

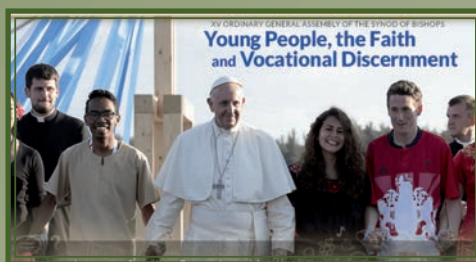


YEAR XCIV – N°2/2018

# PACE E BENE

SUORE FRANCESCANE MISSIONARIE DEL SACRO CUORE





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## THE YOUTH SYNOD: “WE ARE GOD’S DREAM”



Pope Francis, in every occasion of meeting with young people, not only uses the metaphor of the ‘dream’, but also repeats, “God is in love with us and we are his dream of love”. He is the spokesman everywhere of this dream of God and to involve the young especially in the proclamation of the ‘Dream of God’, he has called a Synod on young people.

It is the last Synod of Bishops concluded on October 28<sup>th</sup> on the theme: “Young people, faith and discernment”.

The young people, since the first proclamation of the

Synod have seized the Pope’s appeal. In hundreds of thousands from every continent, they replied to the questionnaire expressing their expectations regarding the Church. Three hundred youth participated in the seminar last March and 34 participated in the synodal assembly. They made their presence significant without fear, without inhibition, with liveliness and courage, fostering a joyful and dynamic atmosphere among Bishops and Cardinals. For the first time in the history of the Church in a Synod of Bishops, the word was also given to the young. The Pope himself in the opening greeting invited them to “ask uncomfortable questions to the Synodal Fathers, without any fear.

Actually, they have freely faced, together with the Bishops, hot topics such as synodality, the role of women, communication, sexuality, migration, wars. They have brought out the thirst for faith and their need to be accompanied. It is also appreciated that seven women religious, chosen by UISG (International Union of Superiors General) have been invited to the Synod as listeners, coming from Africa, from Asia, from Europe, and from America. We have all been able to follow the intense days of the Synod, through the powerful means of communication that have reached every corner of the earth. We have seen Pope Francis among the young, attentive to everyone, listening and being in dialogue with all.

One of the most discussed topics was the presence of women in the Church, demanding greater positions of responsibility in the Church for women. The intervention of a bishop, in particular, asked “women, religious superiors, work and vote in the same way, together with their brothers in Christ at the Synod meetings”. The theme of synodality has been the focus of many interventions recalling that “Vatican II has proposed an ecclesiastical model that has not yet been actualized, that of the people of God”. This Synod with the long journey of preparation and involvement of young people, in particular, marked a decisive step towards the actualization of a Synod “of the People of God”.

Other themes intervened with those of synodality and of the women were those of the vocation and of the personal and group accompaniment. One of the most pressing requests presented by young people was that of listening and accompanying.

It was pointed out strongly, “They need of spiritual fathers and mothers, trained companions, people capable of speaking a new language”. In a world “characterized by increasingly evident pluralism and by an ever-wider availability of options” it is urgent in the Church to dedicate itself to the accompaniment of the young generations to seek together, a path aimed at making definitive choices.





At the conclusion of the Synod, lived in a serene, joyful climate thanks to the presence of young people, great commitment began for everyone, to put into practice the great enthusiasm and the beautiful ideas for a transformation of youth ministry, aimed especially at young people they are far apart.



The final document approved by the Synodal Fathers on October 27<sup>th</sup> shows the same title of the Synod: “Youth, faith and vocational discernment”. It has as its main theme the episode of the disciples of Emmaus narrated by the Evangelist Luke and resumed the division into three parts as the Instrument of Work.

As we can read in the introduction the document is divided into three parts: the first entitled: “He walked with them” (Lk 24,15), presents the context in which young people live today, highlighting their challenges and strengths . The second part: “Their eyes were opened” (Lk 24,31) offers some fundamental interpretations of the synodal theme; the third part entitled: “They left without delay” (Lk 24, 33) collects choices for a spiritual, pastoral and missionary conversion

Young people want to be central characters of ecclesial life, putting their talents to fruition, taking responsibility; they must therefore be encouraged to be active in evangelization with the help of the ecclesial community in their most congenial digital environment and, in particular, in intercultural and inter-religious contexts. A pressing invitation also came to our religious communities, reaffirming that “when religious communities authentically live fraternity they become schools of communion, centers of prayer and contemplation, places of witness to intergenerational and intercultural dialogue and spaces for evangelization and charity ... the Church and the world cannot do without this gift of vocation “.



The message of the Synod of young people restores hope and new vitality for the evangelization of the new generations, to whom our specific mission as Franciscans is dedicated.

## PRE-SYNODAL EVENTS

### A thousand roads: young people in Italy meet Pope Francis

Over 40 thousand young people, belonging to 195 dioceses of Italy, out of a total of 226, traveling from all over Italy to Rome to participate in the event, 'We are here, young Italians meet Pope Francis'. Under the scorching sun of August, tens of thousands of boys and girls of all ages marched from all over the Peninsula. At the "Circle Maximus" Square the young people were 70.000 in the meeting with Pope Francis.

*Let us listen to the testimonies of two groups that included some of our young sisters. Sr. Victoria Simora, Sr. Marta Lucatelli and the postulant Rina with the Capuchin friars of Rome:*

Guided by the words of Pope Francis, inspired by the Gospel of John: "Come and see" (Jn 1:39), we have also felt the impulse to start walking towards Jesus together with the young.

By joining the proposal of the Capuchin friars, we participated in the pilgrimage that they organized for young people from all over Italy in preparation for the meeting with the Pope on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> August, in Rome.

Friars, sisters and young people from various regions of Italy met in Rieti to begin the pilgrimage on the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.

Our experience of pilgrims began on August 6<sup>th</sup>, the feast day of the Transfiguration of our Lord. Like the disciples, we have been invited on this day to rediscover the call in us with the same Gospel



words and to share the joy of the encounter.

"At that time, Jesus took with Him Peter, James and John and led them on a high mountain, apart, alone" (Mk 9: 2); to listen to his voice "this is my Son, the chosen one; listen to him" (Mk 9,7).



The Holy valley of Rieti was chosen for our pilgrimage because it witnessed the assiduous presence of Francis of Assisi. Every day we visited a sanctuary in this valley reflecting on an evangelical passage and a theme related to the place itself.

The first stage was at Poggio Bustone with the theme: “Forgiveness and Mission”. In the second stage we went to the sanctuary of Santa Maria della Foresta, where we met the youth from the “Mondo X” community. The theme of our catechesis was, “Change, the forgiven person enters into relationship with creation “. On the same day, visiting the Bishop’s house and the Cathedral of Rieti, we listened to catechesis, with the theme: “The charity of Francis of Assisi, as a return to God”.

On the third day, we went to the Sanctuary of Fonte Colombo, the Franciscan “Sinai”, with the theme: “To give ourselves the rules”.

For the last stage of the Franciscan pilgrimage, we went to Greccio, the Franciscan “Bethlehem”, with the theme: “If you do not become as children”. Here we enjoyed extraordinary experience of the Eucharistic celebration: the Christmas Mass with a kiss to the Baby, Christmas carols and greetings! In these places, it was possible to discover the secret of a simple, exceptional life.

This journey has been an opportunity to regain possession of our innermost, truer being that was hidden in the noise and the frenzy of everyday life.

Retracing the journey of Francis, we have known how he lived his relationship with the Lord, abandoning everything that was obstacle to him to progress on the path of holiness.



The final goal of our journey was Rome, where we met Pope Francis. We joined him in the prayer along with many young people from different parts of Italy for the Youth Synod.

*The testimony of Sr Barbara Pandolfi with the youth from the diocese of Trento:*

After finishing the camps on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 30 young people from the Alto Garda youth pastoral area, Fr Mattia Vanzo, chaplain of Riva del Garda, and I, set off on a journey that would take us to Rome to the Pope’s meeting with the youth in preparation of the Synod.

The program was designed with different breaks on the way. We had a stop in Vitorchiano at the Trappist nuns’ monastery; there they welcomed us and gave a testimony on the theme of vocation. From the cascades of Monte Gelato then our three-day journey began along the “Francigena” Road.

## In Communion with the Church

During the nights, we were hosted in the Parishes of Campagnano Romano and Olgiata where we have experienced their great hospitality. Along the way at times the weary steps were moved forward by singing and praying, by sharing in pairs and by a time dedicated to Reconciliation. We arrived at the Asisium Community on Wednesday under a scorching sun and a special welcome has refreshed us in body and spirit. In the afternoon with Sr. Tiziana Tonini we had a meeting on the theme “being a mission”; a long sharing involved young people starting from the five points of *Evangelii Gaudium*.



Thursday and Friday were days dedicated

to the service in two Caritas of the City, an experience that marked in the depths of the young people who, with care and passion, became involved in the lives of the many people they met.

The Saturday before leaving for the Circus Maximus Square we experienced a long moment of synthesis in the morning in which everyone was able to express his/her experience during these days. In the end, the young people expressed their thanks to Sr. Paola and Sr. Tiziana who gave them the missionary chaplet with the image of our Founder.



The meeting with the Pope at the Circle Maximus, the night vigils in different churches of the city and the Holy Mass in St. Peter's Square, all these have enriched everyone. We cherish to the hearts the precious words of Pope Francis that has indeed great power to transform our lives.



Here are some of the most significant points:

*"Dear friends, you have set out on a journey and you have come to this meeting. And now it is my joy to hear that your hearts beat with love for Jesus, as did those of Mary of Magdala, Peter and John. And since you are young, I, like Peter, am happy to see you run faster, like John, impelled by the beating of your heart, sensitive to the voice of the Spirit who animates your dreams. Therefore I tell you: do not be content with the prudent pace of*



*those who line up at the end of the queue. Do not be content with the prudent pace of those who line up at the end of the queue. It takes courage to risk a leap forward, a bold and fearless stride to dream and, like Jesus, to realize the Kingdom of God, and to commit yourself to a more fraternal humanity. We need fraternity: take a risk, go forward!*

*"... by walking together, in these days, you have experienced how much effort it takes to welcome a brother or sister who is beside me, but also how much joy his or her presence can give me, if I receive it in my life without prejudice and closure. Walking alone allows one to be unfettered by everything,*



*perhaps faster; but walking together makes us become a people, the People of God."*

*"Dear young people, is it possible to encounter Life in places where death reigns? Yes, it is possible. One might answer 'no', that it is better to steer clear, to distance oneself. Yet this is the revolutionary novelty of the Gospel: Christ's empty tomb becomes the ultimate sign in which the definitive victory of Life shines. And so let us not be afraid! Let us not avoid places of*

*suffering, of defeat, of death. God has given us a power greater than all the injustices and frailties of history, greater than our sin: Jesus conquered death by giving his life for us. And he sends us to proclaim to our brothers and sisters that he is Risen; he is Lord; and he gives us his Spirit so as to sow with him the Kingdom of God. That Easter Sunday morning changed history: let us have courage!*

Thank you very much to the young people who have put themselves at their venture to make this experience so vivifying, and to all the people who have worked hard to make it possible or who have supported and accompanied us with prayer.

**POPE FRANCIS, «MESSENGER OF HOPE» IN LITHUANIA**



“Honor, glory and praise to God the Almighty for the wonders He does in human history” with these words we greeted the Pontiff, Pope Francis, pilgrim and pastor in this precious portion of the Church that is in Lithuania. Inexpressible joy and deep gratitude! He was in our midst from September 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> to manifest his “closeness to the persecuted Churches”, under the banner of ecumenism in the three Baltic countries that are close but different: Lithuania is in fact 80% Catholic. Latvia is mainly Lutheran with 20% of faithful in Rome and 15% of Orthodox. Estonia has only 6,000 Catholics, while 75% of the population defines itself without religion. Four days (of which two and four nights in Lithuania) we lived in intense communion of the Church and of universal fraternity. Pope Francis, who had called the year of mercy, is now visiting Vilnius, the city of Mercy par excellence, where Sister Faustina had the first revelations from Jesus, where the miraculous image of the Virgin of Mercy (Virgin of the Aurora) dominates and protects the city.

A very intense program was made. He visited the sanctuary of the Merciful Jesus, and the chapel of Our Lady of Mercy. His visit, the recollection and prayer in the prison where many Christians, priests, nuns and four bishops were imprisoned, tortured and even killed during the communist regime, was very significant and very touching. An enthusiastic meeting with youth, with the faithful, with the religious and the priests and the Holy Mass at the park of Kaunas etc. indeed, encouraged the people who suffered so long under a communist government. In each place he visited, the Pope left a relevant message.



To the authorities and to the people gathered at the presidential palace he said, “*We must say “No” to a single model that eliminates the difference. You have suffered much on your skin, from the attempts made to impose a single model up on you. Such an act would indeed nullify the difference, with the pretension of believing that the privileges of the few are above the dignity of others or of the common good* “. To the many young people, who crowded the cathedral square Pope Francis presents a strong invitation to trust and abandonment in the Lord: “*God will never come down from the boat of your life.*”



Then he gave some exhortations: *“Go against the current, remember that the Lord saves us by making us part of a people. Never allow the world to make you believe that it is better to walk alone. Dear young people do not be afraid to follow Christ “.*

The Sunday Eucharistic celebration on 23<sup>rd</sup> of September in Kaunas at the Santaka park was attended by more than a hundred thousand people. Together around their Pastor they were, singing, praying, and listening, giving a good participation all through the celebration. Pope Francis in his homily encouraged us all and invited us to make a serious commitment to the Christian life. *“The Christian life always involves experiences of the cross; at times they can seem interminable. Earlier generations still bear the scars of the period of the occupation, anguish at those who were deported, uncertainty about those who never returned, shame for those who were informers and traitors. How many of you can identify at first hand, or in the history of some family member, with that passage which we just read? How many of you have also felt your faith shaken because God did not appear to take your side? Because the fact of your remaining faithful was not enough for him to intervene in your history? Kaunas knows about this; Lithuania as a whole can testify to it, still shuddering at the*



*mention of Siberia, or the ghettos of Vilnius and Kaunas, among others.”*

*“The disciples did not want Jesus to speak to them of sorrows and the cross; they wanted nothing to do with trials and hardships. Saint Mark tells us that they were interested in other things, that on the way home they discussed who was the greatest among them.”. Pope Francis pointed out that “the thirst for power and glory is the sign of those who fail to heal the memories of the*

*past and, perhaps for that very reason, to take an active part in the tasks of the present. They would rather discuss who was better, who acted with greater integrity in the past, who has more right to privileges than others. In this way, we deny our own history, “which is glorious precisely because it is a history of sacrifice, of hopes and daily struggles, of lives spent in service and fidelity to work, tiring as it may be””.*

*“Here in Lithuania”, the Pope still remembers, “you have a hill of crosses, where thousands of people, over the centuries, have planted the sign of the cross. I ask you, as we now pray the Angelus, to beg Mary to help us all to plant our own cross, the cross of our service and commitment to the needs of others, on that hill where the poor dwell, where care and concern are needed for the outcast and for minorities. In this way, we can keep far from our lives and our cultures the possibility of destroying one another, of marginalizing, of continuing to discard whatever we find troublesome or uncomfortable..*

In the afternoon, meeting with priests and us religious, gathered in the cathedral of Kanunas, Pope Francis is moved, speaks in his arms opened and, deeply moved, turns to us: *“Looking out at you, I see many martyrs behind you.*

*Anonymous martyrs, in the sense that we do not even know where they were buried. You are the children of martyrs, that is your strength. And may the spirit of the world not tell you something different than what your forebears experienced... Always be in love with God, witnesses of his love, rooted in the luminous history of the Lithuanian Church. Be evangelizers of an outgoing Church. It is necessary to pray and always adore. Cultivate the desire of God. Look at the roots, on the path traveled by the elderly,*



*there are teachers. Do not be overwhelmed by sadness: "it is a disease". Then, turning particularly to us sisters, he reminds us of being mothers of mercy, icons of Our Lady and of the Church.*

Later the Pope returns to Vilnius to go to the Museum – prison which represents the hard work and struggles for freedom. A moment full of silence and prayers. This is the place where the dramatic pages of the Nazi and Soviet occupation are remembered. In this building, first the Gestapo Nazi police and then the Soviet KGB agents tortured and killed at least thousand prisoners. Pope Francis visited in particular the two impressive cells of isolation, the n. 9 and the n. 11, the width of sixty centimeters, where he lit a candle. In cell number 11 are exposed, in particular, the photographs and stories of some Catholic bishops persecuted for their faith, including Archbishop Teofilas Matulionis, proclaimed blessed on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017. In this building, was killed, mgr. Vincentas Borisevičius, bishop of the diocese of Telšiai on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1946. The silence then marked the visit in the execution hall. The Pontiff then signed the guestbook in memory of his visit. Then the prayer *"Lord, may Lithuania be a beacon of hope, the land of hard memories that renew the commitments against every injustice, that promotes creative efforts in defending the rights of all people, especially the defenseless and vulnerable. In addition, may Lithuania be a teacher in reconciling and harmonizing diversities. Lord,*

*do not let us be deaf to the cry of all those who today continue to raise their voices in heaven"*.

In the following two days he traveled to Latvia and Estonia in the name of the ecumenical journey that the three sister republics have been doing for many years.

We too, sisters of the community of Kretinga say: "Lord Jesus help us to transform our lives, to put into practice the message that Pope Francis brought us, help us to be grateful and to praise you because only You are holy, only You are Merciful, only you are worthy of praise".



*Sister Beniamina, Sister Danute, Sister Julija*



## V American Missionary Congress

From 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> July 2018, in the city of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, the American Missionary Congress took place under the slogan: *“America on a mission, the Gospel is joy”*. The theme of the meeting was, “The joy of the Gospel, the heart of the prophetic mission, source of reconciliation”.



because there were many meetings and training courses to take care of more than three thousand missionaries.

Sister Magaly Warton and Sister Carmen Callizaya were members of the Congress organizing group; Sr Magaly was with the delegation of Cochabamba, Sr.

Luz Marina Velásquez helped Sr Gladys Chavez in the logistics. In our community, we have hosted two bishops, Msgr. Sergio Arthur Braschi, Mons. Jaime Pedro Khol Brazil and two priests, Father Gregorio Cabrera de La Paz and Father Esteban Kross of Surinan. It was a pleasure to have their presence among us in the community. We feel it really as a grace to have participated in this great event. No doubt, it was a living experience of a great Pentecost. We indeed experienced an emotion of being together with many missionaries and feeling all united in the passion for the mission.

With great joy and great missionary commitment, we, the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, also were fully involved in various activities to realize this great event. Sr. Carmen, Sr. Gloria Sr. Callizaya and Sr. Martinez were responsible as head of the missionary group of the parish of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, preparing families to welcome pilgrims and parish volunteers. The country we hosted was Brazil and the La Paz department. Sr. Gladys Chavez as a counselor for vocational youth ministry here in Santa Cruz, has worked extensively with the volunteers for the logistics of the Congress

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The goal of the Congress was: to strengthen the identity and missionary commitment ‘ad gentes’ of the Church in America, to proclaim the joy of the Gospel to all peoples, with particular attention to the peripheries of today’s world and also to feel supportive and fraternal in the service for a more just society.

It was a moment of grace for the Church in America, through which we intended to revive the missionary spirit of the whole Catholic community present in all the realities of the world. Certainly, the transforming power and the joy of the Gospel was the driving force for us to work. It opened the ways of communion and reconciliation in the social and political, interreligious and ecclesial settings.

The Congress brought together all the delegates from each country. A wonderfully ecclesial organization gave hospitality to all, who were hosted by the families of the parishes of Santa Cruz.

Priests, religious and a multitude of lay people, a large number of Bishops from America and of other countries participated in the Bolivian Episcopal Conference. 3177 and 3830 Cruceña missionary families were registered for the congress and received pilgrims and volunteers in their homes.

These were the central themes of the conference:

- \* The exciting joy of the Gospel - Bishop Guido Charbonneau (Honduras)

- \* Announcing the Gospel to today’s world - Bishop Santiago Silva (Chile),

- \* Disciples who give witness to communion and reconciliation - Fr. Sergio Montes, S.J. (Bolivia)

- \* The Church’s prophetic mission today - Bishop Luis A. Castro (Colombia)

- \* Mission Ad Gentes in America and from America - Mons. Vittorino Girardi (Costa Rica).

These are the conclusions and the abbreviated list of proposals for working in groups

Educating With Joy - Going out in the Outskirts

- Bible and Gospel - Missionary Communities -

Communion of Assets - Promoting Reconciliation

- Prophetic Consciousness - Evangelization of

the Family - Ministries of the Laity - Popular

Religiosity.

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, was present at the inauguration of the Congress, during the celebration of the Eucharist.

“America is on a mission”: this was the Prefect’s statement in an interview granted to the newspaper *Osservatore Romano*, just when he returned from the V American Missionary Congress, in which he participated as a special envoy of Pope Francis. “*We proposed a congress*”, the Cardinal explained, “*that from the beginning was in line*

*with the vision of the Pontiff,*” according

to a clear teaching by Pope Francis from the beginning of his pontificate: “*if it is not missionary, if not evangelizes, the Church is not herself* “. From this, we asked ourselves what aspects the Church must face.

The great crisis of the family was highlighted above all, a central issue not only from the ecclesial point of view but also social and civil. Violence and contempt for life show how the





violation of human dignity hurts both the heart of the Church and that of society. As a consequence, the question of the violation of human rights has been reported and this has been linked to the aspect of economic dominance over the person”.

Mons. Sergio Gualberti Archbishop of the city of Santa Cruz in Bolivia and president of the Congress presided over the closing Mass with two cardinals, including the new Bolivian Cardinal Toribio Ticona, 90 bishops, over 400 priests and thousands of missionaries.

The American Missionary Congress (VCAM) ended on Saturday 14, in front of the monument of Christ the Redeemer, in the city of Santa Cruz, with a call to seek freedom and a “participatory and real democracy” in America, where there are some countries that they still keep the population in a situation of “oppression and death”.

During the five days of the VCAM, over three thousand participants, coming from 25 countries of America, reflected on the importance of mission and evangelization in the suburbs. Therefore, Archbishop Sergio Gualberti said in his homily “where there is suffering and pain, because life is neglected, the dignity and rights of the persons are trampled, those who are different in thinking are taken away, their freedom is removed, violence is used to the point of taking away life”.

“He rejected” the irrational and indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources that have caused fatal injuries to our sister mother earth and whose first victims are our indigenous brothers and sisters depriving them of their vital habitat “.

Finally, the bishop asked the missionaries to practice “the values of the Gospel” and “of our indigenous cultures” in an environment of “reconciliation and forgiveness to walk the paths of sincere conversion in our Church”.

At the end of the Eucharist, Bolivia handed over to the CAM headquarters in Puerto Rico, a triptych which was offered by Monsignor Sergio Gualberti, archbishop of Santa Cruz and president of V CAM Bolivia to the delegation of Puerto Rico, which will be the headquarters of VI CAM. The triptych emphasizes the Cross of Evangelization, whose figure has accompanied this path; and within it, it has elements that highlight the identity of the American continent.

Now that the V American Missionary Congress has ended, what next?

First of all, it is necessary to underline that one of the central challenges of the American Missionary Congress was to deepen what Aparecida called the “Missionary Conversion of the Church”. This is the central point that should be grasped so as not to let the parish communities lose the dynamism acquired in the process of preparation for the Missionary Congress, or in other words, so as not to allow the fire of the missionary spirit to go out.

It needs to put into practice the options of the pastoral plan of the archdiocese and the formation of parish and vicar missionary groups. “America on a mission, the Gospel is joy”.

*Sor Carmen Gloria Callizaya Martínez FMSC*



### Missionary Conference in Assisi

**Y**outh for the Gospel, “Renewing all in the word of Jesus” is the theme of the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the National Days of Formation and Missionary Spirituality in preparation for the next Synod of Bishops for Young People.

We junior sisters with our formator Sr Josie Enaje, with Sr Ermellina Callegari and Sr Elena Bilibio, had the joy and the grace to participate in this event. We were 230 representatives from the various missions of the different Italian dioceses. The conference was organized by the CEI (Italian Episcopal Conference) Office for Missionary Cooperation between the Churches and was held at the Domus Pacis in Assisi from 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

These four days journey was focused on four words: vocation, future, prophecy and new exodus; four steps but a single theme, very indispensable that keeps them united, that is on ‘the Word of God. Thanks to the contribution of the various speakers, who presented the topics with depth, ability and competence and served to break down walls and create bridges, connections among young people and adults, lay people and priests, between men and women, between everyone and each one. This creates the future, witness / prophecy and therefore invites us to

come out of ourselves and to go towards others. The day began with Lauds and the Eucharistic Celebration, followed by the video stories of the Missionary Convention of the youth. The Word of God has also been “explained” in the *Lectio divina*, led by Luca Moscatelli, a biblicist, who underlined how the exodus is an experience to be lived daily in the encounter with the Lord: an exodus from oneself, a dynamic not to betray. The days have also been enriched by the meaningful discussions held after the presentation of the reports of various experts in the pastoral ministry of the youth.

Participating in this conference, we had the opportunity to learn about the reality of today’s youth. This experience lived together gave us the interest to know who the youth are in today’s world, how they urge us to listen to their cry, a cry that asks for our time and space to be heard. It also encouraged us to communicate to them the joy of the love of the Gospel “so that they have life and have in abundance” (Jn 10: 10).

The speakers presented us with the reality of the world of youth today, the comparison between the young people with adults, that opened us to the knowledge of the needs of their situation, their dreams, their desires and even their problems.

The speakers made us understand that the care of life is realized in fraternity because our God





is a God who walks with us and lives in relationships. This is the good news that must always amaze us, as Fr Rossano Sala, Secretary of the Synod said, "... let us find out the possibilities of an exit, to awaken fraternity by listening to the Word, meditating it and making it a multifaceted Church experience, rich in different charisms".

It is important that the young people find the deep meaning of the going-out experience in fraternity asking the question why? In all these, we must also sadly pay attention to the invisible frontiers (language, always-ready answers, not asking questions, not listening); to the wounds experienced and not reworked; to gratuitousness and gift, to mutual judgment, by drawing hasty conclusions on the other, which indeed is a risk wounding us.

This conference motivates us and prompts us to listen to the cry of the young people. We are made aware of some of the stress, which they undergo, and how they expect us to accompany them to return to their own environments of ecclesial and personal life. We are left with the task to listen to the cry of the young, because they are tired of the routines. "There is no need of many words, what counts - they tell us - is the fullness of life"; the idea of walking together, that is, of building fraternity, because "fraternity is even today's prophecy". It is the challenge of the Church's near future: walking together is recognizing each other, seeing young people



as our mirror, the being willing as adults to get involved. We have welcomed the ideas to open doors, so that everyone can start processes in their own ecclesial environments but above all on a personal level.

"These days - said Fr Michele Autuoro, director of Missio, -" should not be a meeting of youth ministry on how to approach young people. Rather, instead, we have opened perspectives and processes to be followed by a sign of trust and hope typical of the youth world".

Certainly, this meeting has deeply inspired us to make a continuous conversion, which means an availability to change, possibility to learn; nourishing gratitude by becoming a community that knows how to change resentment and lamentations in the beauty of gratitude.

First of all, we try to take small steps to "build bridges" by living in our community concretely, the richness we have received in these days of meeting, with the awareness that formation does not end with the conclusion of the Convention but only the beginning of a daily task on each one.



*The junior sisters in Centocelle*

## **FRANCISCAN FESTIVAL IN BOLOGNA**

**“Y**ou are beauty” is the exclamation of a lover! St. Francis exclaimed twice in his splendid prayer called ‘Praises to the Most High’ (FF 261). The same exclamation guided us in this 10<sup>th</sup> version of ‘the Franciscan Festival 2018’, which took place on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.



A ‘festival-day celebration’ was our way of giving thanks- to look at “beautiful things”, to look at Jesus’ face, ‘incarnated Beauty’- to mirror ourselves in Him because His light is reflected on our face and we, with new eyes, can see in all creatures a ray of Divine Beauty.

Seeing beautiful things gives joy. Making beautiful experiences makes you happy. Meeting beautiful people fills life. Pope Francis invites us to rediscover the beauty of the Gospel and of the encounter. Beautiful things are not enough; it needs an eye capable of seeing them, heart for contemplating them. It is essential to live and witness the beauty of communion in a world often marked by disharmony and fragmentation.

Witnessing and speaking about beauty, we tried not to limit ourselves to “beautiful techniques”, but we wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on our relationship with the Absolute, to rediscover a daily beauty at hand. We therefore asked ourselves about the role of beauty in our daily experience, in defining our identity, in building relationships among ourselves and with our brothers and sisters in everyday reality.

Fra Giampaolo Cavalli - President of the Franciscan Festival (nephew of Sr. Carmelina) thus defined the commitment of this Festival:

*“The Franciscan Festival is a great exercise of dialogue to build up a shared project in which many different sensitivities coexist. To organize such an event requires a huge effort, but it is an excellent planning and training for a future. The Festival brings together many people from the Franciscan world: laity, youth, sisters, and friars, cultural and social workers who are inspired by our values”.*

We FMSC this year were actively present at the festival on the “Encounter” dedicated to the missions. We gathered from the Province of “Santa Maria degli Angeli”: Sr. Francesca, Sr. Elodie and Sr. Mara, from the Province of Mary Immaculate: Sr. Cristina Botton, Sr. Josie Enaje, Sr. Silvana Botton, Sr. Aileen, Sr. Marta Lucatelli and postulant Rina; from Assisi: Sr Petrona.





Those who passed through our stands could be closely linked to the beauty of a place of mission. We have presented our missions of Albania, the Central African Republic and the Philippines, and there were sisters among us coming from those regions.

Africa, Philippines, Albania: realities that speak for themselves of hardships and hopes, of how they aspire to the development of their rich, authentic and specific abilities.

Yes, because every people is endowed with values that can be shared for the good of the whole world.

At the end of the activity, people were invited to look at themselves in a large mirror and leave written on it, what it was their beauty. It was surprising to see many children, young people, adults, old people, let themselves be guided in this “journey” and took seriously the challenge of looking in the mirror and “finding” the beauty.

A unique experience for us, an opportunity to express the beauty of our life as sisters who share the joy of consecration to God.

“Encounter” was our “stall”, and meeting was our main commitment, meeting people everywhere, with a desire to know and speak, to listen and be interrogated, to be amazed and be amazed with their stories, their doubts, their reflections.

Each of us has made available our skills and our way of being, to be proclaimers in the square.

This has united us particularly and made us go home happy to have thrown a beautiful seed, with the hope that it will bring good fruit in its time.



## **In Rieti... nother Franciscan Festival**

**A**nother Festival was organized in Rieti from October 12 to 14. Sisters of the Roman Province, Sr. Cristiana Basso the Provincial Superior, Sr. Cristina Bottan, provincial councilor, Sr. Marisa Orquin, Sr. Annabel Alera, Sr. Marta Lucatelli and the Postulant Rina took part in it.

*Let us listen to their testimony:*

Arriving in S. Francesco square, the heart of the event, we were welcomed by a giant picture showing the saint with open arms, looking at the Rieti Valley as if to embrace everyone with the words written on the picture, “My brothers and sisters, I want to send you all to Paradise”. The festival took place in different places, in the square among the people, in the streets, in the churches of the city, in the stands set up by the members of the three Franciscan families.

We have also been given a comfortable place where we have had the opportunity to receive many people, from the elderly to children and many Franciscan Friars. To all we have made known our Congregation, our charism and the strong evangelizing mission. Thanks to the presence of so many missionaries sent to 23 countries of the world. The purpose of the Festival is to generate encounter, exchange and dialogue, above all with those who are far from the Gospel message. There were three intense days of cultural, spiritual and artistic initiatives. It helped the people to foster dialogue and encounter, as perfect means of Franciscan values



and Franciscan witness.

The presence of the ‘Crucifix of S. Damiano in pilgrimage’ in the holy valley has symbolically marked the entire manifestation.

On the evening of the first day, Friday October 12<sup>th</sup>, there was a procession starting from Fonte Colombo accompanied by Bishop Domenico Pompili. The bishop along with many friars and the people, all with lighted candles, in perfect prayerful silence, moved forward in procession through the dark ways up to Rieti. The Crucifix of St. Damiano arrived in the city and was enthroned in the church of San Francesco, the true center of the event.

At the end of the Festival, the Crucifix continued its pilgrimage towards the sanctuaries of Greccio, of S. Maria della Foresta, and of other Franciscan places until reaching the earthquake zones in Amatrice, Accumoli and Cittareale.

Our school, “Maria Immacolata” in Rome also participated in the event with groups of families and especially with the students of the Lyceum who offered their young musical talent to the “San Francesco and Simone Weil” Monologue project, playing, singing and reciting a Hebrew lullaby.

We thank the Lord for having had the grace to spread the Gospel message in the proper Franciscan style, in a valley immersed in the spirituality of St. Francis and full of significant signs of his presence.





## XV Chapter of the Province “St. Elizabeth” in Cyprus

The XV Chapter of ‘St. Elizabeth’ Province began in the provincial house in Cyprus on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 after two days of retreat guided by Fr. Daris Schiopetto ofm. He focused the reflections on “Charismatic Identity and Prophecy”, on “Discernment” and on the “mission”.

The chapter was presided over by the Superior General, Sr. Paola Dotto and with the presence of the Councilors Sr Augusta Visentin, Sr. Rose Thomas Palamthattel, Sr. Gregoria Suarez.

The delegates gathered in a corridor outside the chapter room and from there in procession, they entered singing the “Vieni Creator”. The Superior General Sr. Paola carried the Word of God and other two Sisters, two big lamps, one to be placed next to the Word and the other near to the image of Our Lady. All the other chapter delegates carried a small lamp, which they then placed on a tree beautifully decorated and kept in the corner of the hall. We took our seats and after the introductory prayer, Sr Paola read her message of opening of the Chapter in which she recalled the theme and the responsibility assumed towards all the sisters of the Province.

Here are some significant sentences of her message:

*“The theme you have chosen is a challenge for this XV Provincial Chapter: “Sisters and minors in Mission, to witness the love of Christ Crucified” Constitutions remind us. “Every sister, by virtue of her profession in this Congregation, is missionary wherever she may be” (Const. 59) [...] Being a witness to the love of Christ Crucified is a serious commitment! It takes unconditional love in living the sufferings, the labours, the difficulties and, sometimes, the darkness of fraternal relationships, in silence, in the redemptive offering ... knowing that, as St. Paul says, “Everything contributes to the good of those who love God”.*

*[...] Let us make room for the Spirit. Let His life and His Word pass and evangelize our thoughts and our hearts. Then, humbly sharing your insights, you might hear yourself repeating like the apostles: “It is not you to speak, but the Spirit of the Father speaks in you!” It is a true and a wonderful exciting experience! Let us have faith!*



*With confidence and great appreciation, I declare open the XV Chapter of the Oriental Province “St. Elizabeth”. Good listening and discernment to all!”*

During the days of the Chapter all the sisters gave their active and responsible participation in a climate of listening, dialogue, discernment and sharing.

On August 4<sup>th</sup> a day was dedicated to the election of the new provincial Council. At 9.30, together with the sisters of the community, all met before the Blessed Sacrament for an hour of adoration, in preparation for the important task of the chapter members.

With joy then Sr Paola announced the election of the New Council of the Province “St. Elizabeth”:

Sster Angelica Hadjihann	Provincial Superior
Sister Beatrice Skorti	1 <sup>st</sup> Councilor and Vicar
Sister Elsapaola Pudusery	2 <sup>nd</sup> Councilor
Sister Martina Volpato	3 <sup>rd</sup> Councilor
Sister Elka Staneva	4 <sup>th</sup> Councilor



Let us continue to pray that the Spirit of the Lord will enlighten their steps and accompany their mission in the Church at the service of the Province and of the entire Congregation.

On 6<sup>th</sup> August, the Feast of the Transfiguration, the Superior General closed the Chapter by entrusting the future journey of the whole Province to the Lord and to St. Elizabeth.

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### A “grateful” celebration before the Chapter

Cyprus is the second apostolic mission desired and accompanied by our Founder, Father Gregory.

Before the beginning of the Chapter the sisters of the Province lived a very beautiful and meaningful moment. On 28<sup>th</sup> of July, in fact, they organized a solemn celebration to thank the Lord for the Decree of Venerability of the Founder Fr. Gregory and the recognition of his heroic virtues by the Church.

For the occasion, to preside over the Eucharistic celebration were invited the Apostolic Nuncio of Israel and Cyprus, Mons. Leopoldo Girelli, and the Patriarchal Vicar, Fr. Jerzy Kraj, who read the

Decree of Venerability to those present. Friars Minor and Maronite priests, Sisters of other Congregations residing in Limassol, as well as numerous sisters from our communities of the Province were present for this exceptional event. Mons. Leopoldo Girelli in his homily outlined the figure of Fr Gregory through three dimensions of the person of Christ, the priestly, prophetic and royal ministry.

Fr. Gregory, in carrying out his ministry as a teacher of theology, but also as a formator within the Franciscan Order, is a prophet who does not speak of himself, but recognizing that the truth comes from God, teaches with humility and



As Minister Provincial of of the OFM Venetian province since 1857, Fr Gregory carries out the ministry of government with prudence and amiability, with dedication, with the true authority that is able to read reality and to discern.

Since the beginning of his ministry as Founder of the Institute, he exercised the priestly ministry that Jesus expresses in his life, above all in his passion and death.

This is the key to the life of Father Gregory in those years, from 1863, the difficult years, of suffering that he endured with patience, living in a spirit of trust and abandonment, of detachment in silence.

In the life of Father Gregory, the three main tasks of the Pastors in the Church are clearly highlighted: teaching, guiding and sanctifying (as well as being sanctified).

The result of this work - underlined the Nuncio - is you, your Congregation that is born in the Franciscan spirit and in a missionary direction.

The Gospel proclaimed in this celebration (Mt 11: 25-30), - he added - brings us back to the Franciscan spirit, speaks to us and teaches poverty, the poverty of the little ones ...

Fr. Gregory formed a Congregation placing first the charity as a way of life, transmitting its sense with his own example. In the moments of great difficulty, he proposed to our first sisters to go home, but they answered: we do not want to leave this paradise.

This means that they understood the meaning of living charity, as a style and dimension of life.

The Nuncio therefore urged us to put God at the center of life. He recalled the ways to read the signs. The Magi asked the



learned men of Jerusalem, who knew the Scriptures, where their king was to be born, but they did not let themselves to get involved. The Magi, instead, started immediately on their way to Bethlehem. Being Franciscan means having this existential humility that puts us in the condition of affirming that God is my center. *"I remind you - he exhorted - that missionary is the paradigm of Christian life; that is to say, one cannot be a Christian without being missionary, since the Gospel, faith, is a*

*gift to be shared, not to be kept for ourselves. Your lifestyle must have a center and a face; the center is Jesus Christ, His Heart, and from that source you draw the message that you must bring to others; the face is the faith that leads us to the other to bring light.* Mons Leopoldo Girelli concluded: *here is the figure of Father Gregory, he is a living figure; you must learn how to be docile, to be available, like him, as Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.*



## **XIV Chapter of “St. Francis” Province -USA**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 2018, the XIV Chapter of “St. Francis” Province began in the Sacred Heart Hall of the Provincial House “Mount St. Francis”, Peekskill. The Superior general Sr Paola Dotto was present with the councillors: Sr Tiziana Tonini, Sr. Rose Thomas and Sr Gregoria Suarez.

The logo clearly showed the chosen theme: *“Women of mission...doing whatever He tells us and showing His infinite mercy”*.

At 11 o'clock the Holy Mass was celebrated for the opening of the Chapter, presided by Father Robert Abbatiello ofmcap. A very solemn Celebration with the songs properly chosen and accompanied by the sound of the organ.

At the initial procession there were also the Superior General Sr. Paola Dotto and the Provincial Superior Sr. Laura Morgan.



The offertory procession was very touching when two sisters approached the altar with their “walkers” on which they had placed their offerings.

The readings had been chosen specifically with the Gospel of the Beatitudes following the exhortation of Pope Francis “Gaudete et exsultate”.

After communion all the Chapter sisters, with a prayer prepared and divided according to the number of delegated sisters, invoked the various gifts of the Holy Spirit. At the end they received a special blessing from the celebrant.



In the Chapter Hall, the Superior General, Sister Paola Dotto, following the theme of the Chapter, recalled, with real admiration, the three years lived out as a “sacred history”, a story lived with the strength of love placed in the Heart and in the hands of God, with the sensitivity and trust of being women ... and women consecrated to mission.

In her message, she highlighted the theme, “being women on a mission”,

knowing how to grasp the little things and giving great value to everything, with the silent confidence of those who wait, who offer the little they have and know how to transform it in a total offering to the Father.



Furthermore, she exhorted the Chapter sisters to continue waiting, as they courageously demonstrated in these years, following the example of Father Gregory, who never stopped, but in suffering he continued to give life, respecting the times and without asking “why in this way and not otherwise “. She told: *“This chapter is an important opportunity!”*

Entrusting the delegates to the light of the Holy Spirit, to the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, St. Francis, to our Founder, the Venerable Father Gregory and in the certainty of the affectionate closeness of our sisters who have left us for Heaven, and with the trust placed in each sisters of the Chapter, Sister Paola declared open the XIV Chapter of the Province “St. Francis “.



On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, the new Council of the Province of St Francis was elected

Sister Laura Morgan	Provincial Superior
Sister Anna Maria Not	1 <sup>st</sup> Councilor and Provincial Vicar
Sister Gloria Aranguiz	2 <sup>nd</sup> Provincial Councilor
Sister Anne James Guerin	3 <sup>rd</sup> Provincial Councilor
Sister Angelene Matero	4 <sup>th</sup> Provincial Councilor



We entrust to the Lord, with total abandonment to His providential care, the situation of this Province that is experiencing “poverty” under many points of view: numerical, economic, of physical strengths, etc. The sisters, however, have shown, despite everything, so much positivity and hope entrusting all to the Lord who “tries but does not abandon”.

## **Chapter VIII of the Vice Province “Holy Martyrs of Uganda”**

**T**he official inauguration of the VIII chapter of the Vice Province “Holy Martyrs of Uganda” began on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 with a solemn prayer in the chapel of the vice-provincial house in Nkoabang – Cameroun. The chapter delegates in a procession, singing, moved to the chapter hall.

Three sisters of three different nationalities carried, the Cross, the Easter candle and the Bible.

The chapter was presided over by Sr. Paola Dotto, Superior general with the presence of the councilors Sr Rose Thomas Palamthattel and Sr. Gregoria Suarez. In her opening speech, Sr. Paola expressed her joy in having been able to visit the communities, with the two councilors. She reminded everyone that the chapter is a special time for all, not just an evaluation on our consecrated life in three years just concluded. It is,

above all, a moment to continue the search for the will of God with enthusiasm and creative spirit, and implement it in our daily life. It is a renewal of the charismatic journey of our religious family, with courage, passion and gratuitousness.

The Provincial Chapter had as its theme: *FMSC renew the evangelical enthusiasm and live boldly wherever the Spirit leads us*. She then urged us to live this time with humility and simplicity, in full trust that the Lord continues to guide this portion of our family, in the beautiful African land through the mutual fraternal trust among



The days have passed by living intensely the various moments of the chapter.

The report of the Vice-provincial superior, of the treasurer, the study of the instrument of work etc, evidenced a sharing of the worries, hopes for future projects.

To all delegated sisters were offered the opportunity to express themselves, to clarify, to share, bearing in mind that, being a very young organism, the chapter becomes a highly formative experience.



The Superior General announced the new council of the Vice province, as composed

Vice Provincial Superior	Sister Beatrice Bifuma
1 <sup>st</sup> Councilor and Vicar	Sister Beltha Ngwashi
2 <sup>nd</sup> Councilor	Sister Teresa Da Cecco
3 <sup>rd</sup> Councilor	Sister Lilian Fru
4 <sup>th</sup> Councilor	Sister Victorine Mbora



In her closing speech, the superior general wished with her whole heart, to continue the journey, focusing on being free and joyful in Christ, a freedom and a joy that comes from hearing and answering His ever-new call every day with enthusiasm, and with creativity of Love. *“Always be brave!”* she said. *“We trust you! Let us start all over again every day giving value and meaning to everything ... By renewing the evangelical enthusiasm and living boldly everywhere the Spirit sends us”.*

Then entrusting the entire Vice-Province to Mary our Mother, to the Holy Martyrs of Uganda, to our venerable Father Gregory, to our sisters who look at us from heaven and accompany us with care and concern, the Superior General, declared the closing of the Chapter of the Vice Province “Ss. Martyrs of Uganda “.



## **V Chapter of the Province “Holy Family”**

**O**n October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the “Holy Family” Province in India began its V Provincial Chapter with the theme: *FMSC called to make a difference in the world*.

The Superior General Sr. Paola Dotto and the Councilors Sr. Tiziana and Sr. Rose Thomas arrived on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October in India for this important event.

On the morning of October 16<sup>th</sup> all the sisters delegated to the Chapter and some sisters of the community gathered in the parish church, adjacent to the convent, for the solemn Eucharistic celebration of opening, presided by Father Joji Babu, procurator and chancellor of the Diocese and concelebrated by the parish priest Fr Swaminadha

The initial procession, typical of Indian culture, has already given so much solemnity: the sisters of the Provincial and General Council and the priests were accompanied in their procession of entry by six girls of our school in Pamarru, who wore a beautiful pink Indian dress; with elegance, delicacy and smiles they danced to the altar on the notes of a song that expressed praise, gratitude and joy.



Father Joji in his homily explained in depth the significance of the theme chosen for the Chapter and the challenges that it requires to consecrated persons today. He exhorted us to be totally open to the action of the Holy Spirit and to remain “awake” according to the specific theme of the day. In fact, each day will have a “sub-theme” that will accompany every activity and reflection.

Starting the Chapter by staying awake, “awakening”, letting the Spirit guide us. One is “awake” only if one is able to see Jesus Christ, His ways, His provocations.

You are awake if you can be touched by the many people in today’s society, those who suffer and need more love, attention.



We are awake if we are able to look within ourselves, within the Church, within the Congregation and the Province to begin a journey of purification and conversion, placing Christ at the center of our mission.

In the chapel of the community, the delegates gathered for the prayer of the beginning of the Chapter. Here, after being called by the Superior General by name, they took a lamp and then in procession all of them started towards the Chapter Room, where the Superior General Sr. Paola Dotto officially declared the opening of the V Chapter of the Holy Family Province.



In her initial speech, among the many solicitations and reflections, she exhorted us to follow the chosen theme and to reflect together on what difference we want to bring or provoke in the world to keep alive the missionary enthusiasm. She asked the question about how to make a difference, different from Who, different from what and when ... to be today, that missionary prophetic presence we are specifically requested to. The Chapter Days have engaged the delegated sisters who have worked with serenity and responsibility in a climate of listening, sharing, a desire for good.



On October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 they elected the New Council of the Holy Family Province.

Sr. Mini Joseph Varikkakuzhiyil	Provincial Superior
Sr. Lilly Attapattu	1 <sup>st</sup> Councilor and Vicar
Sr. Suni ChackoMannakulathil	2 <sup>nd</sup> Councilor
Sr. Molly George Kanjirathinkal	3 <sup>rd</sup> Councilor
Sr. Nirmala Buradagunta	4 <sup>th</sup> Councilor

The Chapter assembly closed, as Sr. Paola pointed out, “on a significant day for the Church because the 92<sup>nd</sup> World Mission Day is celebrated with the theme” *Together with the young, we bring the Gospel to everyone*”, a day that takes place in occasion of the ‘Youth Synod’ that is being held in Rome this month. It is therefore a particularly ‘charismatic’ day for us too FMSC “.



The words of Sr Paola, in the closing speech were for all the sisters an encouragement, a wish and a challenge. “*You have made and projected a ‘good path’ for the near future! Courage sisters! Let us live with generosity this time which is always of grace and gratitude ...*

*We trust you, your generosity and availability, your passion for the Gospel, loved, lived and passed on to everyone, especially to the poorest.*

*May the Lord bless your steps and always give you the light and the power of his Spirit to make you always new in sharing His Good News.”*

## MISSIONS THAT CONTINUE TO GROW

### *A visit to the communities of the Vice Province*

**S**r. Paola Dotto, our superior general and the councilors, Sr. Rose Thomas and Sr. Gregoria Suarez before the Chapter made their visit to the missions of the vice Province. For Sr. Paola since she had paid many visits before, it was a joy to see the growth of the mission in different aspects. The presence and services of the sisters really brought visible changes in all the missions. For Sr. Gregoria, it was an exciting joy to see the missions once she was part of at the beginning of her missionary life and for Sr. Rose everything was a new experience in this reality.



The school at Nikobang is grown with many numbers of students and many activities, giving more opportunities to the children in and around. Right on the next day of our arrival there was a celebration in the school, marking the conclusion of the academic year. Children of different levels exhibited their talents, which made everyone happy.



The hospital at Nkoabang and the newly opened maternity section are functioning very well. Many patients come from near and far as the hospital is very much known for its medical treatment and medical care.

We visited the communities nearby in the following days: Nkizok, where our presence in Africa has been started and Elat Minkon. Both communities are inserted in very poor and needed places.

We spent some time with the community members and shared their experiences. We had also the joy of visiting the pineapple

plantation that our sisters are cultivating together with people who are helping them and we were able to taste the delicious pineapple fruits.



The Journey to Congo was long and tiring but we enjoyed. When we reached the mission at Kinshasa, we saw the real picture of human misery when there is an unconcerned government.

We stayed two days in Kinshasa spending the time with the sisters and the candidates, encouraging them in their difficulties in living with minimum facilities.

The sisters are living in a slum area surrounded by poor people. We are constructing a new building for the community and for the postulants. We hope that, as soon as possible, they can start their initial formation in a fitted place for their discernment and formative journey.

The injustice of the government is very evident when we see the well-developed Kinshasa town on one side and the life of these poor with their struggle to earn their daily bread on the other.

Our mission in Sembe is really a blessing to the people who live in the villages in the forest. The hospital always has many patients mostly of poor, pigmy people who live in the very distant villages. The possibility to accommodate many patients gives really the opportunity to save life; if we cannot accommodate these poor people, they will go uncared and will die.

The sisters also provide a place for the family members who assist the patients, since they come from very far away villages. We also made a visit to the schools in the villages and spent some time



with the children and the teachers. After one-day stay there, we returned to the Vice-Provincialate house in Yaoundé Cameroun.

Another visit we made was to Kribi a community where we have a school with many students. When we were about to go Sr. Carla Bettio, one of the pioneer members of the Vice province expressed her desire to join us.

We had to make four hours journey by roads. Considering her health, we had a little hesitation to take her. However, admiring her desire to see the mission she started and gave life to grow, we took her along with us.

She was extremely happy and with a beaming face she enjoyed the whole trip like a little girl.

As her desire, we together with the whole community, went to the sea and spent some time on the beach.

We really cherish this time together, especially listening to the inspiring missionary experiences of Sr. Carla as precious moments of fraternal life. Indeed, we had a wonderful time with the sisters and safely, happily reached back in the Provincial house.

We could not visit the community in Bamenda because of the war and group of rebels that continue to kill innocent people. The situation was so much dangerous. We had the opportunity to see the sisters of the community during the Chapter.



The moments  
lived together  
in all the missions  
we visited,  
the sharing,  
the words of  
appreciation and  
encouragement,  
have given joy  
to all.





**FOREVER FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART**

**Sister Mary Claire Bomki of the Eucharist**  
**Sister Mary Blessing Lukong Kinyuy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.**

**T**he 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2018, feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has become an unforgettable date for us, not only for the Mystery of our faith that the Church celebrates on this day but also for the fact that on this day, before the Church, we celebrated a New and Everlasting covenant with God the Almighty, Creator and author of all vocations. Indeed we were glad on this faithful morning, to say our definite yes to God, giving our lives in a joyful sacrifice for ever, during the Eucharistic celebration presided at by Mgr Joseph Atanga, Arch Bishop of Bertoua.

During his homely, the Bishop encouraged us in our vocation as he explained the significance of the ceremony.

He insisted on the importance of mutual love and respect especially in a world in which values are not considered anymore. Archbishop Joseph Atanga reminded us that final profession was just the beginning of a long journey of discipleship (Sequela Christi) which must be nourished by constant prayer, attachment to the master Jesus, our spouse and complete detachment from worldly attractions.

He urged us to count on the intercession of the Virgin Mary, our mother and model.



We were filled with joy, innermost peace and liberty as we knelt to pronounce our definitive yes to God, in the Hands of Sr Beatrice Bifouma, Vice Provincial Superior and delegate of our General Superior, Sr Paola Dotto. Our Vice Provincial Superior, on behalf our General Superior and the entire Congregation, welcomed us definitively into our religious Family of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart (FMSC).

Present at this event were many members of the Franciscan Family, our sisters from all the communities in Cameroon and Congo, Priests and religious from other Congregations, God's people from Yaoundé and our biological families.



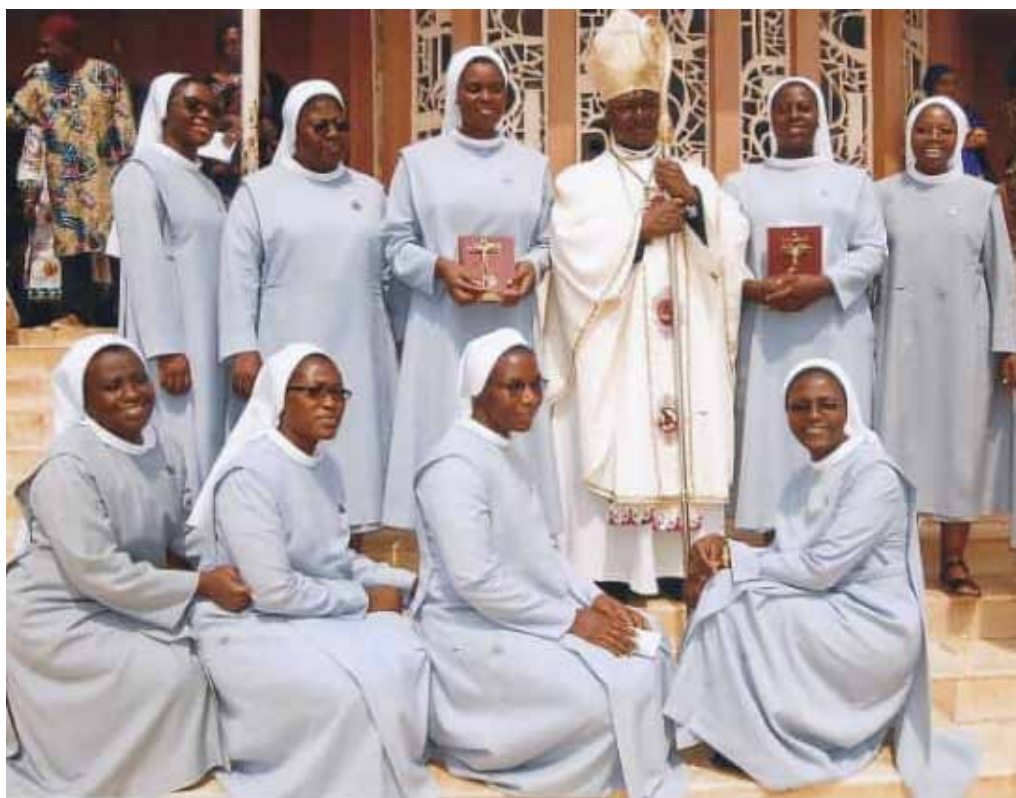
From the depths of our hearts, we thank the Almighty God, for His unconditional love and faithfulness to us. Special thanks to our General Superior, Sr Paola Dotto and her Council, our Vice Provincial Superior and her Council, for admitting us to final profession and welcoming us definitively into this Congregation, we thank all our sisters especially all our formators from

postulancy to the juniorate, for all they did for us.

Our heartfelt gratitude to our parents and our family members for, despite the difficulty to travel from our regions because of the present crises, their strong love for us gave them the courage to take the risk to be here today, to witness the celebration of our definitive covenant with God.

We thank all those who contributed from far and near for the beauty of this day.

May God be honoured now and for ever!





## **A JOYFUL YES TO THE LORD**

### **First Religious profession of four Novices in India**

**Sr. M. Rina Mossang of Divine Mercy**

**Sr. M. Sowjanya Abbadasari of Crucified Jesus**

**Sr. M. Uma Rani Pandula of the Eucharistic Jesus**

**Sr. M. Geeta Takiri of Crucified Jesus**

August 2<sup>nd</sup> was a blissful and memorable day for our Congregation as four of our novices, Rina Mossang, Sowjanya Abbadasari, Uma Rani Pandula and Geetha Tairi made their first commitment to the Lord.

Many priests, religious and relatives were present and indeed was an added joy to all. Our young novices joyfully made their promise to offer their whole life to the Lord in the presence of our Provincial superior sr. Gracy Thuruthippallil



The solemn Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Rev. Fr. Muvvala Prasad, the Vicar General of the diocese of Vijayawada. In his homily, he appreciated and congratulated for their courageous step in offering of themselves to the unconditional love of Jesus, when the world around, where people do not easily understand the power of love they are possessed by. He exhorted the sisters to become Jesus to all by following the Evangelical Counsels faithfully and pointed out that the vows are empowering the religious life.

The newly professed sisters expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Fr. Muvvala Prasad, to all the priests, sisters, well-wishers.

They thanked their dear parents and dear ones who joyfully brought them up and offered to God.

They also thanked our Superior general and councilors, Provincial superior and councilors, the formators of various stages and all the sisters who helped them in one or other way to realize the divine call in their lives. Finally, they concluded saying, *“Today’s beautiful moments are tomorrow’s cherished memories.”*



## **First Religious Profession of Sr Norfe**

*I fully rejoice in the Lord,  
my soul rejoices in my God. (Is: 61,10)*

**T**o the Most High God all honor, praise and gratitude for his great goodness and his infinite grace. Today, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018, He supported me with the strength of His love and I said with great enthusiasm before the assembly “Yes, here I am, I come, my God and my all”.

My heart rejoices with endless joy, for this day and this much desired moment. In my littleness and in my poverty, God has looked at me and has chosen me as His beloved daughter . From the East He took me to the Middle East and there He has called me to witness His infinite love, following His only Son Jesus Christ Crucified, obedient, poor and chaste.



Trully an unforgettable day of my life, September 16, 2018.

A life given out of love. A love that during the Eucharistic celebration, I felt very strong in me. Many people, sisters, friends, different ecclesial groups were present both from the parish of Limassol as well as from those of Nicosia and Larnaca.

Everybody came to pray with me and for me and to accompany me in this very important moment of my consecration.



Fr. Jerzy Kraj, ofm, Patriarchal Vicar who presided over the celebration, concelebrated by other priests, during his homily spoke about the life of St. Francis being the day after, September 17, the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi.

Before concluding, he turned to me, with a very strong message ... a good start for my new life as a Franciscan Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart: “Sister Norfe ... the Church is waiting for you to beautify her with your holiness of life, with a Franciscan simplicity, as a beautiful expression.

*Do not be afraid!*



*As the Lord said to his disciples, do not be afraid to imitate the Master... do not be afraid to imitate St. Francis, you are his daughter... Do not be afraid to be a Franciscan in name and in deed”.*

Religious life is beautiful, but I understand that it is not easy to live it. Everything, however, is possible with love and with Christ at the center of my life.

Together with my sisters, I can become a true and authentic Franciscan Sister!

I want to thank heartily, in a special way, our Reverend Mother General, Sr. Paola Dotto and her Council. I truly felt their closeness in prayer. Thanks to my dear Provincial Superior, Sr Angelica Hadjihanni and her council who admitted me to our FMSC Family. I thank all the Sisters of our Congregation for their prayers, wishes, words of encouragement, for their example and their witness of life.

My gratitude goes to all the people who have been instruments of my vocation and to all those who guided me in my formation. I am particularly grateful to the Province of “Mary Immaculate” who welcomed me generously in the Novitiate house and gave me Sr. Lilibeth Labian as a formator. She truly accompanied me with all her love up to the altar, until the moment she presented me to the Lord.



I thank all the sisters of the Province, especially the community of the provincial house for their work and service made with so much love and joy to make this day beautiful and unforgettable.

Finally, I thank my family who, even from a distance, made me feel their presence and their closeness not only in prayer but with the blessing of my parents, happy with my decision to give my life for love of God.

Let us thank the Lord together for the gift of vocation in our religious Family and in the Church.

To you, Lord, glory and every blessing!

*Sr Norfe Roa of Jesus Crucified*

## 25 YEARS OF BLESSINGS IN MAIGARÒ

**O**n 6<sup>th</sup> of November, 2018 the community 'Father Gregory Fioravanti' of Maigarò celebrated, in the Franciscan simplicity of everyday life, the anniversary of its opening. The Eucharistic Celebration at 6 am was presided by Bishop Mirek.

Together we have given thanks to the Lord for the marvels accomplished here by His loving providence, thanks to the contribution of so many generous people who have given personal means and energies for the realization of the work.

Among the many contributions, we consider the support of the Superiors, the love of our sisters and especially their prayer as the main one.

How can we not remember with emotion that in the most difficult moments, turning to our Provincial Superior, we asked with so much confidence the prayers of our dear sick of the infirmary in the motherhouse?

It is our firm belief that God is supporting his poor people through us. Maigarò is the work of the Father's tenderness, given with love, for his children most in need of bread, care and education.

Sr. Antonella, present from the beginning of this mission, recalled her arrival on 3<sup>rd</sup> of November in Bangui accompanied by Sr. Teresa Della Pietra. *"We left Bangui the next day. Sister Daniela Stecca had come to get us. In the over 500 kilometers that separated us from the destination, along the way we met more goats than cars or wayfarers. I was amazed."*

*Arrived in Maigaro, Sister Carlamaria and Sister Patricia waited for us with joy, in the small, clean and perfumed house. Everything was ready for us to spend the night, but ... Nothing to do, Sister Teresa wanted us to reach Niem.*

*We arrived around 9 pm, under the rain that blessed our suitcases. We spent the night and the next day in Niem and then we finally arrived in Maigaro, 25 years ago ..."*

6<sup>th</sup> November 2018 ... At about 11 am, leaving temporarily the school and dispensary activities, we found ourselves in the spacious dining room to welcome the gift offered to us by Sister Maria Teresa, a Polish sister who helped us in the dispensary for over two years.





She was accompanied by a lady from her country, Mizena, a musician.

In addition to a sweet real pastry, we had as a gift the sweet notes of the Ave Maria of Gunod, played enchantingly on the violin by Mizena who also dabbled with Vivaldi and an Italian ballad.

What a surprise and what a pleasure!

The bishop returned to the community at around 12 for lunch.

The rest of the day was then spent in the continuation of our activities: patients in the dispensary, pupils in the school and the poor always at the door.

Remembering the time we spent, we feel our soul filled with gratitude. When we arrived in Maigarò there was only a hut on the other side of the road.

Now there is a village that is full of life, of cries of children and the shouting of adults, of the sound of the tam tams. There was only a simple house where the sisters remained for over a year. Today the mission counts the large complex of the technical institute with an adjoining elementary school, the hospital, the house of the sisters and the “Odette” house for abandoned children.

The sick always arrive numerous every day; children, boys and girls fill the classrooms to receive a human, spiritual and intellectual formation.

Tens and dozens of girls trained in Maigarò have obtained university degrees and work for the benefit of the family and society. They often come to visit us, to say thanks to the sisters for the formation received. The silent remote place

of the savannah, 25 years ago, has become a center of life and love.

Now we are waiting for other concrete manifestations of divine providence. The new orientation of the school includes the opening of a kindergarten, the closing of the college and the opening to the youth of the new middle school address with technical options. The absence of volunteers who remain for a prolonged time, the uncertainty and fear caused by a latent war, ready to resume, slow down the work of transformation of the structure. Africa teaches patience.

We must wait and meanwhile pray and hope.

Dear sisters who share the labors and expectations of this mission ... plead with us the mercy of the Father.

*Sr. Antonella Lago*



## The MADONNA DEL SUFFRAGIO comes down among her people in GROTTA DI CASTRO

“**M**other come down in our midst... come down from heaven to your people, your people of Grotte.....”: people crowded in the basilica of Grotte di Castro cried out in one voice, along with trumpets and singing with great joy. It marks the solemn descent of the miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary from the altar above the sanctuary of the basilica down to the people. This great event takes place once in ten years.

This tradition has its origin in 1616. A capuchin friar who had a great devotion to the blessed Mother came to Grotte di Castro for preaching. He sent this beautiful wooden statue of the blessed Mother from Rome. While the statue was carried to Grotte, people crowded along the way near the cliff to watch her coming. Because of the crowd and the eagerness to see the Blessed Mother, many people fell on the cliff, but miraculously no one was hurt. This incident and the many miracles after that event gave a great devotion and deep affection to Mother Mary. They call her “Lady of Miracles”. The people consider it as their own “Madonna del suffraggio”. The statue, in the Basilica, is normally covered with a white veil, which will be removed only on important occasions. It was on September 7<sup>th</sup> at 9.30 am that people were at the door of the basilica much in advance to enter and have a vision of the glorious



decent of their beloved Mother. Those present were not only people from Grotte, but also coming from other places to witness this event and get many blessings. Together with the General Council, came to Grotte the Sisters of the Asisium community, of the international iuniorate and the young sisters from Centocelle accompanied by the Provincial Superior. The numerous presence of the Sisters was considered an expression of great affection and a special privilege received as “Heritage” of our beloved Father Gregory.





The basilica was crowded. All started reciting the rosary and singing, looking at the well-decorated beautiful statue of the blessed Mother above the main altar.

The white drapery proceeded from the bottom of the statue was made beautiful with floral decorations on either side.

The joint work of the women of the village prepared the drapery with beautiful embroidery works, symbolically representing the coming of the blessed Mother in their ordinary life situation. The celebration, a para liturgy was presided over by Monsignor Lino Fumagalli, the bishop of Viterbo. Many fathers, natives of Grotte di Castro and from other places were present.

The Gospel passage chosen for the day was Jn.2:1-10, the wedding feast at Cana. Fr. Michele, a son of the Grotte, proclaimed the Gospel and the Bishop gave a beautiful homily.

He appreciated the people for keeping this tradition and devotion alive.

Then continued saying that the beautiful image of Mother Mary reflects our life. She comes to meet us, descent amidst us, enter into each family, make a heart to heart dialogue with each one and grant us a renewed joy.

The Parish priest Fr. Tancredi Muccioli thanked all who collaborated to prepare the celebration showing their love for the Blessed Mother.

The decent of the statue is very meticulously arranged; a mechanical system makes the movement of the statue downwards, very slow, while from the vault of the basilica (as from heaven) shower messages written on color paper pieces. This also is a tradition followed; originally, they were showering rose petals. Children and elders collect these messages as given by the Blessed Mother. The celebration lasted more than two hours.

The statue, during the following days, is taken through every lane of the village. People keep the houses and the lanes decorated with beautiful lights and flowers. The statue of the Madonna remained down for public devotion until 30<sup>th</sup> September. On this day there again they make a celebration for the ascent, but with sadness because long ten years they have to wait for the next descent.

This celebration and the statue of Mother Mary has a special value for us as religious Family because of the attachment of our venerable father Gregory to the place and the Blessed Mother.



## **AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE**

**T**he celebration of the “descent” of Our Lady of Suffrage (Madonna del Suffragio) was a providential occasion that the parish priest fr. Tancredi Muccioli welcomed in order to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Religious Profession of Sr Annagrazia Ghedin, a member of the



“Father Gregory” community in Grotte di Castro for four years.

The truly Solemn Mass was presided by the Bishop Monsignor Lino Fumagalli and concelebrated by the parish priest Fr Tancredi and fr. Michele, the new young priest of Grotte di Castro.

The presence of the Mother general Sr Paola Dotto, of the Council and of Sr Stefania Bandiera and Sr Cristiana Basso, Provincial superiors respectively of the Province “Santa Maria degli

Angeli” and “Maria Immacolata”, of many sisters and relatives made this event truly unforgettable for Sr Annagrazia. The moment when, in front of the whole assembly, Sr Annagrazia renewed her self-giving to the Lord in the Church as Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart, was very moving. In the end, before the blessing, Sr Annagrazia wanted to leave a simple but profound message of joy and faith to those present. The celebration ended late in the evening in the large hall of the parish center, finely decorated with significant writings and wishes. Everyone has joyfully experienced this very special event for the people of Grotte and all returned to their homes by thanking and blessing the Lord.





## The surprises for Sr Annagrazia are not over !!!

**T**o crown the feast of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sister Annagrazia's Religious Profession, Fr. Tancredi had long ago asked the permission that she could attend the Holy Mass of Pope Francis in Santa Marta. On 29<sup>th</sup> of September the Vatican's response arrived, saying: *"Sister Annagrazia Ghedin will be able to participate with an accompanying sister at the Eucharistic Celebration on the morning of Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> . (at 7.00 a.m.)."*

Sr. Annagrazia thus shares her experience:

*"On Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, Sr Mini Alex, superior of the community and I, left for Rome for the General house, and the next morning at the right time, accompanied by Sr. Laura, we were ready to enter the Vatican. After presenting the letter to the gendarmerie and the Swiss Guard, we finally entered the chapel of Santa Marta."*

*We cannot express our emotion while waiting for the beginning of Holy Mass. Very timely, the Holy Father began the Eucharistic Celebration. We have witnessed and participated in the Eucharist with faith and much trepidation, we have perceived that the Holy Father was very tired, in fact he did not comment on the Gospel as usual. At the end of Holy Mass, the Pope went to the hall near the chapel and there he met the participants."*

*First, the faithful of a parish that came with their parish priest, then some couples. We, on purpose, have lined up for last and finally our special moment has arrived."*

*We cannot describe and cannot imagine the emotion experienced in finding ourselves face to face with the Vicar of Christ. We strengthened ourselves and we told the Pope that, "we are the FMSC sisters founded by Fr Gregory Fioravanti from the Grotte di Castro that your Holiness declared venerable last year". We have handed over to him the booklet of Father Gregory."*

*We have brought greetings from our Mother General and from all our sisters present in 23 countries of the world, who are carrying out their mission in many suburbs."*

*We also brought greetings from the elderly people of the four retirement homes that we visit every week and with whom we also pray for him. Sister Mini gave the letter written by the children who this year will make their first communion and a painting done in pencil by Fr. Tancredi's brother*

*and a letter from the parish priest inviting the Pope to come and visit our beautiful sanctuary."*

*In the end, we asked for the blessing of the rosaries and especially for us, for our Congregation, for the country and for our families. We will never be able to thank the Lord for so many gifts!"*



**PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES  
of UNIVERSITY and COLLEGE  
STUDENTS  
of the DIOCESES  
DE LA SARTHE**

**L**ike every year, the “Youth Group” of the diocese of Sarthe organized the “Youth Pilgrimage” in Lourdes. Sister M. Armelle participated as an animator. The 220 young people and adults, after having participated in the Eucharist presided over by Father Johan Visser, took the road to Lourdes, happy to live together this spiritual and fraternal moment!



A group of university students heading to the village of Barthes (7 km from Lourdes) where Saint Bernadette lived as a shepherdess with her family!

Upon arrival, all the young people took part in the Eucharist presided over by Father Benoît Leronce, in the parish of Saint Jean-Baptiste!

In the underground basilica of Saint Pius X, we participated in the international Mass, presided over by the Archbishop of Marseilles, Mgr. Pontier and concelebrated by 150 priests!



Sister M. Armelle explained to the youth the theme “The universal call to holiness” according to the apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis!



## IN THE SCOUT SPIRIT FROM BULGARIA TO ITALY 11-24 AUGUST 2018

**P**ease and Good dear sisters and readers of the congregational bulletin!

Driven by the words of the Holy Father Francis addressed to young people during the World Youth Day in Krakow in 2016, we want to share the experience of faith and joy lived during the wonderful pilgrimage to Italy with a group of young people from Bulgaria.

*“Today’s world does not need a couch-youth, but a youth with shoes, even better, with shoes worn. The world only accepts players in the field, there is no place for reserves. Today’s world asks you to be protagonists of history because life is always beautiful if we want to live it and leave a mark “. Here we are ready to leave after the preparatory course lasted one year.*

*We can say that the young people who took part in the pilgrimage, together with their families, “have fitted their shoes well”.*

For this pilgrimage, the group consisted of 51 young people chosen by the mission leaders where we work in Bulgaria.

The line of the route was marked by these four columns: spirituality, service, art and culture.

For daily reflection, we have chosen, according to the places, the following words: honesty, purity, fraternity, dedication, prayer and contemplation, from bitter to sweet, with all your creatures, perfect joy, chastity, poverty, obedience, cross, see and believe, follow me.

The program of spirituality to be presented to guide the young was shared among Father Claudio Moltelli, an Assumptionist priest, Sister Jyothi Kodumagundla and Sister Elka Staneva.

The cultural and artistic part, however, was assigned to every young person, who had to study and present the specific aspects of a place during the pilgrimage.

The service was the task of everyone in the group and in every moment and place where Providence brought us, everyone had to act according to the needs presented.

The spiritual journey that we followed by visiting the ecclesial, Franciscan and Congregational places allowed us to enjoy the beautiful experiences of God’s great friends, starting from Gemona del Friuli where we lived the joy of meeting with our sisters of the Mother House and of the community of ‘Oasis’.





Celebrating the first Eucharist in the chapel of our convent, we thanked the Good Lord for the people who dedicate themselves to the formation of the young people, recalling the solicitation of our Founders to pay attention to the poorest girls. The beautiful moments of sharing, dancing and singing with the sisters allowed the young to see that those who consecrate themselves to the Lord are the true bearers of joy and hope.

Continuing in Venice, Padua and Verona we have chosen the words of the day among the fundamental principles of the spiritual path of the scouts: HONESTY, DEDICATION, PURITY.

During the moments of reflection, everyone expressed with freedom how and in what situations he/she puts these principles into practice. The Caritas Diocesan of Florence welcomed us in its

new accommodation facility for people in need, where we had agreed to give our service. It was important to be able to participate in this ecclesial line of charity and mercy, themes suitable for this place.

The ancient city of Siena presented us with the figure of St. Catherine, a great friend of the Church. The question we asked ourselves was: I, as a friend of the Church, what am I doing?

The meditations of the chosen words, such as: FRATERNITY, HONESTY, DEDICATION, PURITY, PRAYER AND CONTEMPLATION, and the questions raised on the lives of the saints encountered during the pilgrimage in these places, have prepared us to enter the spirit of Assisi.





We arrived at “Santa Maria degli Angeli” where we have planted our tents under the olive trees and the fig tree of the courtyard of our house. The words of the day in these Franciscan places could only be:  
FROM BITTER TO SWEET,  
WITH ALL YOUR CREATURES,  
PERFECT JOY,  
CHASTITY, POVERTY, OBEDIENCE.



So a good baggage was formed in our “spiritual backpack”. How beautiful it was to sing: “Praised be, Brother sun and Sister moon; Lord make me an instrument of your peace!”

The evenings lived with the sisters of the two communities of Santa Maria degli Angeli and Viole together with their volunteers were the most joyful and pleasant moments of fraternal life, dreamed of by St. Francis and by St. Clare.

By now we were ready to enter the Eternal City to reach the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul.

The time has come to meet with the sisters of the Asisium and tell each other the words memorized in all languages: “Peace and Good, dear sisters!

The words of the day on which to reflect in Rome, CROSS, SEE AND BELIEVE, FOLLOW, have shown us the decisions and choices in everyday life.

The moments of meeting with the sisters of the Asisium and the other sisters from various parts of the world, in the Generalate house, have allowed us to feel once again little stones that build the Church of Jesus and all this through the various colours of the costumes, the various tones of music and the various rhythms of dance! Here the missionary spirit lived in a house, together with the young and the old!



The meeting with Pope Francis was the moment to feel called to bear witness to a Christian life that educates the little ones, values young people and respects the elderly.

We concluded the pilgrimage to San Giovanni Rotondo, near the body of Padre Pio, thanking for all the benefits received from the Lord on this wonderful journey of faith, spirituality, service, art and culture.

There was also the space for a stop at the sea waiting for the ferry to embark for Bulgaria!

With hearts full of joy and gratitude, we want to thank the Lord for the graces and the people we have encountered!



We would like to thank Sr. Francesca Fiorin, Sr. Mara Lorenzet and Sr. Jaida Millard for their availability, for having accompanied us on the journey and having lived some stages together with us.



We would like to thank our dear Superior General, Sister Paola Dotto, for welcoming this youth project and for her support.

Thanks to the Provincial Superior Sister Stefania Bandiera and to the Gemona sisters for friendship!

Thanks to the sisters of the community of Santa Maria degli Angeli and Viole for peace and good!

Thanks to the Sisters of the Asisium for their warm welcome!

Thanks to all the sisters who cooked for us the tasty Italian cuisine!

Thanks to all the volunteers, friends and benefactors for contributing to the realization of this unforgettable experience!

*The sisters of the fraternities of Bulgaria, Sister Elka Staneva  
and Sister Jyothi Kodumagundla*  
PEACE AND GOOD!



## In union to the whole Church, let us celebrate the World Mission Day.

*"Together with the young, let us bring the Gospel to everyone!"*

**T**he Lord on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> October, to make us feel even more missionary, made us decide to celebrate the paraliturgy in the hall of the school since no priest presented himself for celebrating the Holy Mass.

Sr Antonella asked me to lead the liturgy, she gave a beautiful homily in French helping the girls to grasp the richness and the joy of knowing Jesus, a joy that fills and gives meaning to life.



I, on the other hand, made a brief sermon in the sango language to the children to make them participate with the heart and to help them grasp the meaning of the symbols that had been placed at the foot of the altar. We come from God who gave us life and we look at Jesus who gave his life for us, and still gives us his love, gives us the living water. To him we want to look to welcome and live these gifts and then go to bring them to our brothers and sisters doing them good, announcing them Jesus.

The girls were a bit 'taken by the news of what we did: "the sisters who direct the Sunday celebration"! We have seen them participate carefully and actively.

Concluded the celebration we brought the symbols of the missionary day in our chapel, setting everything before the altar. As soon as the missionary signs were prepared, a group of scouts passed by surprise in the chapel.

We were able to pray for a moment together and then I talked to them about the missionary day starting from the signs we had prepared. The young people left happy with the gift received and I am happy with the gift that the Lord has given us of their presence.

In the afternoon, we met with the small group of the students of the hostel (35) and we prayed the missionary rosary in the shade of the tree.

Since Sr. Maria Giulia was unable to attend the morning's celebration because she was urgently called for an operation at the hospital, I asked a Capuchin father to come in the evening to celebrate Mass in our chapel. It was a beautiful missionary day full of gifts offered and received by the Lord.

On Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, the missionary day has been prolonged! We invited the different classes of the 5 elementary and middle schools to come to the chapel to pray and discover the gift of being filled with the presence of Jesus and the joy of being able to bring Him or as the Pope says to infect others with our lives. Looking at the eyes of the children, of the adolescents who come from the villages around, we find the thirst and the need to know Jesus. If our heart could be always surprised and amazed at the love of Jesus open and available as the heart of the child, we can allow ourselves to conform to Him to become a gift!

*Sr Alessandra Sartor*



## SPIRITUALITY AND AGING

On Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> the Sisters of the St. Francis Province sponsored a workshop on Spirituality and Aging at Mt. St. Francis. The Sisters, Ladies from the Villa, and 60 guests came together to be inspired with the excellent presentations given by Dr. Mariette Danilo, director of education at the Saint John Vianney Center in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. Mariette's talks provided us with many inspirational ideas and suggestions to help us take charge of navigating the transitions of change as we grow older. Some topics addressed were: Aging and Being Able to Let Go, Compassion Fatigue, Ways to Build Resilience, Signs of Abundant Spiritual Energy and Signs of Depletion of Spiritual Energy, Living Longer by Smiling More, Self-Compassion, Ways You Make Yourself Miserable, Gratitude, The Need for Awe in Our Lives, Road Blocks to Joy, and Loneliness. We were given personal reflection questions such as: "Who has modeled grace-filled aging for you?", "How do I handle anger?", "How do I cultivate gratitude?", and "What make me feel AWE?". The day was filled with encouragement, gratitude, and led us all to a deeper awareness of who we are to ourselves, to others, and to our God. Everyone has requested that Mariette return to Mt. St. Francis for another workshop and look forward to this next year.



## THANKSGIVING DAY

St. Paul tells us that *"in all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus"* (1 Thes 5:18).

Here in America the fourth Thursday in November is set aside as a day of celebrating the many blessings the Lord has given us, showing gratitude to Him through sharing our abundance with the poor, and remembering that He is the Rock we must cling to.





It was a joy to be part of the Franciscan Community Development Center of Fairview's mission on Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018 as the Sisters, members of the Board of Directors and volunteers came together to serve the most vulnerable- families living in poverty, children, those without shelter. The Center gave turkeys, canned food items, bread, sweets and donated clothes, including handmade scarves and hats, to 748 people.

Early in the morning of Thanksgiving Day, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, we traveled by bus to West 31<sup>st</sup> Street in New York City where the Franciscan friars run a Breadline for homeless men and women. The rising sun pierced through the darkness, illuminating buildings and streets.

In every one of the 250 people who came, we saw Jesus' face- broken, weary, humiliated- but there were also smiles, shared greetings, a brief sense of hope. Some stopped to "chat" with us before going their way.

One woman, wearing an open coat, no hat and sitting on a cardboard box, sang enthusiastically to anyone who would listen. After receiving his gift, a man walked back to our group and asked, "Do you work for Jesus?" We answered, "yes" and he replied, "Is He a good boss?" Another woman told us, "I am sick, but so grateful for this."



Jesus' miracle of the loaves and fishes comes to mind. In the face of such suffering and injustice, the little that we can offer seems like nothing at all.

But as our Venerable Fr. Gregory said, "In the last analysis, we must entrust everything to God's divine providence."

*Sr Lisa Grace Carlone*

## SAN FRANCESCO PROJECT - MENJEZ, LEBANON

A desire with a human face has allowed us to start the new school year in Menjez amidst a thousand anguishes and problems, again because of the Lebanese government at the educational level, but also with a Franciscan attitude that allows us to accompany the children and their families in a climate of small universal family.



The choice of the school project was inspired by the awareness that only starting from human relationships we can grow as brothers and sisters and as children of the only Heavenly Father.

Sr. Beatrice Skorti, director of the school, strongly insisted that this project take on the face of a pilgrimage that can relate young people to values of sharing and respect, forgiveness and sincerity, solidarity, freedom and love.

During these months, our school was decorated with colored streamers and posters and has turned into another Canticle of creatures. All classes

have worked to realize their project by studying a part of the Canticle of Creatures; we were looking for information, models, small statues of St. Francis and materials for building the church of San Damiano and the palace of the Sultan. And those billboards have become a meeting place.

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, with all the students we had a nice moment of fraternity with the presence of Sr Angelica Hadjihanni, Provincial Superior and Father Quirico Calella OFM who came from Tripoli with beautiful paintings of the Canticle of Creatures that were exhibited on the walls of the our theater. The students were involved by Father Quirico both to penetrate in the sense of all praise that Francis addresses to creation and at a recreational level. But the nicest moment was the presentation of each project by all classes. All children small and big have explained their work in French.

Sr. Beatrice with a small commission of teachers gave the prize to the three winners and the smiles were really many and priceless. Often our mission is very much tried and we ask ourselves if we really have to continue but before this mosaic of faces and hearts we just have to repeat again:

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord, all praise is yours, all glory, all honor, and all blessing.!

*The Sisters of Menjez*





## From Calbayog – Philippines: “We are a mission”

**W**e are Mission, We have to witness the Redemptive Love with Passion, the theme of the XVI Provincial chapter of “Mary Immaculate” Province is the guiding thread of the mission of evangelization for our community of Calbayog. Among the various ways of proclaiming the Gospel in which we are engaged in various fields, that of the formation of catechists in the diocese is a very delicate, difficult, beautiful and privileged task.

“Privileged” I say it because it is a way to express our missionary and Franciscan identity directly. Thanks to our superiors who have responded to this appeal which is a particular sign of the time in this Filipino land that constantly seeks evangelizers for “Renewed evangelization”. (PCP II)

The diocese of Calbayog celebrated the opening of the catechetical month on the first day of September. There were 105 participants (82 leading volunteer catechists, coming from 43 parishes and 23 seminarians from the Congregation of the “Poor Servants of Divine Providence” (Scalabriniani).

We dedicated the first day to the conformation of ourselves to Jesus Christ through the retreat, with reflections, silence, prayer, Eucharistic adoration and evaluation of our dedication to the mission of evangelization.

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, during the Mass, the catechists renewed their commitment. After Mass, we went to the streets of the city to announce to the peoples the opening of the catechetical month, to make people aware of the celebration of the catechetical month and to remind them of our baptismal commitment: to proclaim the Gospel.

Why do our young people in the Philippines have the passion to engage in catechesis for children and their peers? Their only answer was: “... *What we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have contemplated and what our hands have touched on the Word of life, we also announce it to you.*” ( 1Jn 1:1-4)



When I heard the response of the young people, I relived the theme of our XVI Provincial chapter: “We are Mission, We have to witness the Redemptive Love with Passion” and my soul rejoiced, because I found that our missionary journey is in keeping with the teachings of the Holy Father Pope Francis: “I am a Mission on this earth, for this reason I am here in this world, as sealed, marked by this mission: bringing light and blessing” (Evangelii Gaudium 273).



At the end of these two days of meetings, the clear evaluation about the formation of diocesan catechists leads me to recognize that to be Mission, that is to bear witness to the Redemptive Love with passion, I must commit myself in a particular way to tend towards the conformation of Jesus Christ Crucified, the true Missionary, and follow His example in forming our diocesan catechists and sending them to the various parishes, as Jesus had formed and sent his disciples. *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you every day, until the end of the world.”* (Mt.28: 19-20)

*Sr. Theresa Knox Gude*





## EXPERIENCES OF FAITH: school and parish (Quito)

In September, our parish becomes a party to celebrate the “novena” of “Our Lady of Mercedes”, where all the religious communities participate together with the educational institutions.



On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September it was the eighth day of the novena; from the school a beautiful procession started with the image of Our Lady of Mercedes; all the students, professors and parents walked towards the Parish to pray the Holy Rosary.

Each class recited a mystery of the Rosary, and at the end of each decade, they brought roses at the feet of Our Lady.

After the prayer of the Rosary, the Eucharistic Celebration presided by Fr. Dennis Yanangomez, parish priest of the parish of the Annunciation started.

It was a very involved and joyous Eucharist; Father Dennis spoke of the importance of having God in our lives, especially in the families, and how it is necessary that Mary Most Holy be the model of virtue and fidelity to follow Her Son Jesus.

He also stressed the great task of parents, that is, the mission that God himself gave them towards their children.

He appreciated the parents who made the choice of a Catholic school for their children but stressed that it will always be their task to educate their children to faith, participating in the Eucharist, praying in the family, preparing the children for the sacraments and trying to be true Christian families in a continuous search for the values of Christ and of the Gospel.

The students were very happy and participated by animating the various moments with songs and much enthusiasm; that characterizes the Franciscan simplicity and life.



## **Attentive to the neediest brothers and sisters**

**I**n Puerto Varas, in the south of Chile, for many years there has been a mission that continues to offer many material, spiritual and psychological help to many needed brothers and sisters and that sows so much 'good'. It is a work that is now called "San Francisco Polyclinic", but in the past it was the "Club for the non-drinkers": Everyone however knows this mission referring it to "Sor Ana Pia", the one who started this activity with the help of Divine Providence.

Sr. Anna Pia Pellizzari, a missionary in those areas, seeing the needs of the population, asked the Superiors for permission to visit the sick, the elderly and the alcoholics. After going to the neighbourhoods of Puerto Chico, bringing the Eucharist, giving strength and courage to the elderly and the dying, she thought about the need for a health care center for these brothers who were helpless, without resources and without medical treatment. This is how after many years of research, requests, questions of "how" and "where" to respond to this need, Divine Providence has come to meet her and her dream has become a beautiful reality as early as 1982. The first service was the "Club for the non-drinkers", for the rehabilitation of alcoholics that were around in the environment and that destroy many families.

Subsequently with the health authorization the "San Francisco Autonomous Polyclinic" has begun to operate, which has various medical services and continues the treatment for the rehabilitation of alcoholics. The center has increasingly expanded. Seeing that many brothers and sisters were dying of hunger, the charity of Sr. Anna Pia has thought of an open refectory that continues to function until today. Here they come every morning, from Monday to Friday between 60 and 90 indigent / needy and homeless people to eat a hot dish that Divine Providence offers them. This work moves the generous hearts of so many people and also the institutions that make all this possible with their help and succeed in giving the possibility to bring some food at home. Among these generous institutions, there are also schools like our school "Felmer Niklitschek". One day, we invited the "doctors of joy" (as they are calling them) to give some serenity to the people who come to eat. It was a very nice moment for everyone!

In addition to the services listed above, we also have a "Club for the elderly" called "Sor Ana Pia". They are a group of almost 50 or 60 elders who meet twice a month, on Saturdays from 3 to 6 pm; they are followed in their meetings and activities with a lot of love by 12 volunteers, our lay associates. A group of adults is also welcomed for a gym laboratory led by a qualified teacher sent by the Municipality. There are about thirty people who receive this help.

The polyclinic, where Sr Elena Bilibio is now working, is an authentic place of "mission", also for our students; in fact the young people of our Felmer Niklitschek College in Puerto Varas - Chile, - the "prejomis" group accompanied by Yolesyn Sch and Ivana Altamirano come to visit the old people's club to live an afternoon of joy with them, with dances, poems, etc.

The students were very spontaneous in their representations and they manage to amuse and make the elderly laugh.

The time spent together becomes a beautiful, meaningful sharing for everyone.





## ONE WEEK TOTALLY FRANCISCAN!!!

The Anniversary of the educational mission of the school of San Francisco de Asís in Cochabamba, was celebrated with great enthusiasm and dedication by the entire scholastic community. For this occasion, on 10<sup>th</sup> September the school received the “Llajta de la Concorde” award from the civil authorities, as a just recognition of its great commitment to the formation of values for young people and children: a well-deserved recognition, as our institution, since its foundation by the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, has always provided an integral formation based on Christian and Franciscan principles.



The feast was organized as follows: the classes were divided by colours based on the elements of the canticle of the creatures, yellow of the sun brother; white of sister moon; red of brother fire; light blue, the color of the sky; green, for the mother earth and blue for sister water. Those responsible for this activity were the fifth and sixth classes, who had to organize the various groups encouraging them to give the best of themselves and to win. This year to celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the award will be for a charitable institution,

where our young people will carry out their solidarity activities.



The students were busy preparing various activities: setting up an altar in honor of our Patron Saint Francis before starting the novena, organizing recreational games, the knowledge contest on the life of San Francis, the night of talents, solidarity activities, the painted murals and the cleaning and care of the Mother Earth.



On 4<sup>th</sup> October, we had the solemn Eucharistic Celebration which was celebrated with the participation of the whole community, thus enhancing the love for the Eucharist that Saint Francis always recommended to everyone.

Through all these activities, fraternal sharing of human and spiritual values was promoted, healthy competition with clear objectives, creativity, leadership and celebrating our anniversary with Franciscan joy and enthusiasm.

*Praise be,  
my Lord,  
with all  
your creatures!*





## At TAMBOBAMBA the “encounters with Christ” have begun



**F**or the first time we have realized the “encounters with Christ” in the school “San Antonio de Padua”. The participation of the students was very active and with great joy and devotion they reflected on the subjects prepared according to their age.

The activity culminated with the celebration of the Eucharist, in which



## RELIGIOUS FAIR IN TAMBOBAMBA

**T**his year the diocesan department of Catholic education organized the fourth edition of the religious fair with the motto: “Living the values following the example of the Holy Family”.

All the students had to prepare stalls with an exhibition of their work done at school.

The students of the primary and secondary schools of the various educational institutions of the province of Cotabambas participated, with different topics of religious education. In this way, students are

encouraged to bear witness and share their faith and the joy of knowing Jesus more and more in the classes of religion.

As a reward we have donated some Bibles that have been delivered to the winning students who have distinguished themselves in their exhibitions.



## CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS-IN INDIA

*“Be like little children...”*

Children's day, a significant day of celebration, exclusively highlighting the children; 14<sup>th</sup> November of every year is celebrated as children's day all over India. It is the birthday of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of Independent India. He loved children and had many dreams on the children of free India. He brought into effect many developmental programs for the good of the children. Therefore it is selected his birthday as a day of feast for all the children of the country. Childhood is the most joyful period of one's life with all its innocence and simplicity. Jesus said, *“Let little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such these that the kingdom of God belongs (Lk.18.16)”*.

In one of the audiences of Pope Francis, a little boy climbed on the stage and walked freely towards the Pope, despite all the resistance from his mother and the guards. The Holy Father motioned the guards to let him come, and he kept him closer. Then he changed the topic of his discourse focusing on our attitude to God our Father, it must be like this little one, free and fearless. Indeed God our Father always expects from us such freedom and love.



We, teachers are fortunate to have the time spend with the children.

In our Province, primarily our ministry is centered on children, having schools and hostels almost in all the communities we concentrate on giving a basic formation to the children.

A celebration like this really gives us more enthusiasm and joy in our life and mission. It is very delightful to see, on this day in the schools, children dressed in different colours, running around, and joyfully greeting each other. It looks as if we are in a garden with different coloured flowers.

They are permitted to wear dress of their likeness on this day, respecting the rule of modesty. The nursery kids are the most mesmerizing group moving around like butterflies in the garden.





A number of colourful cultural programs are organized in the schools to mark this occasion by the teachers, involving children of the entire category.

The kindergarten children are the heroes of the day. Parents and teachers take much initiative to prepare the children to present some events on the stage. For them mostly it is the first time they make a performance on the stage.

With all simplicity, whatever they do, bring much joy and tenderness in the audience. It is interesting to see them dressed like some great leaders and greet the public in a different style.

Many colourful cultural events like beautiful classical, cultural and modern dances, singing and short dramas on patriotic or other motivational themes are performed.

Teachers in their messages, try to turn the attention of all present, to the many children all over the world especially in our country, who do not have this opportunity of celebrating the feast today. It is their feast too, but they are not able to study in schools, as they are poor and are forced to work like the elders, to maintain their daily living.

Every day we hear the news of children who are exploited in many ways. As we enjoy this great day we also should keep in mind our unfortunate friends who suffer in different ways.

The day is made a cherishing experience in all the ways for both children and the teachers and all will look forward for the day.



## Close to our brothers and sisters in the Leper colony

**T**he initial years of St. Francis conversion, the role of lepers was prominent. An experience with them shaped and matured his spiritual life and gave him courage to take very challenging steps in his love for God. We, the sisters of the community of St. Elizabeth, Nandyal, India inspired by his example, have started visiting our leper brothers and sisters in a leper colony five kilometers away from the town of Kurnool. There are 50 families living in this colony. Out of the 150 people living about 50 are leprosy patients. They are the first generation. They were badly affected and the treatments now cured them, but the deformities of their limbs do not permit them to work. So they live by begging. Since they lost the sensation on the affected body parts, they develop some wounds and ulcers from the boils or hurt in the deformities.



This infact separate them from being free in moving and doing. The second and third generations are healthy. They find work and make their living.

Our visits to them are joyful occasions, where they share their fears and difficulties. When we take time and listen to them with patience, they feel much satisfied. We also give them sufficient knowledge about hygienic living and the need to take medicines regularly. We pray together with them, sharing the word of God and singing sacred hymns. They happily participate in the prayers and sing melodiously using their musical instruments. It is very touching to listen to their experience of God in the midst of their suffering. It was very touching that some of them even openly witnessed, that this sickness really gave him an opportunity to encounter and experience God in their lives in a special way. A visit to them and the listening to them really give us more inspiration to live our lives more meaningfully. When we visit them, we always think of taking some gifts for each one. We also provide needed



materials for a good meal. The relatives of these people who are in good health come forward to prepare the meals and share with them. We also have our meals by sitting along with them. These poor people feel grateful and very happy at our visit and eagerly look forward for our next visit. We in fact go back home with hearts full of gratitude to God for all the good things He granted in our life. We also thank God for this given opportunity to spend time with these marginalized brothers and sisters.



## The Drama Workshop : an educative method (Puerto Montt)

The Drama Workshop was created in 2014 as an extra-curricular activity whose main purpose was to motivate the school community to learn English. On the other hand, it intended to integrate Dramatic Arts and English learning as a cross-curricular activity.

Through time, the drama club has also helped its members to develop other important soft skills, such as social skills, communication skills and team work. Thus, the drama club has contributed to develop the students' personalities, as part of an integral approach to education. From its creation, the drama workshop has been in charge of English teacher and Master in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Joel Gallardo Merino and drama teacher and theatre director Giovanni Besazza. They both have a regular one-hour meeting a week with the drama group, soon after the regular school day. The workshop has presented a different show every year, in which other students and members of the school community have collaborated. Here is a summary of the shows presented up to now.

2014: *Teens with Knowledge*, an original short play with five student-actors and a student-producer.

2015: *The Selfish Giant*, an original adaptation from the book written by Oscar Wilde, which included fourteen student-actors and two student-producers.

2016: *The Drama Workshop's Short Plays*, a collection of four brief plays written by the students. The group had fifteen student-actors and two student-producers

2017: *Heidi and Other Short Plays*. The show consisted of an adaptation of Heidi, the famous book published in the XIX Century, and other three short plays. The team had fifteen student actors and three student-producers.



2018: *Les Miserables*, the workshop's own version of the famous book written in the XIX Century by French writer Victor Hugo.

The group has 26 students from ninth to twelve grade, including twenty four student-actors, two student-producers and a singer.

The teacher and translator, Fabián Oyarzún, made a summary of the book, and then he adapted it to the theatrical language and created the dialogues.

The workshop's activities and presentations have been possible thanks to the support of the School authorities, led by Sister Elsa Castillo, School Principal. In addition, the present year the workshop has had the invaluable economic support of the School parent's center.



## **St. Francis School Madhira Khamam, India Inauguration of ATAL TINKERING LABS (Robotic Labs)**

**S**t. Francis School Madhira Khamam, India, is very much honored by the recognition given by the Government of India as one of the prominent institutions which care in the development of young minds with modern innovative skills.

The school inaugurated an ATAL Tinkering Lab in its premises on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Many eminent personalities in the innovative, scientific field were present on the occasion. The school staff



and students were excited with great joy on this rare event in their life. The school was selected to avail a grant from the central government of India for a period of 5 years to create a novel environment to foster scientific temper, innovation and creativity among the students.

Atal Tinkering Labs are dedicated workspaces where students (Class 6<sup>th</sup> to Class 12<sup>th</sup>) learn innovation skills and develop ideas that will go on to transform the Country.

The labs are powered to acquaint students with state of the art equipment such as 3D printers, robotics & electronics development

tools, lot & sensors etc.

The lab activities are designed to spur the spark of creativity, and go beyond regular curriculum and text book learning. These labs will let students explore skills such as design and computational thinking, adaptive learning and artificial intelligence.

The Atal Innovation Mission shall have two core functions: Entrepreneurship promotion through Self-employment and Talent Utilization and innovation promotion: to provide a platform where innovative ideas are generated.

The province Holy family runs St. Francis School Madhira. It is situated in the outskirts of Madhira town and has nothing extraordinary in its set up. Rooted on the charism of the Congregation, the school provides education to the poor. The students are mostly from the middle class or lower middle class economic status. Most of them come from the remote villages.

The dedicated services of our sisters along with a good team of staff always made an exposure of the best of the talents of these children in every field.

On this occasion gratefully we acknowledge the fact, whenever we work for the cause of the poor, the Lord takes the lead.





## A COMMITMENT THAT CONTINUES

### *Associated Laity - Community: San Francisco - Santa Clara (Chile)*

**W**e, the communities of the laity associated to the Congregation of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, with great joy and in a family atmosphere, in October 2018, lived a beautiful day of spiritual retreat, where we had the opportunity to renew promises as lay associates, engaged in the FMSC Congregation.

On this day, we lay associates, despite having different times of formation and growth in the faith, we were able to share the Franciscan charism, and at the end of the day with great joy we could see that the spirit of vocation and missionary service unites us more than ever.

During the day of retreat, the various activities carried out and shared among all, gave us the opportunity to grow. We have been able to speak, as lay associates, of the reality of what happens in the Chilean Church. Sharing gave us the opportunity to express ourselves critically, on the one hand, but also full of hope. We are aware that there are some religious who have not lost their way and that together with them as a Franciscan community we must continue to work so that all the domestic churches (families) present in our schools do not feel lost.

This, for us lay associates of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, is a time of true CHALLENGE.

Furthermore, we have reflected on the centrality of lay life, which is founded in the “experience of God in us” as his people.

We stopped to reflect on different concepts that, even if we know that they should be on our way, sometimes we forget:

- Stop the judgment - • His will be done - • True conversion requires the search for Christian identity
- Be welcoming to others - • Mercy above the law.

At the end of the day and in a heartfelt Eucharistic Celebration, we had the opportunity to renew our promises, and some others have made them for the first time. Together with the Provincial Superior Sr Marcela Uribe who accompanied us at this important moment, with joy and enthusiasm, we thanked God for the blessing that was for us to know the Congregation and to share its charism.



We thank, as lay associates of the Congregation, for the opportunity to walk and grow together, learning from one another and sharing the needs of the communities of the laity and of the Congregation.  
*Peace and Good..*

## XIII FORMATION COURSE ON THE ECUMENICAL AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The ongoing formation course for ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, organized in Istanbul, is a common event also for our Congregation, which every year seeks to participate with the presence of some sisters who have the joy and privilege of making this very special experience. This year took place from October 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> and the small group of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart was particularly “numerous”: two from Cyprus: Sr Antonia Piripitsi and Sr Svetla Zekova, one from Albania: Sr Toline Podja and and sisters of Büyükada: Sr Zita Gutang and Sr Gigimol Sebastian. Sr Miriam Oyarzo did not take part in the course but was present at some moments. Various Franciscan friars from Congo, Italy, Bosnia and Jordan and Italian lay people also took part.



We offer some excerpts from the Chronicle of the two sisters who came from Cyprus, who lived this experience with a special sensibility since this area of mission once belonged to the Province of St. Elizabeth.

*The day established for arrivals was October 14<sup>th</sup> and, we sisters, arrived the day before as we could not wait to go and visit our house in Büyükada, to live not only the fraternal moments with our sisters but also to remind us a little of the history of our Province.*

*So in the morning we took the ferry with the sisters of that community and we arrived at the island where Sr Miriam was waiting for us.*



*There we visited the Nunciature, our house, we went around the island “in a carriage” and ... could not miss the visit to our three missionary sisters buried there.*

*In the evening we took the ferry again and we went back to Istanbul, very happy with the day spent in fraternity.*



On the 15<sup>th</sup> the course started. The meetings were divided into four major themes, carried out with precision and in order of importance: a) In dialogue why? b) Between past and present. c) A look at the future. d) Meaning of interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

To begin the lectures was S. E. Mgr. Ruben Tierrablanca ofm, Apostolic Vicar of Istanbul with the theme: Anthropological Foundations of Dialogue. He stressed that the importance of the course is to make a common experience where “the more you know, the more you open the mind and our person is enriched ... It is about being open to the values of the other and discovering the diversity cultural and religious life in our world. “

He advised us to establish a sincere dialogue in daily life, starting from our own fraternity, where one learns to accept the other, the differences, recognizing that “the origin of life in every person is God”.

The course continued with conferences and pilgrimages to significant places, including: San Salvatore in Chora a beautiful church full of iconography from which the first catechumens were taught, the majestic Cathedral of St. Sophia, the synagogue, and the Tarsus - Cappadocia pilgrimage. The moments of ecumenical and interreligious prayer have been strong and emotional experiences.



At the end of the Course, we wanted to go to the cemetery in Istanbul, where 32 of our sisters are buried, missionaries in this land. So together with the three dear sisters of Büyükada, Sr Zita, Sr Gigimol and Sr Miriam we went to stand before their grave, to pray and to thank them for what they did for our Province and for the Congregation in general.

Thank you, Lord, for this wonderful experience, so enriching and different. Thank you for letting us understand once again that every person is created in your image and likeness and that accepting the difference is accepting the richness of your Holy Spirit.



Thank you for calling us to a Franciscan family, where following the example of our dear Saint Francis we must also become ecumenical people, who can dialogue and witness your love and your peace! Thank you!

Sr Antonia Piripitsi  
and Sr Svetla Zekova

## Living in God

**“Heaven is the goal and the aim  
of our existence “  
(Pope Francis)**



**Sister M. Charlene Taeschler  
of the Divine Providence**

*Born in Bronx NY  
on 26 April 1922  
Died in Peekskill  
on 8 September 2018*

Sr. M. Charlene was born in the Bronx, the second child of four and the only girl, to Charles and Lena Taeschler. The family moved to Union City, NJ. when Lillian was six months old. After graduating from Holy Family Grammar and High School, she received a scholarship to Drake Business School.

Thereafter she worked for nine years as a secretary and then she thought about entering the convent, but didn't have a real desire to do so. Instead she enrolled in nursing school but realized early that she was not fitted to be a nurse.

It was during her short stay in training that she met a Sister of St. Joseph of Peace who encouraged her to consider joining the convent.

At age 29, Lillian entered the Franciscan Sisters, choosing this community because she admired the many Sisters who taught her at Holy Family.

After her Religious Profession, Sister Charlene remained for one year as an assistant in the Novitiate and then was assigned by Mother Roberta to work in the Sisters' Infirmary until 1969 when she went to Ladycliff College. She worked in the Library and Chapel and was the dorm mother for some of the college residents. In 1980, when the college closed, Sister Charlene returned to the Provincialate House, Mt. St.

Francis, and continued her work as an infirmarian. Her gentle and caring ways were of great comfort to the many Sisters to whom she ministered during those days.

Sister Charlene showed a quiet strength throughout her entire life. In her gentle, unassuming way, she carried on her mission with a peace that affected many people.

Living with Sister for 44 years, I never heard her talk negatively about anyone and always admired her ability to be compassionate and caring to everyone. Sister Charlene enjoyed crocheting, reading, fixing things, and being available to help in any way that she was able. She will be remembered as a kind, caring, and gentle Sister.

One of the special experiences Sister had was to be part of a pilgrimage to Italy in 2006, sponsored by our Community, where she visited our original Motherhouse in Gemona and met many of the Sisters from our Congregation.



As we remember her in our prayers we count on her intercession for the needs of our Congregation and thank God for the blessing she has been to us.



**Sister M. Ernestina Magoga  
of the Immaculate Heart  
of Mary**

*Born in Treviso  
on 22 February 1924  
Died in Santiago- Chile  
on 9 October 2018*

Carmela Magoga daughter of Joseph and Ema, born February 22, 1924 in Preganziol, Treviso by a large and deeply Christian family.

The family, the school and the parish were the Christian formation institutions of her childhood and adolescence, where she certainly had already felt, in her open and sensitive heart, the call of God.

In 1941, at the age of 17, she entered the postulancy of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, in the monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli, in Gemona del Friuli. In 1942 she began her novitiate

with the name of Sr Ernestina of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and at the age of 19, she made her first Vows happy on December 28, 1943.

These were hard times, the second world war was in force in Europe, and the bombings were multiplied in Italy.

Fear, hunger and hard work were, in those days, the most significant formators.

Sr Ernestina lived in those times in two different communities of northern Italy, always ready to serve, help and sacrifice.

The Pope of that time, Pius XII, while worried about Nazism and Marxism in Europe, made a call to all religious Congregations not to forget Latin America.

Monsignor Ramón Munita Eyzaguirre, the first Bishop of Puerto Montt, on a trip to Italy introduced himself to the Superior General of that time, Mother Cecilia Lazzeri to ask sisters for his diocese. He asked for 5 sisters, specifying that at least one was a teacher, another nurse, a cook, one who knew how to sew and also one that could play the organ in the Cathedral. The sisters arrived, traveling by ship, after many trials in 1951 and among the five missionaries Sr. Ernestina arrived in Chile, in the city of Puerto Montt.

Life was not easy, getting used to the reality of the new Country, so far away, with other language, other needs and above all other climate. Therefore, the illnesses began immediately and Sr. Ernestina was one of the worst affected, but with their courage and their spirit of sacrifice, the sisters went on.

In Puerto Montt sr Ernestina remained until 1957, after she moved to Santiago, in the home of the Fathers Servants of Mary in Ñuñoa, where our sisters began teaching in elementary school and then moved to Cisterna, and so Sr. Ernestina lived between the Mother Cecilia Lazzeri School and the Santa Maria School until her last days.

Sr. Ernestina was very intelligent but did not have the opportunity to study, but the gift of wisdom accompanied her in all circumstances and the Wisdom of God was her richness in the evangelizing mission.

Over the years, she overcame her shyness to make her spirit of acceptance, affability, understanding and help prevail. Loving and kind words, opportune advice, struggle, constancy and consistency during the most adverse situations were the gifts with which she nourished her hope and strengthened her faith.

She was the prudent and strong woman of the Bible, the consecrated woman who, like Mary, kept all things in her heart.

She overcame various diseases. In the last few years, the sickness in her eyes completely removed her sight.

When she could still move, she went out into the garden and, touching the leaves, she knew how her flowers were that she loved so much and so carefully cultivated ...

A woman of prayer, Sr. Ernestina prayed a lot for the fidelity of the priests.

In the spirit of St. Francis she did not want to waste what good God did in her, making ostentation of His gifts, but gradually prepared, through daily life, pain, sickness, limitations, to give back everything and to restore to God all that was God's, and to enjoy the mercy of the Father, who welcomed her into His home on October 9, 2018.



**Sr. Teresita Tonietto  
of the Sacred Hearts  
of Jesus and Mary**

*Born in S. Martin di Lupari  
(PD) on 18 December 1925  
Died in Gemona (UD)  
on 18 November 2018*

Sr. Teresita Tonietto for some time was preparing herself for the meeting with the Lord that on November 18, knocked at the door of her heart at 2 pm and she promptly replied and passed away in silence as she lived, to the eternal kingdom. She was born in S. Martin di Lupari (PD) on 18. 12. 1925. Her parents, Angelo and Cimador Teresa, in baptism (26.

12. 1925) had called her Anna Maria.

It was a beautiful family enlivened by six children, a family of Christian foundation so that two vocations arose from it: Fr. Carlo, diocesan priest (past eternal life in 2001) and Sr. Teresita who entered Gemona among the Franciscans Missionaries of the Sacred Heart on May 8, 1947.

After the formative journey she made her first profession on May 17, 1949. And then her mission began: knitting expert she could teach young people and also to the sisters a valuable job for that time. But what emerges most in her life is her tireless self-giving, always calm and patient with everyone. She served in various communities with the purpose of "loving with the Heart of Jesus and Mary".

The importance given to fraternal love made her work day and night with such generosity.

She was in fact convinced that "we need to free ourselves from selfishness, know the good of others, make ourselves servants of all and never say, it is not my turn, but to feel that the community is a communion of souls. ..

*People do not look at what I say, but what I am.*

*How Consecrated Life becomes beautiful when it is lived in the presence of Jesus in prayer and in fraternity!*

*"(From her writings).*

It was these small but continuous 'daily charities' that left a great

memory of her, wherever she went: in Cavasagra, in Cavaso, in Borgo Cavour and in the Mother house.

With generosity she also crossed the difficult moments that life often reserves and said that it is necessary to overcome everything,

*"always with a new heart and to start again with the conversion that must change life"*  
(from her writings).

In 2014, she was transferred to the infirmary of the Mother house where she lived her last period of life. She spent four years in which her charitable activity was only "prayer and daily offering of oneself", in silent abandonment in the hands of God until the moment of entering into the eternal Kingdom from where she will surely continue to make everyone feel her closeness to fraternity and charity.

*Sr Teresita, now that you are  
with the Lord,  
remember your loved ones  
begging for them  
the blessing of the Lord.  
To the Hearts of Jesus  
and Mary  
ask for the gift of holy priestly  
and religious vocations  
for the Church  
that urgently needs them.*





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