



We did not forget the scouts of the Telšiai diocese who, always to prepare for the Easter holidays, wanted to gather in Pakutuvenai for the spiritual retreat by inviting Sr. Julija and Sister Benaimina to lead one of the days. Divided into two groups, they have been able to reflect on the person of Christ and their Christian commitment to witness the death and resurrection of the Lord, where they live and work.

Then there is the appointment of the fifth elementary students of the Franciscan high school who come to celebrate the Word of God.

An afternoon dedicated to the knowledge of the History of Salvation and the praise of the Lord for this invaluable gift. Dances, games, crosswords, various sketches: all wrapped in the joy of pupils and teachers and the desire to share the knowledge gained.



For all these activities, it comes spontaneous the song: *PRAISED BE, MY LORD!*

*Sr Beniamina, sr Danutė and sr Julija*

## ***“FIVE BREAD TWO FISHES”*: An AFTER-SCHOOL PROJECT** ***Quezon City - Philippines***

Since 2015 the community of Quezon City is running the after-school Project, named “*Five Bread Two Fishes*”. This project has been intended for the poor children of Rona’s Garden, a squatter area located at Quezon City, where the FMSC Sisters are going to teach Catechism under the Our Lady of Pentecost Parish Program. The said project aims to protect the children from various form of exploitation that surrounds them.



More or less twenty years of doing this apostolate, the sisters have seen and observed the situations of the families residing in this place, where the poor and innocent children are the ones to suffer most.

The Sisters came up with this project: “Five Bread Two Fishes” in order to offer the best they can to help them to grow morally and spiritually conscious of their dignity as persons created and Love by God.

The project is intended for the children age of six to twelve years old and it is an opportunity to be constantly in touch with their families.

As soon they arrive in their house from the Public elementary school, they proceed to the sisters’ convent so they can play first before starting the activities with the Sisters.

This is understandable as in their place they have no enough space for the games and no toys to play. Instead they found in the convent (provided by some of the sisters’ friends) a place to play and enjoy.



Therefore, they first satisfy their day of longing and enthusiasm to play and then they start doing their homework and lesson, helped by the sisters who encourage them to study well for a better future.

The sisters help them to develop a study habit and to use the time properly in doing their class activity.

They give them time and freedom to become able to take initiatives, to decide and encourage doing their activities creatively.

The reserve time to teach them to pray, to praise and thank the Lord for His love and





goodness and for the food He gives through the kindness of others.

To conclude the school-year activities with the children before the summer vacation, the Sisters brought the children to an outing in a nearby swimming pool in which they enjoyed very much.

They thank the owner, for allowing them to use their swimming pool and to have this great and unique opportunity.

The FMSC sisters in Quezon City are so grateful to the Lord for the TAU-ONLUS MISSION headed by Sabrina Vivan with her Staff who financially support this Project to let these poor children feel the love of God through their charity, closeness and concern, giving them the joy of feeling “important”-



## *“Born from the water and the Holy Spirit”*

### *Spiritual retreat of the Franciscan Youth of Albania*

For the Young Franciscans of Albania, (RIFRA) is already an activity consolidated by experience, the appointment for five days of Spiritual Retreat after Holy Easter.

Each year Fr. Nunzio Catania OFM, head of Rifra, proposes a different place by studying well what is best suited for reflection, meditation and even rest, seeking among religious communities throughout Albanian territory.

This year he chose the South and was welcomed by the Sisters Daughters of Christ the King, who have a great school in Gjirokaster, a beautiful, quiet town that rises on a hill not higher than 300 meters on top of which dominates the quaint castle, the destination of many tourists who are increasingly discovering the artistic value of Albania.



The spiritual retreat took place from 19 to 23 April and was attended by 30 young people from the various Fraternities. We also encouraged our youth who finally left for a seven-hour trip.

Sr. Dila, of our community in Scutari accompanied them.

It was neither simple nor easy to get into the climate of retreat. At first they heard the lack of things they do every day, the lack of the phone, the sharing of everything, but the grace worked in their heart and slowly prepared them to enter the theme "*Born from the water and the Holy Spirit*".

The evangelical figure that accompanied them was the Samaritan at the well of Sichar: water, sin, healing.

They faced the reflections on their daily lives, their paralysis, and discovered who helped them to heal and rise to a new life. The days were carefully studied and prepared, and the young people engaged in the liturgical prayer of the Morning prayers and Vespers, in the Holy Mass, in listening the meditations, in group reflection, in sharing, but also in moments of fraternity that have helped them to grow in the relationship, to enjoy the gift that is one to another.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, when we renewed our Holy Vows throughout the Congregation, the young people lived a more vocational day.

In fact, Sr. Dila, after presenting the Congregation and her call to missionary consecrated life, renewed her Vows during the Eucharistic Celebration. Everything took place in a very simple form, but silence, seriousness, the formula publicly quoted in front of the Church, has touched them in the heart. Rarely, our young people have the opportunity to do a similar experience.

They sang, praised, thanked the Lord and ... they questioned themselves!

The most beautiful and intimate moments were those of the night worship on the last night.

It seems strange, but for us now is a truth repeatedly verified: today's youth who are distracted by a world that does not favor inner life and

seem far away and absent from the problems of the spirit, before the Blessed Sacrament reveal a profound need for silence, of solitude, of personal contact with Jesus so much that with difficulty it is possible to stop adoration. They say they are willing to stay all night with Jesus the Eucharist.

In front of the Blessed One, there was a brazier. Everyone after silent prayer or praying before the Eucharist, deposited a burning charcoal incense and the scent that was rising and invading the chapel was a sign of their willingness to compromise on God and the Gospel.



## *Contemplate and Announce!*

### *Juniorato “Maria Immacolata” di Roma*

Following the Franciscan course, “Contemplate and Announce” from November 2016 to March 2017, organized by MOREFRA at the Antonianum, was for us, sisters of the juniorate “Maria Immacolata”, an important experience that we all lived together, a reason of sharing inside our fraternity.

Having this experience together with the sisters of other Franciscan congregations has made us feel a sense of belonging to the great Franciscan family and has led us to experience unity despite the variety of our specific spirituality and charisms.

It is good to see how the spirit of St. Francis has attracted people of all generations and how they continue to do so today, fascinating many young people around the world.

Participating in this course was a lively spiritual experience of meeting with the Lord of Whom we are grateful because we rediscovered the beauty of our spirituality.

As a chain, from the experience of Saint Francis and Saint Clare to this day, we continue to experience a life of contemplation and mission, indivisible elements in our own charism of FMSC.

Thanks to the program and the various reflections (which have deepened the theme of contemplation and mission in various respects from the biblical foundations to the experience of St. Francis and St. Clare and the applications in our specific charisms) we have been able to enrich and deepen our knowledge of certain aspects of spirituality and Franciscan life, in line with our youthful formation. What we have learned, we are now called to live it in our fraternity, a place of first mission for us. This is our responsibility now as we have received so much.

It has been very original and enriching the theme of icons, which want to represent the constant presence of God among us, which is very close to the experience of St. Francis, a man who has lived incessantly in the presence of God.

### *Pilgrimage to Monteluco and Narni Cave*



We summed up our experience of pilgrimage with some words:

GRACE, BENEDICTION, GRATITUDE, PRAYER, ENCOUNTER, and CONTEMPLATION.

At the end of this course, a pilgrimage to the Franciscan places of Monteluco and Cave of Narni was organized on Sunday, March 5, 2017, the first Sunday of Lent.





Indeed, it was a true experience of intimate and spiritual PRAYER, a BLESSING for this first Sunday of Lent. Already the song of praise in the coach, with the exceptional reading of the Transfiguration, has introduced us into the true spirit of this day gift of the Lord.



We have enjoyed the joy of the UNION, to be together and to feel united in Franciscan simplicity, as the priest at the beginning of the Holy Mass also expressed in the chapel of Monteluco, saying that the whole Franciscan family was there gathered in the Eucharistic Celebration.

The simplicity of the places was for us reason for reflection on the poor lifestyle of Saint Francis and the first brothers up to this day (we were in fact greatly affected by their testimony

of life and fraternity).

We have heard the spiritual presence of Saint Francis as we sojourned in the places where he himself lived and in which he preferred to remain in God's contemplation.

It was a true GRACE also the thought of his suffering and his illness that made us feel close to him, having, like him, only the Lord in mind and in the heart.

A true pilgrimage of CONTEMPLATION, the right conclusion of this year journey to Franciscanism, we have been able to experience God, aided by nature, and above all in Narni in the oratory of St. Francis and the Sacred Cave where the Saint felt all inside of the pierced Heart of Jesus Crucified.

The desire for prayer was strong and we have received great richness for our vocation, in returning to our roots, and for what has attracted us to the Lord in the Franciscan spirit.

Of course, the prayer that enriched our heart has spread to all the sisters of our Congregation, especially remembering the old and sick sisters.

*With grateful heart, we praise the Most High God.*



## *The Mission of Education in the School:*

### *GUIDELINES FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTIAGO*

In Santiago de Chile, on April 18, 2017, as every year, the meeting of Deans and Rectors of the Catholic Schools was held. In this meeting organized by the Vicariate of Education in Santiago, participated some of our sisters and school staff: Sister Mercedes Samaniego, Vice Director, Mrs. Nancy Godoy, responsible for the UTP (Technical Unit for Pedagogy), Mrs. Cecilia Meza appointed to Teacher's Pastoral Care of "Santa Maria degli Angeli" school in Santiago. From the high school of "Mother Cecilia Lazzeri" participated the director, Marta Meza and Sister Claudia Muñoz, vice director.

Fr Tomás Scherz, Vicar for Education of the Archbishop of Santiago, introduced the day, also announcing that Archbishop of Santiago Cardinal Monsignor Ricardo Ezzati has made available for the entire document "*Guidelines for the Missionary Action in Education of the Church of Santiago*" 2017-2020.



They are Guidelines well done and can be inspirational means of education in the schools. They are a synthesis of the research path and concrete reflections of recent years and that can offer new opportunities to build inclusive education, an expression of our merciful being, focusing on the dignity of the person, seeking the common good and quality service, characteristics of our evangelical mission.

In these guidelines, Monsignor Ezzati reminds all that the country is involved in the cultural changes affecting the minds of young people in the globalized world we live in, that many of our structures and criteria we have considered valid today need to be renewed to adapt to the Church's

mission in the present context.

As Shepherd, he wants to intensify his orientation towards the Educational Communities and help them in their professional skills to be able to transmit the heart of the Gospel to the school where the environments are welcoming, cheerful and merciful, marked by competent and innovative professionalism that transform them into laboratories of humanity.

It is important to encourage and orient our Educational Centers in a profound process of reflection on the present society, the challenges we face, the paradigms we must overcome and the appreciation of our contribution to the social and cultural construction of the country. The challenge of causing change in education, strengthening the transcending way, in line with the renewal of the Church, through the testimony of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Archbishop Ezzati accepts the challenge of Pope Francis to live the "*Father's Mercy*" Lk 6: 36. The evangelical challenge of being merciful and of being Christian educational institutions, always with open doors, with its own identity, which means to seriously embody the challenges facing a secular context.

Five Challenges are proposed to make a journey of identity and quality Educational:



*First challenge:* Inclusion, which for us must become a possibility of being merciful as God the Father. We must keep our eyes open to the reality of the children and teens we have in our educational environments. Inclusion and attention to diversity and to enhance everyone in their differences, creating spaces where everyone can collaborate.

*Second challenge:* Promote the pedagogy of God's desire for transcendence. We are faced with a social policy that forgets the presence of God; how to learn together with the students to be God's researchers? How can one see that his life is a blessing and how to promote pedagogy centered on religious experience and prayer?

*Third challenge:* In front of an individualist reality, to live the beauty of being an enthusiastic follower of Christ in a community experience, in the spirit of fraternity, as a proposal to the new generations to free them from individualism so that they can discover life as a gift of love.

*Fourth challenge:* Helping young people to get the fundamental values of human and Christian life. They are civic, moral, personal and social values. The educational process enables the values and ideals of the person, family, friendship, and solidarity, love of knowledge, art, beauty, contemplation and responsibility to be made concrete.

*Fifth challenge:* to accompany every young person so that he/she can mature an integral project, in his/her life, before others and our mother earth, our common home.

As a Catholic school, we must have open eyes on the complex reality of the students we welcome in our schools and look at each one with the eyes of Jesus who is merciful as the Father and invites us to live like Him.

### **Formative Meetings for Families and Students**

(“St. Francis of Assisi” School Quito - Ecuador).

#### **“Family, the essential engine in the education of children”**

The family plays a key role in society and for this reason we decided to organize a meeting for the parents of our “San Francisco de Asís” school in Arcadia, a meeting with the methodology called “Encounter for Parents”.

The meeting was held on Wednesday May 17, 2017. Parents were able to listen to the testimony of Juan Hidrovo and Xiomara Moreno, a couple of spouses who belong to the “Charismatic Renewal of Families with Jesus” in Ecuador. They came to share their experience as father and mother, the reality of faith lived as a family, and the proposal that the Church offered with the apostolic exhortation on love in the family, “*Amoris laetitia*”.

The reflection centred on the Church's proposals concerning the family in particular on the theme of the education of children presented in the document in Chapter VII.

*“Parents always influence the moral development of their children, for better or for worse. It follows that they should take up this essential role and carry it out consciously, enthusiastically, reasonably and appropriately. Since the educational role of families is so important, and increasingly complex,”* (N° 259).

Pope asks: “*Where are the children?*” The answer is given by



the same document that helps us to reflect: *“Families cannot help but be places of support, guidance and direction, however much they may have to rethink their methods and discover new resources. Parents need to consider what they want their children to be exposed to, and this necessarily means being concerned about who is providing their entertainment”*. (N°260).



Parents need to be aware of the situation in which their children live, because their children need their company, acceptance, counsel, closeness, and above all to feel loved; parents are their orientators, they need to know how to manage their free time and teach them to tackle the difficulties. Letting them alone does not fortify the lives of their children, rather they leave them in search of other things that impoverish their lives. You must manifest love for your children and the example must speak for yourself.

It was a significant day for all parents who felt the responsibility to live their parenting better and were happy to share the same concerns with others. May God assist us in this commitment to give our children the best.

### *“Encounters with Christ” for the students*

The purpose of the “Encounters with Christ”, prepared and propagated by Father Eduardo Levy SG, is to train the person and to promote personal development in the social, affective, psychological, academic and family context through a healthy and joyful spiritual experience, with the opportunity to have an encounter with the Love of God that gives value and sense to their lives.

There are three moments of this encounter:

1. Identity, that is, who are we?
2. Mission: to cure the formation of the person.
3. Vision: what we want to achieve as a Catholic identity.

This formation program has been set to give answers to the spiritual needs of children, adolescents, young people or adult who are living the encounter with Christ at various stages of growth.

These meetings are of a practical nature and include themes, group work, games, moments of reflection and prayer, the Eucharistic Celebration or a liturgy, possibly in a place outside the school.

In the past year, all the classes in our school have experienced this program *“encounter with Christ”* from nursery school up to ninth year and were accompanied by sisters: Sister Elizabeth Verastegui and Sister Crescence Mbezele, by their Professors and some parents who worked as a guide in group work.

All the students, from the youngest to the older, have lived this time enjoying the beauty of God’s grace with joy and fraternal love among companions and adults.



## *How to renew our missionary enthusiasm As consecrated and franciscan? (Cameroun)*

The Sisters and Novices of the Vice-Province met in Nkoabang for a two-day formation meeting. On 1 May they reflected on the theme: *“How to renew our missionary enthusiasm as Franciscan and consecrated people?”*

We began our day with a prayer to the Virgin Mary introduced by her excellence, Monsignor Faustin Ambassa Ndjodo.

Our speaker then began the reflection reminding us that this is a day of revival (returning to the origins) and meditation. He presented the program as follows: a time for personal work and another for workshop. He added that he would not want us to listen to him as if he were a champion of this renewal, as if it were enough to speak for this renewal to be realized in practice. He invited us to look inside ourselves to see where we are. His role was only to help and facilitate this journey. It is a time of exchange full of charity, charity in generosity.



After its presentation, two essential points attracted attention: the theme of renewal and enthusiasm.

Starting from the second point mentioned above, he defines enthusiasm as a feeling that is expressed from a relaxed state. He continued his speech by saying that when someone is relaxed, he manifests his enthusiasm. At an ordinary level, enthusiasm makes you think of the joy that accompanies an action, the desire to do well and continue to do so. It makes a sense of optimism that minimizes the difficulties, with an overwhelming zeal.



So when someone acts without showing much zeal, without witnessing a determination to go all the way down, it is noticed that the enthusiasm

is lacking.

Monsignor Ndjodo has presented the example of the horse and the donkey saying, *“When you want the horse to go one way, you give a little shot, and the horse begins galloping. In this way the speaker shows the man who acts with enthusiasm. On the contrary the man who needs to be pushed for the march, corresponds to the man who acts by compulsion and without enthusiasm, giving the impression that he has not adhered deeply to the project in which he is engaged. In this case, additional motivations are needed to realize your project. And if there is no supplementary objective motivation, it is necessary to get threats to do so. Enthusiasm frees the energies.*



## From our missions

*Those who feel enthusiastic feel in themselves an inner source that moves them forward. While who lacks enthusiasm is without energy. “*

In communities, some people who are enthusiastic never say “enough” because they find their reason to be and live in what they do. But if you do not find your interest in this, you obviously get tired. Enthusiasm is not only the outward manifestation of joy, but it is also what is experienced internally. The enthusiasm also develops creativity because one does not just want to do it, but



it does well. The enthusiastic person is not just a man / woman of duty (who only does what it was asked of him/her). Those who are enthusiastic, internalize their duty, making the command that they have been given a personal project.

The condition of fulfilment is a physical reality of the plant world. It opens, it shows its openness. It is a flourishing of the potentialities that were already present.

When there is no fulfilment, it is about atrophy, which means that development has been blocked somewhere. Can you consider a link between

fulfilment and enthusiasm? Doing a forced job is not generosity. Generosity is a natural impulse that comes from the heart.

Speaking of our missionary enthusiasm as consecrated and Franciscan, Monsignor Ndjodo has highlighted the fact that vocation gives the impression of diverting us from the natural river. Example: The Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary “How will this happen? (See Luke’s Gospel); the genealogy of Jesus in the gospel of Matthew; Saint Paul to whom something comes through the normal development of things. It would seem that the call to religious life does not coronate what was normally expected at the beginning.

In this regard, Monsignor quoted Saint Peter as a fisherman of fish becoming a fisherman of men. Because- he says- a normal development does not exist when you have to respond to God’s call.



Enthusiasm is the feeling that emerges from a fulfilled situation. The fulfilled person is enthusiastic. A person who is not realized is not enthusiastic.

After his conference, we had a small break. After the break, there was time for personal reflection. For this reason, Monsignor asked us to reflect on the following questions:

- 1- What are my deep aspirations (desires), what would lead me to my realization as a human person?
- 2- In this desire for accomplishment, how did I hear God’s call with the normal aspirations of a young girl?

After this time of reflection, some sisters shared their experience with the two questions above.

Afterwards, we resumed the work in the afternoon along with this question:

What does prevent me from fulfilling myself in my community?

In the discussions of the debate, it has been pointed out that the causes are personal and of the community.

Later, Monsignor concluded the day in these terms: In consecrated life, we follow Christ. Like him, we must give to others life in abundance. We must be givers of life. Enthusiasm is like the spring of our commitment. "Enthusiasm is the music of consecrated life."

*To the praise of his glory !!*

### *Something new in Vice-province "SS. Martyrs of Uganda"*

#### *Great ambitions*

This news of the Vice-Province "Saints Martyrs of Uganda" has a scent or better a very "special flavor"!



Ekié ... is a proverb that says, "Whoever wants to go further, he must have his own horse."

Our vice-province, wanting to have a "mount", and so she did a self-financing project; The "company" of the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart acquired a land in ABANG-TSINGA (Nkoa-bang) for a very special purpose! If you want to see the gifts and abilities of the sisters, just take a ride to Abang-Tsinga and you

will not forget it anymore!

The show presents to our view a "puzzle" of fields well-planted, cultivated and cared for ... cocoa plantations, corn plantations, manioc, macabo, peanut, American potatoes, pineapple, etc ... in the form of a French garden.

Come and see other wonders God does with these women who have given their lives to the Lord.

The FMSC Sisters do not only recite the rosary or the breviary or devote themselves to many apostolic activities but they also feed themselves with the work of their hands and the sweat of their forehead for their full accomplishment and for the glory of God and the coming of his Kingdom.

CONGRATULATIONS to the Sisters and...

*Blessed be, O my Lord, for our Mother Earth,  
which sustains and governs us and produces many fruits  
with colourful flowers and grass.*



## *Apostolic activities in some missions in India*

### *In the school St. Francis E. M. School Madhira*



Variety is the spice of life. Life without feasts and celebration is charmless and lifeless. So it is true in case of school life. So we St. Francis E.M. school Madhira celebrated many events like children's day, teacher's day, parent's day, festivals like krishnastami, Sankranthi, Holy Christmas, ect..

In our school during the academic year 2016-17, these celebrations added color and charm to school life..

The rich and vibrant festivals of India are a testimony to our diverse tradition and culture.

For students it is a great way to understand the rich heritage of India and learn about the importance of various festivals.



### *In the Community "Shalom Matha Bhavan" Manjeri*

The sisters of this community are engaged with abandoned and marginalized women with psychic and mental disorders. In the environment prepared for them, women find warmth, care, and love ... a real family. Activities help them develop their gifts and make them feel important.

*In this photo, they are at work to peel the peanuts.*



The sisters are also collaborating very closely with the parish engaging other people in the delicate mission with these women.

In the photo, they are with a group of parish mothers, who spent an afternoon with the guests of the house.

*In the Community "Laverna" Kottayam*



The main activity is the home for the elderly, which especially welcomes those who are abandoned by family members and society.

Sisters are also engaged in parish activities with the teaching of catechism,

Meetings with young people and the education of children in the nursery school of the parish.

Visiting the families is one of the most important and significant activities. Sisters give people their presence by offering listening time, spiritual, psychological and moral support, and even material aid through small community sacrifices.



*In the Community of the Systematic Juniorate*



The junior sisters who are part of this important and indispensable formation time are engaged in various activities besides the fundamental commitment of their spiritual and charismatic formation.

The formation meetings are led by the Capuchin Franciscan Fathers who help young people to know more deeply themselves, the values of fraternal life according to St. Francis, the vocation to Franciscan and Missionary religious life

Every day they help in the house for the elderly women by giving their service and learning to overcome themselves and their needs to focus on those of others.

For St. Francis, it is important the manual work with our Mother Earth.



Therefore, the young sisters spend time in the garden and in the field to cultivate flowers and vegetables. As they learn to respect the growth of these seedlings, they can learn to respect the human and spiritual growth of each sister by acquiring the ability to be patient, attentive, and caring.

All of these is lived out through love and in the love of the Lord, who must always be the Supreme Good for all!



**Sr M. Domizia  
Savian  
of the Agony of Jesus**

**Born: Annone Veneto (VE)  
il 12-04-1930**

**Died: Gemona  
il 24-01-2017**

In the last days, it may be noted that Sr. Domizia had begun the path that was leading her to the 'Father's House'. Always vigilant and conscious, but with the fatigue of those who are about to fly to eternity, she waited for the last call of the Lord on January 24, came to her heart...

Sr. Domizia surely responded with The Word of the liturgy: *"Here I am, Lord, I come, for so it is written of me, O God, to do your will!"*

At the first touch of the bell that called the Mother House community to the church for Vespers prayer, Sr. Domizia joined the choir of the Saints in heaven to sing her praise to the Lord and thank Him for the gift of the new life in the Fatherland heavenly.

She was born on April 12, 1930, on the eve of the Palm Sunday and her parents Archangel and Antonia Pellegrini, brought her to the Baptism on the Wednesday of the Holy Week, April 16, calling her Bruna.

She grew up in her numerous family of deep Christian faith; the religious vocation has not

delayed to manifest itself in her and, at the age of 21, on 28. 03. 1951, Bruna entered the convent of the fmsc in Gemona, where she could, in simplicity and labor, take the formative journey of the postulancy and of the novitiate and in two years she was ready to pronounce her desired 'yes' to the Lord with the Religious Profession on 22 July 1953.

After this step, Bruna, with the new religious name of Sr. Domizia, was already prepared to start her "mission" as a cook in various communities and schools in Friuli and Veneto.

A humble but very important service in everyday life where the 'family sense' grows and grows in the intimacy of the house managed with love and fidelity.

The last place where she lived and worked was in Carnia, at Cavazzo, and after in 2006 she retired already old and sick, but still able to continue the other "side" of the 'mission', that is of physical suffering offered with love to the Lord as it is required of every Franciscan missionary sister of the Sacred Heart.

*"Sr. Domizia now that you are in the glory of God, continue to pray by asking the Lord the gift of vocations who can choose, as you did, to donate themselves with simplicity to serve the brethren responding to the call of God. Pray for your dear ones and for us your sisters and intercede for all, heavenly blessings.*

**Sr M. Natalia  
Sartor  
of Mary  
Immaculate**

*Born: Postioma (TV)  
il 06-12-1942  
Died: Gemona  
il 01-02-2017*



Sr. Natalia Sartor was born in Postioma on December 6, 1942, the fifth of six brethren. It was the time of Advent, of Mary, the holy and blessed One whom the Father has chosen for the coming of his Son to the world. Thus the parents of sr Natalia, Francesco and Armida Giandon, do not miss the opportunity to bring to the baptism their creature just two days later, on December 8, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. They call her, Pierina Concetta. She grows in that poverty to which the families of the time are forced, but in exchange she inherits, together with her brethren, that genuinely Christian faith that is rooted in the different vocations: first of all that of her brother Mario entering among the cappuccinos and becoming a priest.

Also Pierina, at the age of 21, still under the protection of the Immaculate Conception, on December 8, 1963, chooses to follow the voice of the Lord who calls her and begins her path of preparation for the Religious Life in Gemona among the fmsc, where her Sister Sr. Rosita had preceded her 10 years earlier.

After two years she is ready to pronounce her 'yes' to the Lord with the Religious Profession in the mother-house (Gemona). From that day she will be called Sr. Natalia of Mary Immaculate: a religious name and surname that link to each other the memory of the birth of Jesus (Natalia) and of the Holy Mother, who gave her to Him (the Immaculate).

She then sealed her self-offering to the Lord with perpetual Profession on September 11, 1972 in the occasion of the National Eucharistic Congress in the cosmopolitan Cathedral of Udine 'Maria Annunziata'.

In the service as a cook and parish pastoral care, Sr. Natalia carries out her mission in various communities in the Province, but the most beautiful period is that of Viole di Assisi and S. Maria degli Angeli, where she could breathe in full lungs the spirit of St. Francis. So her presence, simple, open, and full of joy, despite her weak health, conveyed to all the Franciscan joy of life. What supported her in this daily mission and in the harsh evidence of long illness? ...

Without doubt, the Word of God meditating assiduously and deepening with the help of his brother Fr. Mario. She was also grateful to have had in Vittorio Veneto, through the invitation of the priest fr. Vittorino the opportunity to attend a biblical course from which she learned how to confront and how to live the Word of the Lord in the Gospel-Franciscan spirit.

In the last days, won by illness, she has shown patience, strength and abandonment in God. She was lovingly assisted day and night by Fr. Mario, Sr. Rosita and her brothers and nephews and nieces who came often to see her. On February 1, she gave her spirit to the Lord who called her to appear in the Temple of Heaven, ready for the wedding feast that will be celebrated next to Jesus in the "feast of consecrated life" the following day (2 February).

*Sr. Natalia, from heaven where you are now, continues to convey what the Word of God has revealed you so that you can exclaim with joy as Simeon:*

*'My eyes have seen your salvation prepared by you in front of all peoples'. Remember your loved ones who have always been close to you and we, your sisters in the same vocation. Intercede the gift of other vocations that can share to our sick world of sadness, the joy you gave when you were with us.*





*Sr. M. Antonia  
Maguire  
of the Holy  
Eucharist*

*Born: New York  
il 12-03--1931  
Died: Peekskill  
il 25-04-2017*

Muriel Maguire was born in New York City on March 12, 1931 to Thomas and Catherine Maguire, joining her older sister Rita and brother Frank. She graduated from PS 52, Cathedral High School and the New York Foundling Hospital School for Infants' Nurses. Before entering the Franciscan Sisters she worked at the Foundling Hospital and then in the newborn nursery at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York City from 1951-1957.

After her profession in 1959, Sister received a BA in Philosophy from Ladycliff College (Cum Laude) an MS in Counseling from Fordham University, and completed the Archdiocesan Training Program in Spiritual Direction and Religious Counseling.

Sister taught various grades at Assumption School, Peekskill, and science at the St. Joseph's branch of Cathedral High School in NYC. She served as Vocation Directress from 1969-1971 and Directress of the Juniorate and then was the Guidance Counsellor for the Catholic Schools in the Peekskill area. In 1973 she began volunteering at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, where she eventually ministered as the Catholic Chaplain at Bedford Hills, Taconic, and Sing Sing. She was the first woman Catholic Chaplain in Prison Ministry in the state of New York, a ministry which became the heart and soul of her Gospel living.

In 1985 she was the initiator of the establishment of the Gift of Love, working with Cardinal O'Connor and Mother Teresa in opening this wonderful hospice for people with AIDS. From 1996-2007 Antonia served on Governor Pataki's AIDS Council to help bring about changes from all suffering from the disease.

After retiring from her Prison Ministry in 2015, Sister served as Provincial Secretary for her Religious Community until two days before her passing.

Sister Antonia was selfless. She would go out of her way to help anyone, always with a big smile and the kindest of hearts. She truly lived the Gospel and showed others what it meant to be a real follower of St. Francis.

She could make everyone that she met feel special, but her men and women "in green" (her prison family) held their own sacred place in her heart.

She was affectionately known by the inmates of the State Correctional System as "*The Worldwide Mother of People in Green!*"

She LOVED to go to prison! And the prisoners were grateful for her "life sentence" in serving them.

When she was asked what she liked to do in the very few leisure moments she had, she said: "I like seeing my friends, and sitting quietly to 'drink in' the beauty of the river, sunset, birds, and flowers."

Sister endured much physical suffering: patiently and quietly. She lived every day as best as she could, never complained and was always willing to help someone out.

She had no fear of death; she and Sr. Laura had many talks in these last few months about dying, heaven, meeting Jesus, and being whole again in His kingdom of love.

On Monday morning she said: "I can't do this anymore".

She knew her time had come and she was more than ready to take her last breath in His earthly Kingdom and open her eyes, looking at His face in His eternal Kingdom of Heaven.



**Sr. M. Olga  
Barcelli  
of the Eucharist**

*Born: Isola del  
Piano (Pesaro)  
il 2-2-1936  
Died: Le Mans  
il 30-04-2017*



Sr. Olga Barcelli was born in Italy, at Isola del Piano, on February 2, 1936, in a Christian family. She has learned from her parents the deep sense of faith but also the work and honesty!

After working for a long time in the “Azione Cattolica” in Rome where she was employed in a family, at 28 year old, she decided to knock at the community door of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Centocelle.

After two years of religious life formation, she pronounced the first Vows on September 26, 1966. Knowing that she is a member of a missionary Congregation, she welcomes with enthusiasm and joy the mandate to be sent to France, in Paris, as a cook at the young workers of the “Santa Clotilde Foyer”. After a short time, she agrees to uproot herself and she traveled to Manchester in England at a nursery school in the Italian mission. Religious of prayer and action, she was appreciated everywhere for her generosity, her willingness and above all for her love for the Creator, Creatures and Creation.

When the mission was closed, she returned to France in several missions, but always with the same enthusiasm! Woman of the earth, having her “green hand”, she fulfilled her skills, working in nature where she sowed, collected, planted and embellished the chapels with beautiful multicolored bouquets, she only possessed the secret!

The Lord who has chosen her for Him alone and for the humble services, He has also tried her with numerous tests of suffering and illness.

She is transferred to Le Mans community because of a serious operation. Though she was convalescent, she continued to serve the community, not forgetting the small services to the priests of the rest home “St. Aldric “!

When it is reestablished, she consecrated herself for 43 years to various services for sick and elderly priests: nightly vigilance, table service, lifelong accompaniment, and above all liturgical daily liturgy of the Eucharist and sacristy.

In June last year, her health has worsened. During this long illness, the Bishop of Mans, Bishop Yves Le Saux, the priests of the “St. Aldric “and many priests of the diocese have made her visit.

This sign of gratitude has helped her a great deal during this time of purification and suffering. All the sisters in the Province supported her with prayer, presence and fraternal affection.

With courage, without ever complaining, in serenity, she has reached her Lord, the one she has always sought, served and loved. Saturday, April 30 at 0h 25, God, Father of Mercy, has called her! May she rest in Peace!

