

## *Borders and encounters*

*In the time of history and of the Church in which we are living, we perceive strongly that these events deeply question our consecrated life: we are being asked to actually work, as on several occasions Pope Francis said, in a “hospital camp” that is not only the Church itself, but the whole of humanity. In the many countries in which we are engaged as missionaries to spread the love that redeems us, restores dignity and opens roads for the future even to the most marginalized, we experience the suffering, the anxieties of the world, but also the evangelical joy that captures good fruit even where it would seem to dominate the weeds. The richness of our faith and our charism gives us safe and good “keys” to read the story, so to be “joyful messengers of high proposals, guardians of the goodness and beauty that shine in a faithful life to the Gospel”. (EG 168)*

The frequent reports of walls rising in several European countries at this time “to defend” national borders pose a serious challenge to our conscience and the authenticity of our Christian witness.

In a world that, on the one hand, proclaims globalization, in a society that boasts of fast communication through the whole planet ... becomes questionable whether such progress is only “virtual”, that is where we do not touch each other. We do not touch the other’s flesh, we do not contaminate ourselves, we select only what we like and are interested about the other person. The dialogue over the air, at a distance, does not compare with the neighbor.

Multitude - anonymous, approximate numbers in daily landings on European shores - men, women and children are concentrated in closed areas in order to protect ourselves and get distracted, because no one knows who has to face the problem ... maybe just those fleeing trying horizons from which fleeing again.

On the frontiers, men cannot offer promises, but an unspoken - or scream - exchange of threats that generates countless ghosts of foreigners. Foreign, dangerous people, different human beings, strangers, nomads, exiles ... by a choice? Who has the right to choose for them?

Then a question arises, aroused by wrinkled faces who cannot leave quiet my memory, remembering that with Vows, on the day of my religious profession, I publicly side with the little and outcast people: what is my experience of borders?

On which setting does the door of my room open every day... in the name of God?



How many talks we are doing lately in the name of God, how many words ... Woe to me if I use that name to show a compassion that keeps me safe!

For the missionary always the future, the beginning has been a "border" ...

How many borders have drawn the geography of our history! Again, I believe, the future is for us at the border. Border is the Promised Land that Moses - the head of the exiles - gazed from afar, after accompanying his people

to the border, where the Lord has opened up a new story. Maybe we are called to prepare land for alliances that save, growing ever larger receptions, planting an authentic root - human and Christian - of trust and dialogue starting from our communities and then coming out as continually urges us Pope Francis.

The Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* suggests perspectives through which to read the story and discern. The Pope invites to proclaim the Gospel everywhere **"to all places, on all occasions, without hesitation, reluctance or fear"** (23), taking on the challenges of the current reality. The categorical "No" of the pope to an "exclusion economy" and to the "idolatry of money" (53-58) indirectly assigns an opposing force to our commitment of Franciscan poverty, to the view of "giving back", to a real sobriety pursued to learn to listen to the expectation of the poor and to amaze us every day with divine Providence.

Poverty becomes a meeting ground where of course there are rescues and shares. The No to **"inequality that generates violence"** (59-60) proclaims the fraternity revolution, the land where obedience is the service of others and the overcoming of the border of their need, of the aggression stimulated by the struggle of having and being.



The contemplative dimension, the daily time of thanksgiving, of silence that ponders and the word that asks forgiveness keeps us from the temptation of falling back on our own truth, from externality, relativism and superficiality.

Faithfulness to prayer, the joy of supporting each other mutually helping to have faith, is communion and intercession for those who are persecuted and oppressed for the name of God (cf. 61).

We are called to be on the borders to *"discover and share a mystique of living together, of mingling and encounter, of embracing and supporting one another, of stepping into this flood tide which, while chaotic, can become a genuine experience of fraternity, a caravan of solidarity, a sacred pilgrimage"* (87).

Our fraternities can be laboratories of inclusion and beauty areas, where human dignity is celebrated and becomes commitment to Christ and the land of sending and coming back, where the guest is sought, expected, accepted.

Where there is courage because together we believed. Moreover, faith is a journey, from border to border, that help us to deconstruct and make us to cross over, to make us say, *"We had never done so"*, yet it is possible.



## In communion with the Church

### International meeting to conclude the Year of Consecrated Life



More than 4,000 religious, belonging to the different forms of consecrated life, came to Rome from all over the world to participate, like us, Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, to the big final event of the Year of Consecrated Life, which was held **from January 28 to February 2, 2016.**

This great event was attended by the General Council:

*Sr Paola Dotto*, Superior General, and the councilors:

*Sr. Tiziana Tonini,*  
*sr Emmapia Bottamedi,*  
*Sr Georgina Vilongiyil,*  
*Sr Bernarda Alvarez,*

and the general secretary *Sr Augusta Visentin,*

together with the Provincial and Vice-Provincial Superiors: *Sr Anna Maria Volpato* of Province "Saint Mary of the Angels", *Sr Angelica Hadjihanni* of the Prov. "Saint Elizabeth", Cyprus, *Sr Marta Camerotto*



of "Mary Immaculate" Prov.,

*Sr Fides Lorenzon* of the Latin American Prov. "San Antonio",

*Sr Beatrice Bifouma* of the Vice Prov. "Holy Martyrs of Uganda" *Sr Gracy Thuruthippallil* of the "Holy Family" Prov. India.

Other sisters have joined the group.

## In communion with the Church

This international meeting has been organized with days of meetings, prayer vigils, and times to gather and reflect together on the characteristics of each form of consecrated life, with a prophetic look into the future. These were the purpose of the meeting:

- Learning more about the great mosaic of Consecrated Life.
- To live in communion rediscovering the unique call in the diversity of forms in order to live together the journey in the great "**Jubilee of Mercy**" that once again is entrusting to all consecrated people the specific mandate of their vocation: *to be the face of the merciful Father, witnesses and builders of true fraternity.*

The meeting began with the vigil prayer on Thursday 28 January 2016 at 18:00 in the Papal Basilica of Saint Peter, presided by His.E. Msgr. Jose Rodriguez Carballo OFM, in the presence of His. E.

Cardinal. Joao Braz of Aviz,  
Prefect of CIVCSVA.

The Archbishop in his opening address emphasized the gratitude to the Most High Good Lord, for this year of grace and blessings for Consecrated Life.

A time, which has called religious life to reflect on itself, to question what God and humanity, are now demanding to live with fidelity to the Gospel.

Bishop Carballo stressed the commitment to fight against the temptation of self-reference, and to be conscientious to go out to the peripheries to bring the **GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL** to all especially to the poor and distant people and share one's own spirituality and mission with the laity.



Friday, January 29 all religious and consecrated people participating to the meeting gathered in the Paul VI Hall at the Vatican for conferences directed to everyone.

Saturday 30 and Sunday, January 31 the participants of all forms of consecrated life came together in five different places in Rome, to deepen some specific aspects of their vocation.

## In communion with the Church

We found ourselves all together again on *Monday, 1 February* in the Paul VI, for an audience with Pope Francis and in the afternoon for the oratorio *“On the Trail of Beauty”* directed by Msgr. Marco Frisina, with a guided visit to the Sistine Chapel.



On *February 2* in the morning the groups went in different basilicas jubilee to live the *“Jubilee of Mercy.”* Our group went with joy at the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls. In the afternoon at 17:30 with a Eucharistic Celebration presided by Pope Francis the year of *consecrated life ended in this Holy Year of Mercy.*



## In communion with the Church



For the Sisters of the General Council and the Superiors of the Provinces and Vice-Province was a time of grace and very appropriate as a preparation for the Extended General Council.

Each experience was a real opportunity to learn more about the directives of the Church, to reflect on our charism, to feel deeply the urgencies of the world today and to thank God with joy and confidence for our religious family, founded on a strong missionary and ecclesial spirit that we must preserve and transmit faithfully primarily by the witness of our personal and fraternal life.





### **With the entire Franciscan Family, we remember the Centenary of the Portiuncula Indulgence, 1216-2016**

**On 1216 Francis obtained the Portiuncula Indulgence: “ those who come to this church and confessed and repented, conceding absolved by a priest, are freed from guilt and from punishment in heaven and on earth, from the day baptism day and time of entry into the church”.**

This year, providentially in the extraordinary **Holy Year of Mercy** wanted by **Pope Francis**, marks the eighth centenary (1216-2016) of this event which is also known as **the Pardon of Assisi**.

We report here some excerpts from **the letter of the general Ministers on the eighth centenary of the Pardon of Assisi** that help us to reflect on the importance of the “Pardon of Assisi” today for us and for our being “missionary” of His redemptive love for humanity



*Two important events are marked during 2016: the anniversary of the date traditionally associated with the granting of the Portiuncula Indulgence, which was inspired by St. Francis’ wish that “everyone be brought to heaven”, and the celebration of the Jubilee of Mercy, inspired by the Pope who bears St. Francis’ name.*



*The word Misericordia is very dear to St. Francis, who in his writings frequently uses it in two ways; referring both to God’s mercy towards us, and our showing mercy to our brothers and sisters.*

*This is reminiscent of the Gospel phrase that the Pope has suggested as the motto of the Jubilee Year: “Be merciful as your Father is merciful” (Lk 6:36). Our merciful relationships with others are closely linked to the mercy that God shows us: God’s love is the limitless spring from which we can draw the mercy that we then communicate to our neighbor. And as we know, we can love only to the extent that we are aware of being loved by the Divine Source of all good.*

*What we generally say about love can also be said about forgiveness, which is a specific form of mercy. The parable that Jesus tells in response to Peter’s question “how many times must I forgive?” condemns the behavior of the servant who does not forgive his co-worker’s small debt, when previously the master had forgiven him a huge debt. Once again, the reason for forgiving others is that we ourselves have been forgiven by God - as we pray in the Our Father, “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” That “as” does not so much indicate an equivalence, it indicates the motive behind our forgiveness of others: from the certainty that God has forgiven me comes the need to forgive “as” the Father forgives. This is another way of saying that we should be merciful “as” the Father is merciful.*

*Given the truth of this, a sure way for us to become increasingly merciful is to grow in the awareness that we ourselves are loved by God. Here again we make the association between the gift received from God and the gift offered to the brothers and sisters, something which is characteristic of the Franciscan spiritual experience.*



## *Journeying with the Franciscan Family*



To the extent that we, like Francis, discover that God “is the good, all good, the highest good, and he alone is good”, so the need to respond to the good that we have received gains strength in us, with the consequence that we pass on the goodness of which we are capable...

When he asked the Pope for an extraordinary indulgence for the little church of the Portiuncula, Francis found a new means of celebrating Gods’ abundant forgiveness and mercy towards us...

Whenever we receive this amazing indulgence of the Father through the Church, we too experience an outpouring of mercy, and this allows us to become more capable of compassion and reconciliation in real life situations.

We can see wonderful examples of this creative ability to promote peace and reconciliation in the life of Francis. The episode at the end of his life, when he reconciled the Civil Authority (Podestà) and the Bishop of Assisi, comes to mind. He did this by singing his Canticle of Brother Sun, with the addition of a verse on forgiveness. An early biographer writes at the beginning of this story that Francis told his companions: “It is a great shame for you, servants of God, that the bishop and the podestà hate one another in this way, and that there is no one intervening for peace and harmony between them.”(Assisi Compilation, 84). Francis does not assume that this is an issue of no concern to him; he has a sense of shame because no one has intervened in order to restore peace. I wonder whether we too feel some shame because no one intervenes in the conflicts of our time? How much responsibility do we feel, as Francis did, to bring about peace and reconciliation? To do this above all in our own fraternities, when there are divisions, but also in regard to the political, religious, economic, and social conflicts of our time?...



In today’s world we Franciscans are probably not often called to address and solve the complex problems of the world by offering technical solutions, or by being involved in difficult issues, which are often beyond us. Instead, we are called to find ways to foster reconciliation and peace by touching people’s hearts with the witness of minority, simplicity, beauty and song. By living as brothers and sisters in sincerity and truth, we witness to what is essential; and the people of today, just like the Podestà and the Bishop of Assisi, can thus recognize how worthwhile it is to live in peace, seeing problems in their proper perspective, and choosing the path of forgiveness.

May this centenary help us to experience a “healthy shame” because of the lack of those strongly committed to working for peace and harmony in the conflictual realities in which we live. May it help us grow in our creative abilities to find new ways to sing a song that the men and women of our time can relate to. May our lives be a living song of praise to God, the source all love, and thus be a real inspiration for peacebuilding and reconciliation.



## Episcopal Ordination in Istanbul Monsignor Rubén Tierrablanca OFM

The Christian community in Istanbul and throughout Turkey, on June 11, the feast of St. Barnabas, gathered with great joy and consolation for the episcopal ordination **Fr. Ruben Tierrablanca Gonzalez, OFM**, parish priest already for 13 years of the parish of S. Maria in Draperis in Istanbul.



The Superior General, Sr Paola, who was in Cameroon at that time, sent the General Council to participate in this extraordinary event, as a sign of fraternity and gratitude for the help and cooperation offered by the ofm fathers to our community of Büyükada.

The solemn celebration presided by *His.E. Cardinal Leonardo Sandri*, Prefect of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, has gathered in unity priests, religious and laity of the Latin, Byzantine, Armenian, Chaldean and Syriac rite, members of the Orthodox churches,

Muslim authorities and ordinary people. This gathered was the result of the dedication to ecumenical and interreligious dialogue cultivated for many years by Father Ruben with his ecclesial spirit.

*“Unum in Christo”*, the motto chosen by the neo-Bishop and the bridge drawn on the emblem indicate well the project of communion among the Churches and the peoples of so many religions and ethnicities in Turkey and highly visible especially in Istanbul.



Alongside the co-consecrating Bishops, *Archbishop Lorenzo Piretto*, Bishop of Smyrne, and *Msgr. Paul Bizzeti*, bishop of Anatolia concelebrated also *Msgr. José Carballo*, Secretary of the Congregation for Religious, *Msgr. Angelo Accattino* in charge of the Affaires ad interim of the apostolic Nunciature in Turkey, *Fr. Julio Cesar Bunader*, Vicar of the Order of friars Minor and many other friars who came mostly from Italy.

The songs, cared by the Catholic communities of the Eastern rite Chaldean, Armenian and Syriac, have revived the celebration and, as is normal in Istanbul, a variety of languages in addition to the Latin have been used during the rite.



The day of June 12 was dedicated to the Christian community of the parish of Santa Maria in Draperis.

The different groups of the faithful from Africa, Philippine and Korean took turns for the animation of the Eucharistic liturgy, that was participated with great devotion by many people. Among the gifts, very meaningful was the one offered by a couple of Italian origin belonging to the first family present in the parish since the nineteenth century. They offered an ancient map of the Holy Places.

To close the evening in the Italian Consulate Circle we could attend the prayer with song and dance of the whirling of the Dervishes Sufi Muslim group.

On the eve of the great feast, June 10, to the Sisters of the General Council and the community in Turkey had been reserved a special privilege: the visit at our house in Büyükkada of Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, accompanied by the

Secretary of the Nunciature, Monsignor Angelo Accattino and his Special Assistant, Don Flavio.

These prominent guests, after visiting the house and celebrated Mass ended with the blessing of the statues of Our Lady and of St. Joseph, donated by the Superior General, Sr Paola, they fraternally shared a meal prepared by our sisters of the community, Sr Zita Gutang and Sr Miriam Oyarzo. It was for us a favorable opportunity to raise awareness of the missionary reality of the whole Congregation, present in the Middle East from the beginning of the foundation and in the various continents.



The Cardinal praised, in particular, the courage to return to this earth to bring the Christian and religious witness in the middle of the multi-religious people of Turkey. An atmosphere of fraternity, joy has permeated every moment, providing an opportunity to meet, to create friendship, communication, so necessary in a country where Catholics are so scattered and a small minority.



# EXTENDED GENERAL COUNCIL

2 to 12 February 2016

*“We are still excited and thrilled of our participation in the closing event of the Year dedicated to the Consecrated Life, for the engaging audience with Pope Francis in Paul VI Hall, for the celebration of the Jubilee and the participation in Holy Mass, presided by Pope Francis in St. Peter’s Basilica.*

*It has been a gift and a special privilege rich in meetings, discussions, provocations and guidelines that illuminate and even sustain our General Council meeting Extended to all of you, Provincial and Vice-provincial Superiors, in communion with the whole Family that wants to search and continue with the power of the Spirit, the journey in the Father’s Will. “*

With these words, the Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto, introduced on February 3, the work of the Extended General Council with the participation, of the General Councillors, Sr Tiziana Tonini, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, Sr Georgina Vilongiyil, Sr Bernarda Alvarez, the Secretary, Sr Augusta Visentin and the Provincial and Vice-provincial Superiors, Sr. Anna Maria Volpato, Sr Laura Morgan, Sr. Angelica Hadjihanni, Sr M. Armelle Kosta, Sr. Marta Camerotto, Sr. M. Fides Lorenzon, Sr Beatrice Bifouma and Sr Gracy Thuruthippallil.



The greeting-message of Sr. Paola focused especially on the missionary element of our Charism, the collaboration within our religious Family and the formation. The presentation of the congregational setting and the challenges that today’s political social world context pose, elicited a constructive dialogue.



On February 4, **Fr. Ruben Tierrablanca OFM** of the community 'S. Maria in Draperis' in Istanbul has offered a reflection on the theme: **'Fraternity in mission'** with references to his mission experience in Muslim land in Turkey.

His words were clearly full of concrete examples especially for living out more true and evangelical community relationships, and with a strong sense of openness not only within the community but also to all the brethren and of any religion.

On 5 and 6 February

**Fr. Gabriele Ferrari s.x.** offered deep and rich reflections on the missionary aspect of our Vocation



and the needs of the Church today. Everything was followed with great interest by all. The topics addressed have sparked a lively debate:

**"The mission ad gentes is changing, but is not diminishing",**  
**"The mission according to Pope Francis.**

**The new perspectives of mission ad gentes and the evaluation on the way of doing mission by the missionary institutes",**

**"The overview of the universal mission - Problems, urgent tasks and challenges",**  
**"Pathways for a missionary spirituality."**





From February 7, the dialogue continued with lively and intense participation by all resulting from the answers to the questionnaire previously sent to the Provincial and Vice-Provincial Superiors, and other related issues, in particular, **the preparation of the next General Chapter** and the commemoration of the **100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of our Foundress, Laura Leroux de Bauffremont**.

The meetings marked by listening and dialogue, have been interrupted only by listening to the message of Pope Francis in the first day of Lent and the visit to the community of the Provincial House in Rome - Centocelle.



With serenity and clarity, many issues have been proposed and debated concerning evangelization today in the various realities of the world with constant reference to the Congregational charism.

The synthesis of the topics addressed has been delivered to the Provincial and vice-provincial Superiors in order to continue the reflection and sharing with the sisters of the respective Organisms.

Mutual trust and hope in the Lord led all the work of the Assembly, projecting into the future our religious Family.





## ***Canonical Visit of Sr. Paola Dotto, Superior General to "Saint Louis IX" Province***

The sisters of the Province "Saint Louis IX" had the joy of living the canonical visit of Sr. Paola Dotto, general superior!



In listening and with trust, each sister had a chance to talk to her, to get her advices and with that to continue her journey to "follow Christ" with more enthusiasm in the gift of herself to the Lord.



*With the Priests in their Rest Home*

*Pace e Bene*

"From February 23 to March 12 was achieved in our French province the canonical visit of Sr. Paola Dotto, our Superior General, whom we received with great joy.

The visit of the Superior General is always a "unique" event and each of us had many expectations and hopes because the voice of the One who guides us is important to revive our community and missionary life.



Sister Paola, in fact, met every community in the province and she has offered to each sister a message of hope and peace.

During her visit, she has encouraged us to continue our mission with generosity and enthusiasm, wherever we are. In addition, echoing the demands of Pope Francis, she has urged us to go out to the peripheries and to reach out to others to find again the “joy of the Gospel”.



*Community 'St. Maurice'  
Attichy*

Her passing among us occurred in the sign of fraternity, of sharing of our daily life with children, the sick and all those who come to us for a word of consolation and hope.



*Community 'St François'  
Carlepont*

Sister Paola left us a memory of goodness, encouraging us to continue our daily offering to the Lord with enthusiasm and confidence in the Lord.

We lived this meeting with great joy, simplicity and serenity, because she instilled in all of us openness and courage.

*Community of "Notre Dame du  
Sacré-Cœur" in Paris*



*Pace e Serene*



“Meeting the community” of **Lithuania**, Sr. Paola went to visit the Hill of Crosses, which is a pilgrimage site located near the city of Siauliai, in the north of Lithuania.

The first crosses were placed on the fortified hill in the XIV century.



Over time, Catholic pilgrims have brought here numerous crosses, crucifixes, carvings of Lithuanian patriots, statues of the Virgin Mary, effigies and rosaries.



*Community ‘St. Jean XXIII’ in Tavannes, Switzerland with the Superior general, Sr Paola and the Parish Priest*

Together let us give praise to the Lord for these opportunities that have encouraged us by giving new impetus to our lives, to our mission in the Congregation and in the Church.

We entrust Sr. Paola to the Lord Jesus and thank her very much for her affection, her simplicity and her joy.



## Canonical Visit of the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto To The Latin American Province "San Antonio"

March 19: Feast of St. Joseph, patron of our Congregation. It was a special day for our Province "San Antonio" as Sr Paola Dotto, Superior General, has come among us, to make the canonical visit.

Sister Fides Lorenzon, Provincial Superior, Sister Inés Pavan and Sister Marcela Uribe, went to pick her up at the airport, with the director of the Lyceum "Mother Cecilia Lazzeri" Ms. Martha Meza, and some teachers and students. In the provincial house, the sisters were waiting with joy and in a spirit of fraternity.



With emotion and sentiments of being privileged, students have offered to Sister Paola, on behalf of the college, palm plants, as a sign of strength and olive tree as a sign of peace and hope.

After the welcome reception, the sisters shared with

Sister Paola, a moment of fraternal dialogue, asking about the various missions and the health of the sisters in Italy and in other missions.

We received Sister Paola with the joy to recognize ourselves as sisters united in God, being her presence for us a possibility to meet, to grow and to get new strength.

Sister Paola started visiting the "Community of Lourdes" in the provincial house, at first with the sisters of the infirmary and then continuing, according to the planned journey, to visit the different communities of our Province.



Sunday, March 20 came to the Provincial Community, the sisters of the Community "Santa Rosa" and "Santa Clara" to share a lunch, in the joy of gathering together around our Superior General.



In the morning prayer of Lauds, we invoked the Holy Spirit to enlighten us and enable us to open our hearts to listen and express to our Superior General, feelings, worries and difficulties.

It has been a lot of significant experience of living throughout Holy Week with the presence of Sister Paola and participating with devotion every day in all the celebrations until Easter Sunday.

Holy Thursday, sr. Paola took part in the liturgy and then shared lunch with the teachers and all the staff of the school "Mother Cecilia Lazzeri."



**Easter Sunday:** we celebrated this solemn day, participating in the Liturgies of the Parish and in fraternal joy we also shared the lunch with the sisters of the Community “Santa Rosa” and “Santa Clara”

The following days, sr Paola continued visiting to the various Communities of our Province.

*With the Junior Sisters in Santiago*

*Among the sisters of the Community “Santa Chiara” of Santiago.*

Sister Paola came to our community on Easter evening to begin the canonical visit.

The next morning we prayed Lauds together and then we had breakfast in the community; then she invited “**Santa Maria degli Angeli**” where the entire educational community of our school was waiting to welcome her. The principal of the school, Sister Attiliana Durigon with the management and the student center team received warmly sr Paola and presented her to the whole community.

A group of students with the national dance has honored her. Also in the afternoon, she met all the groups of the educational community offering them her message.

We believe that the presence of our Mother General has been very significant for the fraternal sharing with us in the community, for her Franciscan simplicity. Each sister has had a space for personal dialogue with her, sharing experiences, doubts, fears, joys and sorrows. This made each of the sisters able to recognize weaknesses, virtues and enhance the efforts done.

In the community, Sister Paola did an introductory reflection, sharing her experiences during the visit to the different missions, and urged us to love our religious family and to recognize our Founders, as our Spiritual



Parents: Laura Leroux and Father Gregory, who have been instruments of God. Listening to her passion for our Congregation, we were motivated to strengthen our love for our religious family, as God’s work, and work for it, for the Kingdom of God with everyone, especially the neediest.

After she has given us the Way of the Cross, reminding us that we must not forget that our spirituality is centered on the Passion of Christ and His love for mankind.





We thank Sister Paola for her invaluable presence in our midst, may the Lord continue to bless her in the delicate mission that He has entrusted to her.

*Visit to the Community “Maria Assunta” of Puerto Montt.*

March 30, Sr Paola Dotto arrived at the airport “El Tepual” where were waiting for her the sisters of the community “Maria Assunta”, teachers, the Director of the parents and the Director of the students of a folk group, who sang and danced in her honour. Then we proceeded on the road to the school, where the children were waiting and they expressed their welcome with white handkerchiefs. In the red room, children in the fourth grade welcomed sr. Paola with the “salute of the flag.” In that place, many persons of the staff working in the school came to greet her.



In the afternoon of the same day, Sister Paola started the dialogue with the sisters, in a quiet, peaceful setting. We celebrated together the recitation of Vespers, followed by dinner and recreation, and the Compline prayer. At the end of the day, we could say that we lived very emotional moments sharing with her.

On April 1, our Superior General, was received in audience by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Puerto Montt, Archbishop Cristián Caro. Sister Alicia Gallardo superior of the community accompanied her.

The Archbishop has shown a keen satisfaction for the work done by the sisters, and he also spoke at length of vocations explaining that the next week would be dedicated to vocations, with prayer and with various activities for the religious and priestly vocations.



April 2 Sister Paola continued the dialogue sisters and then welcomed the visit of the parents of Sister Miriam Oyarzo. In the afternoon of the same day, we gathered as community invoking the Holy Spirit for this fraternal meeting. Fraternal life and the spiritual life were the two reflection aims where Sister Paola urged to be courageous and steadfast in living with joy, our religious vocation and Franciscan missionary spirit. We ended going in our chapel, to receive a plenary indulgence at the conclusion of the visit.

Thank you, very much Sr. Paola for all that you wanted to share for the sake of unity in our fraternity. May the Lord God bless you, protect and guide your words in expressing the message you want to give to every community of our sisters.



*In the Community "Regina Mundi" in Puerto Varas*

Today my community want to celebrate, celebrate the gift of the family called "Congregation" make this date a memory rich of "thank you"

These words of tribute spoken in the Eucharist of thanksgiving for the presence of Sr Paola Dotto, expressing that every moment was significant for us making very joyful her visit to our community.

In our memory will remain the joyful face of our Superior General in listening how lay people, children and young people feel part of the charism of our religious Family. For our part, we have accepted her enthusiastic and joyful words that has invited us to further strengthen our charism and our missionary commitment in the Congregation.



Thank you Lord for Sister Paola,  
Thank you dear Mother General for making this day a great feast.  
Thank you ... because your presence reminded us that we are daughters who bear the name of Franciscan with a missionary vocation and a charism that flows from the Sacred Heart.



*In Guayaquil – Ecuador with the Bishop , Mons Luis Cabrera Herrera ofm*

Sister Paola, our beloved Superior General, stayed three days with us. She expressed the desire of not wanting to go anywhere, if it was not necessary to remain in the community as long as possible.

Her words and attitudes were full of simplicity and fraternal closeness. The sharing moments were lived quietly and in Franciscan simplicity. She was "a sister among the sisters," who has given us all the time, taking advantage of the available space for "dialogue, listening and sharing." Thank you very much for what she "is" and does for each and for all in the Congregation.



*Pace e Bene*



*In Quito - Ecuador*

In the five days of the canonical visit with Sr. Paola, our Superior General, we could share with joy and gratitude our life, mission, and we welcomed her presence as a time of grace.

With her wise words, she encouraged us to be faithful witnesses to the mission and always try to be united with the Lord, taking care of the brethren especially the weakest, in school, in the parish, anywhere.

We had the joy of sharing with her the various moments of our day, prayers, meals, speaking simply and sharing our life. Her humanity in sharing with us this time made us feel her closeness and left us a great task.



*With our sisters .... in Tijuana , Mexico*

The community '**Laura Leroux**' Tijuana in Mexico had the grace to receive the visit of our General Superior, Sr Paola Dotto on 15, 16, 17 and 18 April. This is the farthest communities in the Province, in which we are three sisters and in which we have not our own apostolic work; Sister Paola would never have imagined that her arrival could cause a feast.

She was welcomed, as is characteristic of Mexico, with "mariaci". We, the sisters of the community and people with whom we work, pastoral and educational groups were there to greet her.

One of the significant moments of the visit of our General Superior, was the meeting we had with the two groups of lay associates we have in the community and representatives of various groups with whom we share our apostolate.





It all began with a solemn Eucharistic celebration in our parish, in which we had the grace to receive a plenary indulgence in this year of grace; then, at home, some lay people of different groups shared their experience of participating in our charism in this young mission. We thank God for his providence, for all we live and do: this is the experience that we have received from the Lord, and thus we expressed to

our Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto.

Moreover, these days, we have had the grace to share moments, in different times and places, with Bishop Rafael Romo Muñoz, archbishop of the Archdiocese of Tijuana, with Father Carlos Ramon Sup. Provincial of the Capuchin Friars of this area, with Fr. Ignacio Muro, Vicar Provincial OFM and former general definator, who contacted us so that our community could come to this earth and with the children and directors of Christopher Columbus School. We thank all for the sharing and for being close to us day after day in our life as Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

The most important thing of the whole visit of our General Superior was the sharing in the fraternity. To sr Paola, we say thanks for her closeness and simplicity that we have enjoyed these days. Thanks for having encouraged us to live each day more faithfully our consecration and our charism.



### ***With the Community of 'Sta Isabel de Hungria' in Cuzco, Perú.***

The community is composed of: Sister Rosa Vega, Superior of the community, Sister Zulma Ayma, Sister Almendra Aparicio and Sister Silvia Nina.

The long-awaited canonical visit of Sr Paola Dotto Superior General was a very enriching experience both human and spiritual, for each of the sisters who lived it as a sign of God's presence in the midst of fraternity and as a personal meeting with Him.

The language has not been an obstacle to personal





dialogue and community meeting; with her closeness, the attitude of listening and simplicity Sister Paola created the dialogue, thus facilitating space for a free and honest communication.

The facts that have characterized this visit were: the presence of the parents of the native sisters of Cuzco, who wanted to be partakers from her arrival at the airport until the day agreed, for a Thanksgiving greeting to Sister Paola for her coming to this land mission.

Also significant was the visit in our community of His. E. Archbishop of Cuzco, Monsignor Richard Daniel Alarcón Urrutia, with Father Manuel Hurtado Alegre, to welcome our Superior General, share the realities of the parish and recognize the presence of our sisters in the Church of this area called “right edge”.



At the conclusion of the visit, Sister Paola urged us to be witnesses of the living Christ, living in simplicity in the manner of St. Francis, having mutual trust, love for the Eucharist, constant prayer, abandonment to the will of God, faith in Divine Providence and responsibility in studies to better deliver the message of

the Gospel to the people around us, especially the poorest and neediest. We recalled the example of the first sisters who with joy, faith and perseverance have lived our Congregational charism.

Grateful to God for this special experience, Sister Paola’s visit in our community, we ask the Lord to bless her always and continue to bless our Congregation with many vocations.



*With the sisters of the Community ‘Virgen del Perpetuo Socorro’ in LIMA*

With great joy, we received our dear Mother General Sr Paola Dotto. Sister Isabel went to welcome her to the Airport, while at home a group of women belonging to the community “Peace and Good” of lay associates welcomed her with a beautiful bouquet of flowers.



*Pace e Bene*



On April 21 anniversary of 155 years of the canonical opening of our Congregation we had the grace to enjoy the presence of our Superior General. We had a simple, but significant celebration, surely with a cake. We started with the Morning Prayer in which we gave thanks for our religious family spread in many parts of the world and committed to bring the message of evangelization with joy and availability wherever Holy Spirit guides us.



In the afternoon, we gathered with all our friends, benefactors and people in the neighborhood around for the Eucharist Celebration of thanksgiving. Bishop, Juan Carlos Vera Plasencia MSC, was the presider with the deacon Ewuin Figueroa. During the presentation of gifts: the Easter candle was presented by the Superior General in charge of the transmission of light in our religious family and the flag of Peru presented by a married couple, meaning that our charism is already spread in several places in this country that has given 14 young people who today live their consecration as FMSC.

The Superior General then handed to each person present at the celebration a lighted candle as a sign of the missionary mandate to transmit light of the Gospel to others. We continued the feast in our house, where the community of lay associates had prepared a buffet dinner. It was a fraternal and joyful sharing with typical songs of the Peruvian folklore.

A beautiful gift was offered to Sr. Paola: the “Cruz del Camino” or “Cruz del Calvario or of the Andes”, which represents the “sorrowful mystery of the crucifixion and death of Christ.”





The presence of Sr Paola Dotto has certainly brought a festive atmosphere and celebration of the days spent in the community. On April 22, we started the day with the celebration of the Holy Mass in our chapel. It was presided by the parish priest, Father Francis Xavier, a Passionist priest. We renewed our religious profession and we felt united in our thanksgiving.

The Superior General also met the Cardinal Juan Luis Cipriani, Primate of the Church of Peru. It was a pleasant conversation; the Cardinal is interested in the works we have in Peru, gave a gift to Sr Paola, one of his books with his autograph, gave us his blessing and told us to pray for him as ever asks Pope Francis.

Sr Paola Dotto greeted also the Auxiliary Bishop of Lima, Raúl Chau, a few minutes before the meeting with the Cardinal.

On April 23 ended the canonical visit of Sr Paola. Her close presence, simple and comfortable, with her gifts of listening and understanding has remained in our hearts. Her testimony has enriched us, also through the sharing of experiences and present situations of the life of the congregation.



### *... And the Community 'Virgen del Carmen' in Tambobamba, Perú*

Sister Mirta Duarte with Father Cristian have traveled to Cusco to welcome our Superior General Sr Paola Dotto who came to fulfill the canonical visit to our community of Tambobamba "Virgen del Carmen" in Peru.

Sr Mirta arrived Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at noon in Tambobamba with our Superior General Sr Paola Dotto.

The sisters of the community, along with teachers, students of the School of San Antonio de Padua and children of Nazareth board, they were in the Palcaro square waiting for our superior General to accept her, with the presence on the Mayor Flores, with banners, songs and dances.





After the general welcome, the religious community met with the Superior General.

On the same day, in the afternoon Sr. Paola Dotto was able to meet our bishop Monsignor Domingo Berni, to give report of the religious community in this mission of the Prelature of Chuquibambilla, where the

sisters carry out their pastoral work.

On Wednesday, April 27

Sr Paola Dotto has visited and sharing some moments with the students of the school of St. Anthony of Padua. The Director Sister Consuelo Borda guided the visit in which students were in a dialogue with the Sup. General.

On the same day, in the afternoon, Sister Consuelo with her staff met with Sister Paola Dotto, presenting the educational project of the school and our educational mission in our village Tambobamba.



### *In Bolivia in the Community 'Sagrado Corazón', Sorata*

The long-awaited visit of the Sup. General Sr Paola Dotto, from 2 to 5 May has brought so much joy to our community and to the educational community where the sisters work for 30 years.

The pastor of Sorata Fr. Eloy Vargas, Sister Rosa Blanco, superior of the community and Sister Soraida Portillo went to the airport of El Alto (3,800 m. above sea level) a little concerned about the possible negative effects of the altitude. Thanks to God, they returned with no problems except for some riots in the streets, as always happen in La Paz.

At their arrival near our house, they were attended by the Bishop of the Diocese Bishop Juan Vargas and the priests of the parish. All have shown great interest and joy at the presence of Sister Paola. In the school community the presence of Sister Paola was an opportunity to meet and reflect on the human and spiritual values. Everyone listened with great interest and Sister Enrica has translated from Italian.

Students and teachers showed their artistic abilities and the desire to have at least one photo to remember the event. We all wanted her to stay longer.

It was a moment of special grace for the sisters. Sister Paola brought us great joy and new lights for living more deeply our consecrated life with renewed commitment and enthusiasm for a more joyful and attractive witness of life also in view of new vocations.

We thank her for your presence among us and we assure our prayer that the Lord will accompany her in her delicate work in favor of our beloved Congregation.





***In the Community 'San Francisco', Cochabamba***

From 6 to 8 May Sr Paola Dotto went to be with the sisters of the community of Cochabamba living with them moments of grace, joy, dialogue, sharing their expectations, projects and hopes of the community life and apostolic activities .



It was very significant the time lived by our Superior General with the teachers of the educational units of the schools of St Francis of Assisi and St. Clare of Assisi, as well as the meeting with the representatives of the catechesis of First Communion, Confirmation, of the JOFRAMI, of the Infancy and of the Student Center. The children and teachers of St. Clare of Assisi School made an artistic representation to welcome Sister Paola.



A solemn Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated for the visit of Sr Paola Dotto that was also attended by the teaching staff, parents and students.

***Community 'Virgen de Guadalupe' in Santa Cruz***

From 9 to 13 of May: The visit of our General Superior, was waiting by her sisters, moved by the spirit of family and sense of belongingness. Sister Sandra Araóz and Sr. Luz Marina Velasquez were present at the airport Viru Viru to welcome Sr Paola Dotto with parents and students of the College "San Francisco." While sister Carmen Calizaya and Sister Gladys Chavez waited in the community.

For us, the presence of our Superior General Sr Paola Dotto, was a time of grace of the Lord



*Pace e Bene*



and renewal in the desire to further invigorate fraternal life, with generosity and responsibility in the fulfillment of our mission in and out of the Community life.

This welcome and fraternal spirit was also present in the educational community, who welcomed Sr. Paola with a presentation of the orchestra violin with parents and the whole school community; a cultural and international experience.



In the canonical visit, the community has experienced the joy of the presence of her person characterized by closeness and simplicity.

During the meeting, she encouraged us to continue with firmness and perseverance to live out the call of our consecration and living the values of our Congregational charism so that each of the sisters and the people, who visit us, can hear “the good perfume” to serve the Lord with joy. Feel united in one spirit and in the same direction. We also said that we are experiencing a lack of vocations throughout the Congregation because of the generation gap. We must commit ourselves to work for the Kingdom of God, without walls and barriers, to pose in order to

reflect and see the will of God, united together with the Lord, who sows, collects and give the fruits. We are grateful and excited to continue our mission, “go where others cannot get to” praising and thanking God our creator, for sharing these days with our Superior General, with which we have experienced more closely in the footsteps of the Lord.

### *In Rancagua, Community ‘Santa Rosa’*

On May 17 in the afternoon, the Mother General Sr Paola Dotto came in our community, accompanied by Sr Fides Lorenzon, Sr Gregoria and Sr Marcela. With great joy, we received her in the community for the canonical visit.

On May 18, The Professional Technical High School “Santa Rosa” has received Sr Paola; the students greeted her with a beautiful singing in English, and then met teachers and administrative staff of the Lyceum in a high school classroom, Sister Paola ended her visit on May 19 with a community meeting in which motivated us to continue the work of evangelization through education, and fidelity to the charism of our Founders.





*In the Provincial House*

Santiago Friday, May 20: On her return from the visit to the different communities, Sr. Paola was invited to the school “Mother Cecilia Lazzeri” to express our appreciation and gratitude, through an artistic representation in her honor, where students have expressed their artistic talents, with folk dances of Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Mexico.

Also present were Sister Fides Lorenzon, Provincial Superior and the Sisters of the provincial house.

The Orchestra of the High School has also performed three selected songs. At the end of the program, Sister Paola thanked for the affection shown to her person by the entire educational community.



The program ended with a cocktail offered by the entire school staff.



Friday, May 20: At the conclusion of the canonical visit, Sister Paola met with the sisters of Provincial Community. For all it was a grace to share this precious moment and receive encouraging words that invite us to hope and to plan future projects with confidence and enthusiasm in missionary work and especially for those most in need.

We thank Sister Paola for her staying among us and the time she has given to each of us, with patience, empathy and love.



On Sunday, May 22, the Eucharist was celebrated in thanksgiving for the canonical visit of our Superior General, presided by Monsignor Jorge Concha, Auxiliary Bishop of Santiago and responsible of the religious life. We also had the grace to receive a plenary indulgence and pray the prayer that indicates the Church.

23 May: our Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto left Santiago to return to Italy.

With grateful hearts we greeted and wished her “good trip” and assuring our prayer for the delicate and precious mission for our religious family.

*Cardinal Riccardo Ezzati Andrello with the Superior general, Sr Paola and the Superior provincial, Sr M. Fides.*



## ***Canonical visit of the Superior General Sr Paola Dotto in the Vice-Province Holy Martyrs of Uganda from June 1 to July 5, 2016***

*“How can I tell you, Lord, all the good you have done to me? How can I thank you, Lord, for my joy?”*

Yes, great is our joy and we do not know how to express our gratitude to the Lord for this time of grace spent in the company of our Mother General and her Councilor!!!

From June 1 to July 5, it took place in the Vice-Province “Holy Martyrs of Uganda” and the two communities of Central Africa the canonical visit of the Superior General, Sr Paola Dotto who was accompanied with one of her councilors, Sr. Bernarda Alvarez.

As a true apostle of Christ, the Mother has made a visit to all our communities by meeting personally each sister, in order to know the reality, the joys and concerns of each mission.

In each community, the canonical visit started with a moment of prayer that gathered all the community members in the chapel to confide to the Almighty this visit and to implore the Eternal Father to open our hearts so that this personal exchange with our Mother



should bear fruits in abundance. In fact, through the personal dialogue with Sister Paola, each community member had enough time to share what was in the depth of her heart and to welcome her advises.

She exhorted us to put all our trust in the ONE who called us into the His vineyard. We remain very grateful to her for her visit because she made us experience deeply the spirit of belongingness to our beautiful Religious family. Each Community welcomed sr. Paola and sr. Bernarda with characteristic expressions of African culture.

Everywhere was a celebration of songs, sounds, colors and especially the many smiles on the faces not only the sisters but also the people who work in our missionary realities, children, youth ... all!

A very special celebration was carefully prepared by the **Community of Sembe**, where Sr. Paola found



*Pace e Bene*



herself on the day of her birthday and her feast day: 29 June. What joy for this small, poor but joyful village of Congo!

A unique and very special opportunity to express to Sr. Paola joy, gratitude, prayer for her to the Lord in this day of celebration!

All were involved in the Eucharistic celebration, with songs, dances, costumes; a true “pontifical” at six o’ clock in the morning with the presence of

small and adult: children with their spontaneous joy and enthusiasm, health care hospital staff, teachers in schools and everyone who works and collaborates with our sisters in this precious mission. The Feast from the Church then continued in the dining sharing, an expression of communion, of celebration, of joy!

Sr. Paola and sr. Bernarda after visiting the various communities have returned to the Vice- Provincial House, which was reserved the last days also to end the visit with a meeting with the vice-provincial Council; a time of sharing and very valuable reflection to help and encourage the sisters of this young reality of our religious family.



Sr. Paola was really happy for the growing number of aspirants, postulants, novices and, Junior.

Mother and Sr. Bernarda have encouraged us to take care of vocations and to preserve our way of life: trust in God, humility, simplicity, joy, patience, missionary spirit, the joy, and fraternity. Everything is so much important in order to transmit the elements of our Charism, so that our religious family will continue to be everywhere a valuable and significant presence that “indicates” and offers the redemptive love of the Heart of Jesus crucified.

The visit of our Mother have very much comforted us and gave courage so that we can keep alive the flame of the Charism of our Founders



in this part of the world that is Africa. We are so much grateful to her and to the Almighty God for the wonders He does in us through our Mother Paola. May He continue to give her strength to guide the flock entrusted to her care.

We thank the Lord and thank our mother and our sister for their support and their sisterly love!



## Life of the Congregation



The **Community of St. Francis of Assisi Nkizok** with its mission of evangelization through the apostolate of education and care for the sick.

The **Community "Mary Queen of the Apostles"** of Elat- Minkom: with its mission of evangelization through the apostolate of the sick and the parish pastoral.



The **Community "Our Lady" of Maigaro** with the apostolate of evangelization of the suffering people, education and acceptance of orphans.



The **Community "Sacred Heart" Niem** with the mission of evangelization through the care of the sick, education and for women.

The **Community "St. Joseph" Gari-Gombo** with the mission of evangelization in the care of the sick, education and parish ministry.





**The Community "St. Anthony of Padua" in Kribi** mission of evangelization through education, parish ministry and of tertiary Franciscans.

**The Community "Father Gregory" of Kinshasa** with the delicate mission of vocation promotion, acceptance and formation of postulants and the parish pastoral.



**The Community "Holy Trinity" of Bamenda** in the mission of evangelization in the education of children, for vocations, the delicate mission to welcome and form the young women wishing to enter postulate and service in parish ministry.



**The Community of "St. Mary of the Angels" of Nkoabang** with mission of evangelization, a place for all the sisters of the Vice-Province and care for volunteers, nursing the sick, parish ministry and reception and formation of novices .



## A Congregational Feast for our Superior General

On July 10, everything was ready since early morning and the joy could be read on the face of every sister. We felt so much joy this festival occasion that has united us from all over the world and made us feel deeply our identity as FMSC. It was a clear sign of our belongingness to a religious Family with its wonderful history and so much alive, still able to bring the richness of the charism throughout the world, where our sisters announce the Kingdom of God with simplicity, with dedication and with the originality that this “not easy” time offers us.



It was the feast day of Sr. Paola, our superior general, even if postponed; we wanted to celebrate her birthday together with her Feast day. With the arrival of many sisters from all over the world for the Renewal Jubilee, the occasion has become a large Congregational Feast giving us a time of special joy, and a special and unique encounter. Their presence has enriched the fraternity gathered by the love of the Lord to express thanks with gratitude and dearest feelings to our General Superior: the one whom the Lord has given us to guide us with her presence full of charity towards each of us. Her witness full of faith and hope invites us to discover the gift of fraternity among ourselves and with others.

She constantly encourages all the sisters of the congregation to “come out” and to “Go” as messengers of peace and goodness bringing everywhere the compassion and mercy of the Heart of Jesus, healing the deep wounds of humanity and filling the world of the perfume of gratuity and benevolence.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Bishop. José Rodríguez Carballo, Secretary of CIVCSVA and concelebrated by his secretary Fr. Francisco Arellano, with Fr. Eleuterio Makuta from Istanbul, Fr. Giuseppe Buffon, ofm and Fr Sebastiano, vice-parish priest of our parish St. Philip the Apostle.

Bishop Carballo in his homily stressed three points suggested by the Word of God and by the feast of Sr. Paola.



**The first point: the mystique of encounter** that leads us to live and share all the joy and pain because everything is part of life and creates fraternity. It is important to know and love each other; no one loves what he does not know! Get together to know each other, love each other and share.



**Second point: Joy.** The deep joy of the heart that no one can steal and that sustains us and gives us the certainty that we are not alone. God is with us always.

**Third point: Proximity.** The news that the Gospel today tells us is that a Samaritan acts as neighbors of a Jew, cares for Him and cleans his wounds. My neighbour is no longer the one who shares my ideas, my policy, my faith, but is the “other”, the one different from me.

This is the secret of fraternity when I know the other as a gift from God. The invitation of the Gospel:



“Go and do the same” makes us understand that mercy is not a feeling but attitude.

The Eucharistic celebration proceeded solemnly with music accompanied at times by various instruments expressing the presence of various cultures.

The church was prepared for a great feast; in addition to the flowers, on a real grass carpet stood

out five wax roses to represent the continents where there are our missions. Those beautiful roses had a very special perfume that mixed with that of incense, going up to heaven as an offering of praise, prayer, and sacrifice to the Lord: those of our missionary sisters around the world.





Even lunch was really a moment of fraternity, sharing and of festive joy with so many signs of affection for Sr. Paola.

The afternoon reserved a pleasant surprise for all of us, and Sr Paola. All were invited on the theater for an original show and unusual with a very profound message full of news, of humanity and sincere affection.

The program was divided into three parts: beginning with a prayer dance that wanted to express a praise to the Lord for the gift of life and the important mission of Sr. Paola and say thanks. It was followed by a Video, an expression of unity in diversity; in fact, the video led us in all our realities wherever the sisters are in mission. Each province and vice province was able to express the best wishes to sr. Paola.



It was as a flight to the various continents to collect the joy of sharing, the feast that unites, the very warm greetings, beautiful and very original, but above all, it has caught the living testimony of what we are in the Congregation and in the Church with our specific charism.

The choreography of an English song concluded this very suggestive moment, full of affection and with a load message of renewed hope.



Every day we are missionaries to bring to the world, the light, the hope, the balm that heals the wounds of the heart, the joy, the praise to all the nations, and the desire to live in the will of God that his Kingdom may be present in us, among us and in the world.

We have collected all the best wishes to Sr. Paola: ***"We wish you joy, serenity, to collect everything you sow and receive blessings and great beauty, what you share in the world!"***





*Renewal Course  
in the General House  
for the sisters  
who are celebrating  
their Jubilee of 25 and 50  
years of religious life.*



*“Minor Sisters in Mission.  
Witnesses with gratitude  
of the merciful face of the Father”.*

As Jesus called and gathered around Himself those He loved and He had sent, and invited them to rest, so also our Superior General, with the pace of two years, makes the invitation to the sisters who are celebrating their Jubilee of Religious Profession, to retire, to come aside and celebrate the joy in the encounter, reflection and prayer in the General House.

This year 37 sisters have responded to the invitation from the various countries where the Congregation is present. They came with a great charge of enthusiasm, with emotion and desire to meet.

The meeting started, on July 10, the feast day of our Superior general Sr Paola Dotto, and it set the tone for all the days that would follow. In that day other sisters of the two Italian Provinces, came to the General House to ensure that we were all present to renew the unity of the religious Family and to celebrate the feast with joy that never should fade, and that has to give “taste” to our mission.





### July 11:

The days of meeting, study and work have started.

Sr Paola opens the first day, with her greeting full of affection consolation and gratitude. She invited us to entrust everything to the Lord, even the inevitable concerns that we left moving away from our mission, to let ourselves be embraced by the merciful Father in these days, to be with Him and in Him with all the sisters. She helped us to look at the past with gratitude, to meet again with the simplicity and holiness of so many sisters free, available and ready for sending to look to the future with hope and offering ourselves renewed in faithfulness and testimony.



To her words of greeting was followed by that phase of work in which each has had the opportunity to present herself in the mission entrusted by the Congregation. The journey through the many missions was exciting, vibrant and colorful touching the beauty and relevance of our charism in the originality of many sisters, despite the fatigue of daily life that brings with it the suffering and tragedies of our time.

We read the fidelity in the variety of services, the constant presence of a continuous research that, in the light of the Spirit, knows always to meet persons, embrace them in their grief, understand them in their search for meaning of life.

**Father Maurizio Faggioni, OFM**, guided the second day helping us to reflect on the theme: ***“From the merciful gaze of God the Father, my eyes reconciled to myself, to the brethren and the world.”***





Father Maurizio has divided his reflection in two moments:

- the merciful gaze of God on me;
- my eyes that in God are transformed in looking at myself, the brethren and the world.

The father invited us to enter the merciful love of the Father and to let ourselves to be filled by His Love.

The merciful love is the love of someone who is involved with me. To say that God is merciful is to say WHO is truly God: God is Love!

It is important to see and tell our own life as a work of God's mercy. Breathe the air of love, mercy and live in this atmosphere that envelops everything, and that helps to change our look to become more merciful to others.

### The day of July 13

we were guided in our reflection by Sr. Maddalena Lainati, a Franciscan Missionary of Mary sister who dealt with the theme: **'Franciscan Sisters in Mission'**.

In the morning she set out in a simple and concrete the basic themes of the Franciscan mission:

Mission and the encounter with Christ and with the leper; Mission and prayer; Mission and fraternity; Mission and poverty, humility, self-emptying; Mission and communion with the Church.

After raising a lot of interest with her presentation, she invited us to study, meditate and share in groups and then in assembly the various themes.

A very significant and simply beautiful time to apply ourselves to bring down in our reality one of the issues that we had the freedom to choose, which we have covered in the group and then shared in the assembly with a pleasant originality. In the afternoon, the attention was given to a very special lectio divina about a passage from the Franciscan Sources: the conversion of Montecasale brigands.





### July 14 :

Today was dedicated exclusively to our religious Family, with two expert sisters Sr. Antonietta Pozzebbon and Sr. Marzia Ceschia.

In the morning, **Sr. Antonietta** has projected us the **History of the Congregational Mission**, by entering the first few years of the birth of our religious Family in the context of the social and ecclesiastical history of the time, to further emphasize how the missionary mentality grows incarnated in history.

Her rich display content, precise and documented, has helped us to deepen those values which determine our being missionary in the Church and for the world, today.

In the afternoon, we have heard another issue of great interest: **The Congregational Missionary Spirituality**. Sr. Marzia has based her reflection based on ecclesial texts, on our sources, on our Constitutions and on the letters of our first General Superiors.

Once again, we savored the charismatic beauty of the Congregation, declared clearly as “missionary foundation.” We were founded and wanted as Minor sisters for the Missions. Sr. Marzia has highlighted many evangelical, Franciscan and ecclesial aspects that emerge from our missionary spirituality.

At the end of her presentation, she offered the current provocations that invite all of us to take back and to live, personally and communally, with greater coherence our being “missionary.”



**July 15, feast of St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, we went to visit Grotte di Castro, the birthplace of our Founder Father Gregory, going at first at the Basilica of Santa Cristina in Bolsena, where Don Antonio helped us to reflect on the importance of the place.**



Three important memories are kept in the Basilica:

- The body of Santa Cristina, an example of faith and loyalty. At just 14 years old, she was able to give her life for Christ;
- the Eucharistic miracle that took place back in 1264;
- a well-exposed image within the Church that reminds St. Maria della Pace, the young Franciscan Missionary Sister of Mary, granddaughter of our father Gregory, who was martyred in China in 1900.

Missionary Sister of Mary, granddaughter of our father Gregory, who was martyred in China in 1900.

The day of pilgrimage then continued in Grotte di Castro.

After the Eucharist celebrated by the parish priest Don Tancredi, we went to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Suffrage and the birth house of Father Gregory.

At the feet of the Virgin in the Sanctuary where our founder received Holy Baptism and where he grew up in a life of faith, we prayed entrusting to her our lives, thanking her for what she has been so far for us and asking her maternal protection for a future of fidelity and hope.



The day continued with a joyous time and fraternal sharing in the community house of our sisters who are present in this place since 2008 and who welcomed us so generously and with Franciscan joy.

### July 16:

Today there was a free time that we dedicate to the visit Rome, in particular to the heart of Christianity, the Basilica of St. Peter. In the afternoon, we rested and prepared ourselves for departure to Assisi and La Verna.





## July 17:

Early in the morning, we sit in a comfortable coach and begin our pilgrimage uniting serenity, joy, prayer and singing. The superior general Sr Paola and Councillor Sr. Tiziana were with us.

Arrived in Assisi, all morning we were free to enjoy as best we wanted the presence of St. Francis in the Basilica of S. Maria degli Angeli, and pause in prayer at the Portiuncula where, precisely in this year of mercy, is celebrated the eighth centenary of the Pardon of Assisi. Which "providential" coincidence!

For lunch we were waited by the sisters of the Community of S. Maria degli Angeli, also with the sisters of the Community in Viole so that the feast was complete. Everything had been prepared with sincere fraternal joy, gentleness, generosity and good taste.

At five o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at

**the Sanctuary of La Verna**, a very significant place for the Franciscan spirituality, surrounded by green forests that still transmit prayer and meditation, in which our Father St. Francis lived totally absorbed in God and , here he was marked by the Sacred Stigmata.



## July 18:

We began our retreat led by **Father Aldo La Neve, OFM**, who offered us his reflections on three central themes: **the missionary spirit, mercy, gratitude.**

The days were spent in the rich atmosphere of prayer, of reflection, of profound joy and amazement at what every day the Lord gave us with his tenderness and love.





Very beautiful, meaningful and spiritually intense were the jubilee experiences in this Year of Mercy with the “passage” of the Holy Door of the Sanctuary and Mass in the Chapel of the Stigmata that concluded the retreat. For all was a very powerful experience of communion with Jesus Crucified in the spirit of St. Francis that made us singing with him:

*Great and wonderful Lord, Almighty God, Merciful Savior.*



### July 23:

was the final day in the General House that on our return from La Verna had already dressed the first signs of the feast prepared by the sisters of the Community.

Very significant was the meeting in the afternoon, with the Superior General and all the Sisters of the Council. They have reserved another space of attention so we could express how much we also had in our heart for the future.

It was a simple and free meeting. Together we reflected upon and expressed what was dearest to us for the time to come in order to be ever more faithful to our identity, embodying it in the present.

The words of Sr Paola have encouraged us. Taking up and underlining the words of the speakers, she invited us to bring into the world the merciful face of the Father, because all of our realities need His tenderness.



Moving was the moment when she expressed her gratitude on behalf of the Congregation, for our joys and hardships, the difficulties overcome in secret and exhausting daily. She thanked us for having found that the privileged place of encounter with Jesus is still our difficulties. Finally, as a new sending, she told us:

***“Continue to live with courage the lifestyle of FMSC sisters taking care of fraternal relationships to bring joy, because the enthusiasm lit these days will never turn off, rather it must increase and become contagious”.***

### July 24 :

The Renewal Course ended with the Jubilee Celebration for the 37 sisters who lived through this time of grace. The whole day was shrouded by an atmosphere of joy, praise and thanksgiving to the Lord and also with emotion. Many signs of celebration in the environment, in the church, in the refectory and above all in the faces and expressions of the sisters.



The Eucharist celebration was very solemn; It was presided over by Father Aldo La Neve, OFM, and concelebrated by Father Massimo Coccia, OFM, the assistant pastor of the Parish of St. Philip the Apo-

stle: Father Sebastian and the parish priest of Borgo Faiti: Don Luigi Venditti.



Many sisters arrived from the the Provinces in Italy, but there was also the presence of two sisters came from Lithuania and Mexico.

We have received from the hands of Sr Paola the new mandate expressed through the light of a lamp. ***“Go and turn on the light of joy”***

The day ended with the solemn Vespers during which we presented to the Lord some of the prayers that we had prepared in the group reflections. Everyone wanted to be a “return” to the Lord for all the good He does in various parts of the world with each of us with profound joy and love, we repeated our ***“Here I am!”*** to continue our journey renewed every day as true Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.



*Sisters celebrating 50 years of Religious Life*

*Sisters celebrating 25 years of Religious Life*



*Together in cutting the cake*

*Pace e Bene*



## Inauguration and Blessing of Nithya Sahayika Matha Bhavan

*"It is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous to our eyes".*

A kilometer away from the East to Kasdega on main road Rourkela, a beautiful house "**Nithya Sahayika Matha Bhavan**", Dipatoli is constructed by Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred heart, Holy Family

Province, India, for the purpose of training the candidates and discharging different types of ministries to the people of God in the locality and the parish.

April 21st 2016 - we had really the celebration of double joy – the anniversary of the canonical opening of our Congregation and the opening of new house with the shepherd of Simdega diocese Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa.

The house was inaugurated by Rev. Sr. Gracy, the Provincial and blessed by Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa with solemn Holy Eucharistic celebration along with many priests from the diocese and outside. The presence of our sisters from different communities marked our joy and unity.



We renewed our vows during the Holy Mass before the Bishop. During the Eucharistic celebration Bishop invited the whole congregation to thank God for the wonderful works He has done in our midst.

Even though there was such a burning and scorching heat at 11.a.m. many people came over there for the celebration to witness their faith in



God and as a sign of co-operation and support with us in our ministry. After the mass there was felicitation for all the dignitaries of the day. The provincial gave a message expressing her happiness and thanks to everyone who worked hard for the completion of this beautiful house.

***Yes, We praise God on this happy moment for His Marvelous Works.***



## First Religious Profession in India



- Sr. M. Nilima Lakra of the Sacred heart of Jesus**
- Sr. M. Kanchan Lakra of the Crucified Jesus**
- Sr. M. Sarita Nayak of the Crucified Jesus**
- Sr. M. Haritha Rani Pilli of the Love of Jesus**
- Sr. M. Smita Tirkey of the Sacred Heart of Jesus**
- Sr. M. Sukanya Gorantla of the Child Jesus**

*"I will be glad and rejoice because of your constant love"*

*(Ps. 31 : 7)*

With deep sentiments of gratitude and joy we raise our hearts to God for all his wonderful works which He has done in our lives and we thank Him for choosing us as His own. *"You are precious in my sight, You are important and I love you"* (Is. 43:4).



June 4, 2016 was a day of great joy and thanksgiving for us. On this beautiful day of our first profession, we have been very glad to become the part of the family of Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and to make our first commitment to the Lord, in the presence of priests, religious and relatives.

Accompanied by our parents we joyfully and decisively walked to the altar to pronounce our decision to belong to Him forever. Sr. Gracy Thurithipallil, our Provincial Superior received our vows.

The Holy Eucharistic celebration was presided by Most Rev. Joseph Raja Rao Thelagathoti, S.M.M. Bishop of Vijayawada Diocese, and along with other Priests. On this memorable day His Lordship, enlightened us through his homily speaking on the importance of Consecrated life: "Christ should be the center of our life". We are called to live a holy life since religious life is called to holiness. He exhorted us to stand firm and to be faithful till the end of our lives.

It is a boundless pleasure for us to extend our special thanks to our Mother General, Sr. Paola Dotto and councilors, though they were not present in our midst we have been sure and felt their spiritual closeness among us. Our gratitude is also expressed towards our Provincial Superior Sr. Gracy thurithipallil and councilors for their prayers, encouragement and accepting us as members of this family .

Thanks to all the sisters from various communities who enriched us with their gracious presence and prayers.





## Closing of the Year of Consecrated Life in ...



### AFRICA - SEMBE In the Diocese of OUESSO

***“Where there are consecrated persons, there is joy”*** (Pope Francis- Rejoice)

Pope Francis, considering the important place which the consecrated life has within the Church, He has dedicated a year that started on Nov. 30, 2014 and ended on 2 February. The Holy Father has invited us to be prophetic signs capable of waking up the world. During this year, we consecrated of the Diocese of Ouesso we tried, as far as we could, to live with intensity each one the Charism of the Institute in the Church, in our respective communities and in different places of apostolate.

Our closing took place on 23 and 24 January 2016.

Saturday, January 23, from 10.00 am, all consecrated gathered to prepare the room “Nelson Mandela” where each Institute made the presentation of the various congregations and their charism.

The presentation went on up to 3 pm.

The hall was almost overflowing with Christians who were curious about the consecrated life and its requirements. Some have been asking questions about what they did not understand well. There were five Congregations: the Spiritans, the Sisters of Charity, Servants of the Lord, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary and the Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

At the end of the presentation, we took along a moment of refreshments. To end this day, Monsignor Yves-Marie Monot, our bishop, has urged us to be experts of communion as Pope Francis says in his letter: Rejoice.

Sunday, January 24, 2016, took place the closing itself with a Pontifical Mass presided by Bishop Yves-Marie Monot and concelebrated by seven priests of our Diocese.

Each consecrated contributed for the success of this celebration. At the time of his homily, he urged parents to let their children to serve the Lord and to support consecrated persons in their arduous mission.

After the Mass, we got together a fraternal agape.

We just have to live the present with passion!!!

## In Cameroon - Yaoundé

***Theme: Consecrated Life, Gospel, Prophecy, Hope for the Church in Cameroon today.***

For the closing of the Year of Consecrated Life that the Church has given us through the voice of his servant, Pope Francis, the Church in Cameroon gave us a week dedicated to the following activities:

- major Superior Meeting
- Dialog for religious
- Pilgrimage
- Pontifical Mass

The meeting of Major Superiors took place from 1 to 2 and then 3 to 5 February and we have participated.





The Consecrated Life is a gift from God.

The speakers invited us to be disciples of Jesus Christ, taking Christ as the model par excellence. Following Christ is a precious gift for the Church and a free choice that requires some sacrifices. Today, our Church needs consecrated persons who testify of their radical nature of following the Christ.

They have proposed models to imitate, like Elijah, Jesus, obedient, chaste and poor, Mary: loyal to her “yes” to God’s plan and Saint Paul. They showed us that our consecration is a free act, characterized by gratitude. We live a testimony that anticipates the kingdom of God among the nations.

Finally, consecrated life is an ecclesial reality, a treasure of the Church through the proclamation of the Gospel, a gift that calls us to the total giving in imitation of Christ, poor, chaste and obedient unto death.

### In Bamenda

The Franciscans gathered in the Capuchin community Bambui to conclude the year of the Consecrated life. The day began with holy mass. Some significant events took place such as the procession with the symbols of the various Congregations to the altar and the general renewal of vows.

Rev Fr. Joseph Dufe in his homily pointed out three important points following the closing of the year of consecrated life. He said that Consecrated persons should continue waking up the world. That they should be joyful, the joy that comes from the heart. Lastly, they should live the perfect joy of St. Francis. He appreciated and thanked the Consecrated persons for their collaboration in the work of Evangelization

Activities continued after mass, beginning with animation by the different communities followed by the Presentation of charisms of the various Congregations. From these presentations, it was revealed that each Congregation exists because of the help from other Congregations.

Rev Fr. Kilian gave a talk on the Franciscan identity. He said that, our identity as Franciscans is what makes us different from other spirituality. He mentioned three types of identity; personal identity, cultural identity and the Franciscan identity which is poverty, humility simplicity etc. He urges us to live out these virtues as Franciscans. The beautiful celebration ended with the sharing of a fraternal meal and departure.





## **Meeting in Guayaquil Archdiocesan Day of Consecrated Life.**

***Closing of the Year of Consecrated Life and opening of the Jubilee Year of Mercy.***

In the city of Guayaquil, from 2 to 5 February we were gathered by the auxiliary bishop of Guayaquil Monsignor Iván Minda and the coordinator Father Pablo Mogrovejo OCD, in charge of Religious Life at the archdiocesan level. Our community has participated in the three days of sharing: Sister Mirella Venturin, superior of the community, Sister Lucila Mayorga y Sister Blanca Herrera.

With the penitential liturgy in the Church “El Sagrario” adjacent to the cathedral, the meeting began, giving the opportunity to all religious to receive the sacrament of reconciliation in this “Jubilee Year of Mercy”. It was a special moment in which we have felt deeply that God the Father is close to each of us with His forgiveness and His free mercy.

After the liturgy we walked in procession to the cathedral to pass the “Holy Door” and receive a plenary indulgence. Then followed the Eucharistic celebration preceded by His E.R Monsignor Luis Gerardo Cabrera Herrera OFM, Archbishop of Guayaquil. The liturgical event filled with joy the heart of every participant sister and priest.

On February 3, the first reflection of this meeting was “Jubilee Year: Time of Grace for personal conversion” presented by Monsignor Ivan Minda.



February 4, the final day of this meeting had the theme “*The ecclesial nature: integration and pastoral responsibility of Consecrated Life*”.

In his reflection His. E.R Monsignor Luis Gerardo Cabrera H. considered the words of the Pope from the Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee: “*Therefore, where the Church is present, the mercy of God must be evident. In our parishes, in communities, in associations and movements, in short, wherever there are Christians, anyone should be able to find a haven of mercy.*”

The reflection invited us to question ourselves and confront the new challenges to live in today’s world.

At the end of the Year of Consecrated Life and at the beginning of the Year of Mercy, we thank God for this gift of “**Grace**” that the Church has given us.

These were days of communion with the universal and local Church, with our congregations, with our communities. We were enriched with moments of prayer, listening, reflection and sharing. We are grateful for the presence and participation of our pastors and their collaborators.





## The “HOLY DOOR” is open ...

*in Mother House – Gemona*

*April 21, 2016: special Jubilee of mercy*

Which most significant and best day could be chosen to live the Jubilee of Mercy in our Mother House? It came naturally thinking of April 21, a memorial day for us FMSC! Three special moments and experiences were prepared with the participation of all sisters of the community.

It began, in fact, with songs, reflections, prayers, for the Anniversary of the canonical recognition of our Congregation.

At Mass, Fr Giuseppe OFM has accepted the Renewal of the Holy Vows of all the sisters of the Community.

In the homily, he recalled the example of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, after he was acclaimed in his entry into Jerusalem.

The Master is the One who serves, who gives salvation to anyone who wants to accept His mandate. Like Jesus, we too, FMSC, we put



ourselves at the service of others, full of goodness and love. Thus, we can help to recognize “the redemptive Love” of the Heart of Christ: it is a love that saves. Always we are called to know Jesus deeper and to imitate Him in our lives.

After breakfast, the Community went to the Infirmary. There a devout, moving procession of wheelchairs and walking was arranged. Preceded the procession Sr. Giannapaola in a wheelchair carrying the crucifix of San Damiano and Sr. Dominga, at her side, carried the lamp of the Jubilee.

While all sang the hymn of the Jubilee, “misericordes sicut Pater”, the procession was advancing through the **HOLY DOOR OF MERCY**, being prepared with the icons of the Jubilee.

Accompanied by prayerful silence, the Provincial Superior Sr. Anna Maria has proclaimed the Prayer of Pope Francis to Mary, Mother of Mercy followed by the Salve Regina recited by all the sisters.

After the Prayers for receiving the Indulgence, it ended with the singing of “Our Lady of the Angels...” Irrepressible was the joy of the Sisters Infirmary and all.

It followed a festive snack to continue to be together with the joy of being loved and constantly filled by the mercy of the Lord.

With joy, we can exclaim:

**“This is the day which the Lord has made.”**





### Opening of the Jubilee of mercy in Assisi

Assisi was restless for the Holy Year of Mercy, a rich program of initiatives and events for this occasion, was prepared and presented, called "The Pilgrim's Handbook" made available in churches and hotels, available on the website of the diocese; in this brochure, it shows the highlights and main events.

A citywide path into seven stages was organized, inserted within the complete guide with a map of the city, which retraces the Franciscan places visited by Pope Francis in his visit to Assisi on October 4, 2013. (Cathedral of San Rufino, San Damiano, Disrobing room, the tomb of St. Francis, Seraphic Institute, the Porziuncola in the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli and the Franciscan place in Rivotorto church).

The Jubilee of Mercy started, in Assisi in the afternoon of Sunday, December 13: the bishop of the city, Msgr. Domenico Sorrentino opened the Holy Door in the Cathedral of San Rufino,, also we have attended together with many people.

Bishop Sorrentino wanted to precede the celebration with the opening of the door of mercy, at the Institute Seraphic where disabled children are housed and where the pope Francis in his visit to the city wanted to make the first step of his pilgrimage Assisi. I

n the institute's square, after opening the door, to welcome his Excellency were waiting the representatives of the main voluntary associations committed to the health and care of the sick. After the bishop, Sorrentino has traveled to the town square.



Here waiting for him there was the vicar general Father Maurizio Saba, the vicar for the diocesan Pastoral Don Jean Claude Hazoumé, confraternities, the representatives of the parishioners pastoral councils, the mayor of Assisi Anthony Lunghi, and some youth of the Seraphic Institute.

After the reading of the papal bull, from the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the procession moved to the Cathedral of San Rufino, where there was waiting the whole diocesan community.

Hundreds of people attended. The cry that resonated in the Cathedral of San Rufino was "Open," as in every diocese and cathedral in the world.

The door was opened to welcome, to let in, rivers of people for the duration of the solemn Eucharistic celebration, chaired by the Bishop Domenico Sorrentino and concelebrated by all the priests of the diocese

A river of people that have never ceased to exceed the threshold of the Holy door.



In his homily, the bishop explained: - It is a Jubilee that touches us in a very special and specific way.

S. Francis is a great witness of Mercy.

In Assisi, the experience of Francis brought an emphasis on mercy and in his personal journey: he himself tells in his testament that his conversion started when he went among the lepers. Then because, once started in the path of holiness, he would propagate the mercy of the Lord asking for special indulgence at the Portiuncula, the **“Pardon of Assisi”** which this year coincides with the VIII centenary.



The Jubilee must bring the sweetness of soul and body through the Mercy. .

He also reminded the thirtieth anniversary of the Spirit of Assisi in 1986, the historic meeting for peace wanted by St. John Paul II. He said *“we are working to prepare a memorial of this thirtieth anniversary that brings together all the religious and the civil community to give a convergent message to the whole world and testify and announce that this peace can be done also through the works of mercy.”*

One of the paths inside the cathedral has already started in these days.

From January 10 every Sunday afternoon, the bishop holds a lectio divina, and he is available for confessions.

Further, it reiterated to all of us that there is also a mercy to be exercised on a social and political level that can inspire the laws, attitudes, the same way that we relate among peoples. No coincidence that the Pope, in his Bull of Indiction, remembers a mercy to live even in the relationship among religions. We can see how much urgent is that!



*Pace e Bene*



## VOCATIONAL NATIONAL CONGRESS His GRACE ... .. our THANKS!

From 3 to 5 January 2016 at the Domus Pacis in Rome, it took place the yearly Congress aimed at all those involved in the pastoral care of vocations of the Italian dioceses. This year the theme was **“Rich in Mercy ... rich in Thanksgiving! Grateful as loved.”** Slogan selected by the Italian Church for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2016 to be held on Sunday, April 17. It wants to be *“an invitation - said Monsignor Nico Dal Molin, Director of the National Office for the pastoral care of vocations of the CEI - to rediscover the beauty and richness of gratitude”*. How can we start to live the gratitude? Why we need to say thanks?



There were more than 650 vocation animators: the diocesan team directors, rectors and educators of seminars, formators, seminarians, novices and pastoral workers, including three of our sisters: Sr. Tiziana Tonini, Sr. Lissy Joseph Puthenparackal and Sr Sophy Poonamkavil .

During the three days, there have been very significant moments:

### Seeds of gratitude:

that the theme of the initial welcome.

It has immediately created an atmosphere of contemplation, meditation, prayer through a video on Creation and human beings, in particular. It intended to give birth in the hearts of those present sentiments of gratitude, through wonder and amazement! Each was asked to write on a piece of paper their gratitude with sentences that began *“Thank you for ...”* After those papers were put in a clear plastic cylinder very well prepared and picked up in the established moments for prayer. This is us! Some young people share their experience.

Twelve high school students have offered their testimony, by sharing their experiences, creating strong empathy. The ideas that emerged have highlighted the need for the Church to be close to families wounds, to the young people, and give them more trust.

### Paths of Gratitude.

The educator Anna Antonia Chiara Scardicchio, outlined a series of “Paths of gratitude” pointing out that the word “thank you” is born from being regarded with benevolence. She urged us to transform the times of trouble and sin in occasions of grace ... and thanksgiving.

### “Overflowing Mercy “

It was the theme presented by Giancarlo Pani, writer of “La Civiltà Cattolica”. He has proposed a vocational reading of the bull of the Jubilee “Misericordiae vultus”. Mercy is a gift of the immense love of God, totally free and unconditional: hence our great gratitude and challenge, as priests, as consecrated persons to be “signs” of true mercy.

### Grace ... thanksgiving

The prayer meeting to rediscover and “taste” in the Word and in the Presence ‘Eucharist the “Grace and thanksgiving”.





### Grateful as loved.

With the Prague Cello Quartet in concert, Fr. Ermes Ronchi and Marina Marcolini, led the meeting to hear and meditate on Bible passages, poems, testimonies to underline that gratitude comes from being loved. The path proposed intended to move those present to proclaim the word “Thanks”: the most beautiful and pleasing prayer to God.

To God, all Good and every Good, our thanks and prayer that our life as consecrated may be a hymn of thanks to Him in every experience, in every sentiment, in each offering!



### Conference in Assisi for local superiors

It was really a joy and a grace the possibility to participate in the MO.RE.FRA. Conference for local superiors, held in Assisi at the center of spirituality “Barbara Micarelli” at Santa Maria degli Angeli, from 13 to 16 April 2016; There took part: Sr. Novella Gaiet, Sr. Eliodora Mattiuz, Sr. Mini Alex, Sr. Sophy Ponamkavil, Sr. Rosangela Bregani, Sr. Adele Angela, Leonarduzzi, Sr. Carlamaria Bandiera, Sr. Ornella Callegari.

The place of Assisi already full of spirituality and, above all, a deep call to holiness on the way of St. Francis and St. Clare, is made even stronger and more explicit in this extraordinary time of the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

The participants in the Conference were about 140 consecrated persons from all over Italy. We were hosted by our sisters of the community “St. Maria degli Angeli” - Assisi.

The themes discussed at this meeting were the following:

- **The Lectio Divina**
- **The Admonitions - the path of mercy**
- **The local chapter - the place of mercy**

Three important issues for the community life, that seem already well known and even somehow practiced in our fraternities, but they have proved to be really interesting.

The various considerations have lit more on these three pillars that support the personal and communal spiritual life. They have challenged us to an initial commitment and desire to careful preparation in doing well the Lectio Divina with the sisters, how to live the local chapter and give attention in our daily lives to the teachings of St. Francis, considering them important tools and paths of holiness.

Very profound was the presentation on the practice of Lectio Divina which Father Francesco Cocco OFM. conv. He introduced us, pointing out the urgency of listening to the Word of God that must become guidance and support in our daily choices of personal and community life.

When we make the Lectio Divina, we always ask not to be content to touch Jesus from behind; we try to



live an open relationship with Him, looking into the face Jesus and allowing ourselves to be penetrate by His intense gaze that will change our lives. A strong call not to be superficial before the Word of God.

The report that Father Dino Dozzi ofm.capp has shared us on the local chapter, it was really exciting. It led, in fact, through the history and meaning of the Jubilee in the Bible, to our present history of the community that is always the history of God and therefore the history of personal and community salvation.



From the numerous and significant interventions and questions of the sisters, it emerged that the local chapter is yet to be discovered in our communities as a tool of mercy, of salvation and of profound conversion, and it is a path of humility and seeking the Kingdom of God in joy of proclaiming God's mercy.

A local chapter is certainly not only to program or to examining the economy matters etc.



It is important as we gather to watch ourselves in the face and, in this spiritual meeting, knowing how to listen, how to enhance the positive aspects, what each person is and knows to do, what was not accomplished, without being

“first lady” (talking to local Superiors), but in the joy of sharing in simplicity, silence, patience, waiting .... That builds fraternity.

Father Maurizio Erasmi ofm.conv in his report he drew attention echoing in our hearts the teachings of St. Francis, through his writings *“The Admonitions / Crumbs of wisdom and paths of mercy.”* His speech was simple, actual and coherent, typical characteristics of a Franciscan who, walking on the footsteps of the Saint of Assisi, leads us to live the Gospel in a radical way.

Following a bit ‘broad exposure on the Admonitions, we can point out some thoughts that have most challenged us.

It is important is to live the relationship with God, the relationship of the disciple with his Master with a dimension of a creature, by his poverty: stand before God not with closed and full hands, but open and empty; this is the path of mercy.

God is invoked, prayed, acknowledged as Supreme and only Good who gives Himself to us and thus we are lacking of anything, so St. Francis teaches us.

However, the Father has stressed that this first movement should be in harmony with the second upward movement, ie “give back.”

The experience of mercy is a gift of God; it becomes a commitment to donate, so we move from “footprints” to the “form”, and thus is a fertile ground for living the compassion. *“Receiving and giving back”*, ie stand free and poor creatures before God.

It has been a very intense day and full of teachings. A special issue was dedicated to the “fraternal correction” - XXIII Admonition: *“Blessed is the servant who bears discipline, accusation, and blame from others as patiently as if they came from himself.”*

It is not easy, even if the correction is part of our lives. The beatitude of the servant, lies in his patience, knowing how to suffer and offer the true patience and true joy, without being disturb within, waiting, without seeking defenses, without closures, because what man is before God, that he is and not more.



The truth is not coming from other but God is my charity. We have always helped to extend mercy, patience and humility, when we are judged, and when we must correct; this is a path of mercy.

The conclusion of the course was a very welcome gift to all participants.

We were invited, in fact, to the theater of Assisi where we could enjoy the musical “Chiara di Dio”: one acclaimed show, full of messages and, above all, able to put in the heart so much peace and all good.



## **46<sup>th</sup> National Conference Study General and Provincial Treasurers**

### ***The continuity of our charism in collaboration with the laity***

This is the title of CNEC conference (National Center for Community Treasurers), held in Rome on 28 to 30 May 2016, for the general and provincial treasurers of Italy who, as the title suggests, they were

conducted to reflect not on budgets but on the charism lived with the laity.



The argument concerning the presence of lay people in our works is more relevant than

ever; the question posed by the conference is this: the presence of lay people in our works is a need or an opportunity? It is appropriate to ask ourselves this question because there is the danger of considering only the lay as employees that allow us to continue an activity in which we believe.

Lay people are with us followers of the presence of our charism in the Church. Many times, we find ourselves talking about the charism as our property, no, the charism is given by the Spirit to the Church and we have a duty to keep it alive and active. The fundamental core, therefore, is not the continuity of a work in itself as the continuity of the charism by means of that work.

The Spirit shows us new paths, sisters and lay people together, we want and we must welcome new paths. This is the kind of communion the Church asks of us today. The charism is a gift from which the laity are not excluded; in fact, they are called to live next to us, but in a different way, as laypersons.

We must ask first if in our activities we offer to the laity who work with us a witness of communion and mercy, that is, an experience of God, which leads spontaneously to build with them a community of faith.

One of the speakers highlighted in particular the need to identify in the laypersons in our work the reasons that pushed them to work for us.

They could be internal or external reasons. Should be valued in particular those lay people who develop inner motivation because they possess a gift that comes from the Spirit, and that gift is the charism. The external reasons are those induced by material needs, such as salary.

The latter are also to be accepted and to be formed so that with the others and with us, we can take a path of communion.



We are called to a demanding charismatic job, adapted to the times, which forces us to get out of our securities.

We cannot see the continuity of our charism today, only in our communities; other organizations have appeared conducted by the Spirit who shows us the path to walk together religious and laity.



## On-going Formation meeting in Cyprus “The Mercy in the Bible”

On the year dedicated to the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, the Provincial Superior and her Council invited the Sisters of the province to participate in the course “*The Mercy in the Bible*”, led by Father Frederic Manns OFM. This opportunity has given us the joy of being together and living the Franciscan joy in family communion in the Provincial House. Competently father has exhibited in broad and simple way the theme chosen on Mercy from the biblical-spiritual and archaeological point of view.

At the beginning of his lectures, father introduced us to old-testamentary text of Exodus, where the Lord, after giving the Tablets of the Law to Moses, revealed His name and also his characteristics.

*“The LORD, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity, continuing his kindness for a thousand generations, and forgiving wickedness and crime and sin; yet not declaring the guilty guiltless, but punishing children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation for their fathers’ wickedness!” (Ex 34: 6-7).*

The mercy of God is manifested in all generations. From the text presented, you see the 13 characteristics of God, and it is noteworthy that the first is of mercy.

After working through these pages of Exodus, we have returned to the theme in the Psalms and in the book of Jonah: “*I knew that thou are a merciful God.*” Thus, continually it is taken up in the Jewish tradition. God is merciful, slow to anger, compassionate, full of mercy. All this brings us back to the vocabulary of the Covenant.

The other point that has been presented was regarding the “*Door of Mercy*” in Jerusalem.

For us, in the Middle East mission was interest-

ing from an ecumenical point of view that this door called “*Golden Door*”, involves the Jewish religion as the most famous monumental door of their religion, which will be called “*The Temple of Jerusalem*”.



It also involves the Islamic religion because it was built as well as today in the times of the Arab caliphs, after the conquest of Jerusalem.

It is related also to the Christian religion, because at the time of the Crusaders it became the entry point celebrating the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem.





The significance for our consecrated life in the context of the Jubilee year of Mercy, it means daily crossing the True Door that is Jesus Christ. Thus in our missions we are called to be the “open doors” for all the people that the Lord puts on our roads every day.

Regarding “pilgrimages” that we can make in our journey of faith, we hope to do especially the spiritual ascent to welcome the forgiveness and mercy of God, in order to transmit the first message of St. Francis: *“You are our eternal life: Great and wonderful Lord, Almighty God, Merciful Saviour”*.

We want to express our grateful thanks to Sister Angelica and her Council for the gift that were offered to us, the grace to participate, to enjoy being together and deepen the biblical spirituality of Mercy.  
Thanks sisters!



### European Meeting of Prison Chaplains

In Strasbourg, from 30 May to 1 June, it was held the European Meeting of Prisons Chaplains supported by the Council of Europe, which was attended by about 50 chaplains from 20 States throughout Europe. From Turkey, Fr. Eleuthère Makuta OFM and Sister Miriam Oyarzo FMSC attended as representatives of the Episcopal Conference of Istanbul and as chaplains of the women’s prison in Istanbul (Bakirkoy).

The main topic was to look at the prison as ‘the place’ to cure and not to abandon. Prison is a place where reigns pain and suffering, but also solidarity and charity, that is why it is important the role of the chaplain who has a special vocation as a person who builds

bridges of dialogue; be chaplains is a privilege, it is the heart beating of the prison and, many times, the conscience of people.

At the center of the experience in the prison is the religious experience where inside there are fundamental questions.

The theme of “radicalization” has been exposed by various points of view by some experts, both from the organizational part of the meeting and the European Council. The phenomenon worries at European level in their commitment to the promotion of human rights, which pays special attention to the conditions of the people in prison.





The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland traced 4 goal or lines to follow in the environment of the prison:

1. Rehabilitation: re-enter the “people” in view of a new path for the future and emphasize a reintegration into society.
2. Do not suppress religion. It is not a matter of practice but of expression and it cannot be suppressed.
3. Human contact: with an accurate pastoral care to follow humanly people without leaving them alone, nor isolated.
4. Support after prison: people are very vulnerable after the experience of prison and therefore chaplains play an important role in the accompaniment.

The meeting had two main objectives.

- The first: update of the chaplains on the developments in the Council of Europe of the human rights standards in prisons and on the fight against the phenomenon of radicalization.
- The second: on the contribution that the ministry can provide in the fight against radicalization and, more generally, the promotion of human dignity in prisons. The meeting ended on Wednesday, June 1 with a session focused on the spirituality of the prison chaplains and the presentation of the “Jubilee of Mercy for Prisoners”, to be held in Rome on 6 November 2016, during the Holy of Mercy called by Pope Francis.

The day at the European Council was very interesting where the participants shared their concerns and their questions.

At the end of the meeting, the Council of European Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE) and the International Commission of the Catholic Pastoral Care in prisons (Iccpc) issued a statement stressing that: *“The harsh conditions sometimes faced by people in jail, do not deny the fact that the person is created in God’s image, his/her inalienable dignity and rights.*” In addition, faced with the challenge posed by the growth of violent extremism and radicalization, the signatories appeal to the *“Guidelines for prison and probation services in the field of radicalization and violent extremism”* approved by the Council of Europe.

In this Plan is emphasized, among other things, the need to respect the principle of freedom of expression and religion in prisons.



# Living in God



**Sr M. Romana Tommasini  
of the Immaculate Heart of Mary**

**Born in Fanzolo (TV) il 3.7. 1923  
Died in Gemona (UD) il 26.2. 2016**

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!”  
(Mt 5, 3).*

This statement of Jesus has found a place in a simple and humble life of Sr. Romana who had understood that the beatitude of the poor in spirit is, in practice, the way of love, the only one that leads to life, the road of which she has always walked in her mission close to the children and the elderly.

Giselda Tommasini was born in Fanzolo (TV) on July 3, 1923, and

baptized five days later, on July 8, in the Parish of the Holy Martyrs Vittore and Corona.

She grew, strong in the testimony of her parents Ferdinando and Romana Reginato, fervent Christians, in a family that had eight children. It is not surprising that right here blossomed her vocation to religious life.

In fact, November 18, 1943, responding to the call of the Lord, she entered among the Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart in Gemona: she was 20 years old, in the bloom of youth! Here, after the preparation time she gave herself to God by religious profession choosing to call herself with the mother's name, Sr. Romana. It was August 12, 1946.

Immediately began her mission in the Borgo Cavour Rest Home (TV) as a cook, challenging service that she carried on throughout life in various kindergartens and nursing homes: in S. Maria Maggiore (TV), Manzano (UD), in Paluzza (UD) and finally, in Gemona in the large Mother House Community, 1988-2009.

In this year of mercy it is natural to think of the first work of mercy “Feed the hungry”, coupled with the promise of Jesus: *“What you do to the least of my brethren, you did it to me”* (Mt. 25).

Sr. Romana with her eyes of faith saw and served Jesus in her brethren!

Her words of the last days of her life, expressed her profound conviction when she said: *“I can only say thanks to the Lord for my life and confirm that I have always been happy wherever God has wanted me, I know I did pleased everyone I served! ... And now, when He will call me, I am ready!”*.

On 26 February, still present to herself, in the last moments she called one of her sisters already in Paradise: Ortensia, as to desire to be accompanied on her last journey.

Reassured by the presence of the superiors, of her niece Sr. Chiar-damiana and sisters of the community, in a few minutes, she stepped through the “Holy Door” of heaven and the church clock stroked 13:30.



## Sr M. Raphael Conlon of Our Lady of Sorrows

Born: Bogota NJ il 4. 8. 1925  
Died: Peekskill NY il 3.3 2016

Sister Raphael of Our Lady of Sorrows was born in Bogota, NJ and graduated from St. Joseph's Grammar School, Bogota, NJ, and St. Cecilia High School in Englewood, NJ. Sister received her BA from Ladycliff College (Magna Cum Laude) and her MA in English from St. Bonaventure University in Olean, NY. Sister also pursued Religious Studies at the Catechetical Institute at Dunwoodie.

After her profession in 1946, Sister went to Holy Name of Mary School in Croton on Hudson where she taught the 4th grade. In 1955, Sister Raphael was sent to teach the first grade at Assumption School in Peekskill. Her next assignment was to Cathedral High School in New York City where she taught Math.

Being assigned to Ladycliff College in 1964, Sister Raphael spent many years as a Professor and later as the Chairlady of the English and Humanities Department. Sister was a Master teacher of American Literature, Poetry,

and Creative Writing. Her love of literature and her creativity in writing was infectious for her students. Sister's own research on the works of Emily Dickenson, which became the subject of her Master's thesis, was regularly share with all in her classes.

Sister always demanded excellence from her students: difficult while in class but very much appreciated to all of us later on in our lives. Sister's presence as a dorm monitor had a great effect on the Ladycliff girls who lived on her floor. She was VERY well liked and admired.

When the college closed, Sister Raphael, along with Sister Kevin, her life-long friend, began a new ministry of coordinating the Religious Education Program at St. Mary's Church in Katonah, NY. Following their years at St. Mary's, they began this same service at Holy Family Church in Staten Island, NY. Both Sisters served there until the need to retire to Mt. St. Francis became a necessity.

Sister Raphael spent her years in the Sisters' Infirmary the way she lived her life: as a gentle, quiet, and prayerful person who put her trust in God and his plan for her life. Even as the evidence of aging stole her memory, Sister could show her appreciation to her Sisters, her visitors, and the

Infirmary Staff by a constant smile which showed her gratefulness for their care and kindness. As the Lord prepared to call Sister to her heavenly reward, the Sisters gathered around her in prayer and support for her and her dear friend, Sr. Kevin. While we all sang her favorite hymn, "Hail Mary, Gentle Woman", Jesus brought her home, quietly and with great peace. As Sr. Kevin thanked us all, she reminded us that Sister Raphael was privileged to die the way she lived, as a gentle and peaceful woman. We count on Sister, now watching over us from the best of places, to intercede for us and our Community. In the words of her favorite hymn, Raphael "teach us wisdom, teach us love".



## Sr M. Rosapia Cuzzolin of the Blessed Sacrament

Born: S. Donà di Piave (VE)  
il 1.1.1926  
Died: Gemona (UD) il 5. 3. 2016

Sr. Rosapia was born in San Dona di Piave (VE) 1 January 1926 starting in Cuzzolin family, already numerous in children, a new year with a new life. Ten days later, in Baptism, her parents Peter and Elizabeth choose to call her by the beautiful name of Anna Maria placing her under the protection of these great Patronesses.



Her childhood passed quickly and in simple form in the home. At the age of 21, she asked to consecrate her life to the Lord and she entered in Gemona among the Franciscan Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, where she prepared herself for three years to that definitive step that gave her the joy to fulfill her desire by the Religious profession that took place on May 7, 1950.

From that moment on, her life elapsed multiple stages: in the space of thirty years, she moved through several countries of Friuli, Veneto and Trentino. A particularly challenging time were the seven years she spent with the orphans in Centocelle - Rome, service of closeness and above all love for those who have not experienced love in life. This is the mission each Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart feels as her own, belonging to the spirit of the charism: the poor are always the favorite portion and choice; in them, we serve Jesus!

Since 1985, Sr. Rosapia was present in the motherhouse where so many other sisters share the daily life of prayer and fraternity, experiencing the help and mutual support. In the last period, she was in her nineties, she felt close to the last call of the Lord and, waiting for "Sister Death", she was serene

and repeated as she could, murmuring in whisper, her offering to the Lord.

On March 5, surrounded by the love of her sisters and bearing in her hearts the memory of her family that they had actually visited her in recent days, she left the earthly dwelling to enter the banquet of the eternal wedding.

We bless the Lord and thank Him for Sr. Rosapia: she achieved 90 years on this earth; her life was prolonged in the blessed eternity according to the promise that, in the liturgy of the Word, God gives us:

*Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; The things of the past shall not be remembered or come to mind.*

*Instead, there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create...*

*No longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there, or the sound of crying;*

*No longer shall there be in it an infant, who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not round out his full lifetime... (Is 65:17-20)*

From heaven where Sr. Rosapia entered forever, intercede for her dear ones, and especially for her sister and three brothers present among us, every blessing of God and for our religious family the gift of vocations that can bear witness to the love of Jesus with the spirit of FMSC.



**Sr M. Giannapaola Severin  
of the Holy Eucharist**

Born: Paese (TV) il 18. 7.1941

Died : Gemona il 21. 4. 2016

Faith makes us read the last day of Sr. Giannapaola earthly life on the mirror of the Passover of Jesus, crucified and risen. In fact, the day 21 April, the memorial of the canonical opening of the Congregation FMSC, has realized the desire pursued for some time in this year of mercy: to live the Jubilee passing through the "Holy Door of the infirmary" of the Mother House.

And here Sr Giannapaola was invited to open the procession carrying the cross, began her journey, living the Easter way of the Cross followed by all the sick sisters. With prayer, the plenary indulgence and the Sacrament of Confession her soul exulting in the joy, experienced the baptismal innocence, ready to go with Jesus on that cross He carried.

The night passes briefly and from 4 to 6.30 am, conscious and present, she suffered and offered herself to the last breath.

There were superiors, the ambulance ready and emergency room doctors who could do anything in front of the Lord's call and the immediate response of Sr. Giannapaola who gave her soul to God



while in church at Morning Prayer the sisters in prayer proclaimed *"He has Risen: He left the tomb."*

... Yes, why to try to revive her when her soul has left brother body who was holding her and rose to heaven? Death and New Life here is the Passover of Sr. Giannapaola who could enter *"the Holy Door of Paradise"* where she found, as Fr Joseph said in the Eucharist Celebration, *"the wedding banquet"* ready for feast in the Kingdom of the Lord!

The earthly life of Sr. Giannapaola enclosed in the space of 75 years whose birthday was next 7 July 2016.

Born in Paese on 18 July 1941. Her parents, Giovanni e Nasato Paola, just two days later July 20 lead her to Baptism with the name of Luisa Angela. She grew up with two other brothers: Angelo and Anna Maria.

The Christian climate that reigns in this environment and in the parish guided her to hear very early the Lord's call. She entered still young (1952) among the FMSC in Gemona. Here began her journey in religious life.

Transferred to Rome in Centocelle for studies (1956), she graduated in Natural Sciences. She entered novitiate (09.30.1961) with the name of Sr. Giannapaola of the Eucharist. After the canonical year, on 1 October 1962, she made her Religious Profession.

In 1966 she was in Gemona as a teacher of Science in the School "S. Maria degli Angeli": thus began her service with the students and families, precious mission that will continue also in Rome as Teacher and Dean in "Asisium" School.

At the level of the Province of "Saint Mary of the Angels", she has also exercised the local superior service, and Vicar Provincial Secretary. All appreciated her as a Sister and good teacher, friendly, always ready to dialogue and to fruitful relationships.

A few months ago, it presented unexpected "the disease of the century - cancer of the head" and Sr. Giannapaola, who went to Gemona, had to undergo a delicate operation, from which she had been gradually recovering with high hopes and with special satisfaction of the doctors...

But the Lord had in reserve for her another design that at the dawn of 22 April, He has completed for the eternal joy of Sr. Giannapaola.

*We accompany you to your eternal rest and you, Sr. Giannapaola, remember your brethren Angelo and Anna Maria and all your loved ones, pray also for this your religious family*

*you loved and for which we ask you to implore from the Risen Lord the gift of holy vocations who, like you, know how to give their lives to Jesus.*



**Sr M. Biancangela Carniato  
of the Agonizing Jesus**

Born: Treviso il 5. 11. 1917

Died: Gemona il 31. 5. 2016

*"That is always true what I once said: "Where there are religious, there is joy". We are called to know and show that God is able to fill our hearts to the brim with happiness; that we need not seek our happiness elsewhere; that the authentic fraternity found in our communities increases our joy; and that our total self-giving in service to the Church, to families and young people, to the elderly and the poor, brings us life-long personal fulfilment."*

(Pope Francis to all consecrated)

This is the testimony that Sr. Biancangela Carniato left us in her long Consecrated life (99 years), marked by the "joy of belonging to Jesus living among the brethren." And this was also her mission: to bring happiness of life 'together', to communicate to others with spontaneity and enthusiasm that life offers us every day as a gift. Sr. Biancangela went anywhere with her good humor and Franciscan simplicity, sharing serenity and joy even in environments where suffering and pain were daily food, as among the elderly and the sick in nursing homes.



Yes, her personal feature was the joy, certainly a natural gift of her character, but also the result of an intuition of the heart: "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9) and, therefore, the joy in her, was the fruit of love that is self-giving.

Sr. Biancangela was born in a deeply Christian family that her father Carlo and her mother Amalia were concerned to form and grow in faith.

Born on November 5, 1917 in Treviso, she was baptized the following day by the name of 'Antonietta' and shared, during childhood and youth, family environment serenity with four sisters and two brothers. Soon, welcomed the call of the Lord, she responded to the call coming in Gemona-mother house among the Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart because she felt that 'the spirit of this religious family' corresponded to her being simple, open, and Franciscan: it was November 4, 1940. The following year, with the religious habit, she was given the new name: "Sr. Biancangela of the agonizing Jesus".

Completed the formation process of the novitiate, August 17, 1943, she was admitted to religious profession and immediately sent on her first mission in Cavaso del Tomba for the sewing school.

After five years, 28 August 1948, by making the 'Perpetual vows', devoted herself totally to God forever. From that moment Sr. Biancangela became available in the mission alongside the sick and elderly in nursing homes, especially in the 'Menegazzi' (TV) where she remained for 35 years: in those brothers, in whom she saw agony of 'Jesus' ; she He took care to

relieve suffering with her joyful, pleasant and attentive presence,.

In 2008, aged 91, she returned to the Mother House, elderly among older sisters, but still full of vivacity and dynamic spirit. That joy, accumulated and distributed to all long-life, has never turned off until the last.

And at the end of life what greater joy can there be than that of letting oneself be carried to heaven by the Virgin Mary? This was her desire in the few days that preceded her departure from the earth. So, precisely on the feast of the Visitation (May 31, 2016) when we remember that Mary goes 'fast' to St. Elizabeth, Sr. Biancangela has left to reach 'fast' Maria before the month of May ended and with her, she went up in the sky ... it was 11:15 pm!

And because joy was complete 3 June 2016, Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was held her funeral. Thus, in the embrace between the Heart of Jesus and Mary, Sr. Biancangela will live eternal happiness that she tried to communicate at all when she was among us.

*"Those who have met the Lord and follows him faithfully is a messenger of joy of the Spirit" (Rejoice 6)*



**Sr. M. Eleonor Singer  
of Our Lady of Providence**

**Born: Floral Park NY il 25.10. 1926  
Died: Peekskill NY il 12. 6. 2016**

Sister Eleanor Singer was born in Floral Park, NY to Lillian Brunner and Joseph Singer. She was the second of three children and was raised as a Lutheran.

After the family moved to Manhattan when she was four years old, she attended PS 96 and then Julia Richman High School, where she graduated in 1943 at the age of 16. Eleanor then worked at the NY Telephone Company for 5 and a half years.

Eleanor began attending a club moderated by the Helpers of the Holy Souls.



When she was 19 she attended their retreat and met Fr. Joseph Ledit, SJ. She began taking classes there, was conditionally baptized, and heard the call of God leading her to religious life. At the age of 22 Eleanor began her lifetime journey as a Franciscan Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart.

After her first profession, Sr. Mildred Marie was assigned to the Girls' House of St. Joseph's Home as a group mother and second grade teacher. She then taught at Sacred Heart, Highland Falls, Immaculate Conception, Irvington, Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, NYC, until 1961 when she began teaching at St. Joseph's High School in West New York, NJ.

In 1964 she taught at St. Joseph's High School, NYC, followed by another three years in West New York. Sister became principal in St. James in Totowa, then taught in St. Leo's, Elmwood Park, NJ, St. Michael's High School in West New York, and Franciscan High School in Mohegan Lake, NY and later worked at Cathedral High School in New York City.

Sister earned a BA in French from Ladycliff College and her MA in French from Rivier College. During the summers of 1972 and 1973 she chaperoned students from St. Joseph's High School in West New York on their trip to

Nice, France under the Foreign Study League. After 46 years of teaching, Sister returned to Mt. St. Francis, where she served a Provincial Secretary until her retirement in 2009.

Sister Eleanor did not know how to retire. Since 2009 she took over the duties of our library at the motherhouse, worked at the switchboard, and helped out whenever she was needed. Even in these past two years when she experienced the many trials of an aging body, she found little things that she could do to help others. Her relationship with her God, her religious sisters, and her friends and family all strengthened her as she faced many recent surgeries and hospital stays. Eleanor taught us how to handle the tough times in life with faith, gentleness, and trust in the plans that God has for each of us. Even on the worst of days, her answer to our "How are you today?" was always "Can't complain!" and if it was Thursday she would then hurry off to BIN-GO at the Villa.

Worldly things such as chocolate cake and ice cream, mallowmars, the NY Yankees, Family Feud, and lots of good novels will always remind us of Sr. Eleanor, but her faithfulness to her Lord, her genuine smile, her support to so many people, her dear friends, especially

Ray, Vicky and Madeline and Peppy, and her patience and acceptance of her long suffering, will remain a part of her memory and legacy. To paraphrase 2 Timothy: *"Her departure was at hand. She has run the race, she has fought the good fight, She has kept the faith."*

*The crown of righteousness awaits her, which the Lord, the just judge, awards to her today."*

Sr. Eleanor, from you home in God's everlasting kingdom, walk freely in peace and watch over us.



**Sr. M. Rachele Menis  
of Jesus, the Eucharist**

**Born: Artegna (UD) il 16.10.1926  
Died: Le Mans il 25. 7. 2016**

Sister Rachele Menis was born into a very religious Christian family in the village of Artegna in northern Italy on October 16, 1926. Days later, she was baptized and received the name of Clelia.

In 1943 during the war at the age of 17, in order to fulfil her project of life, she gave up her job as she was employed in a factory and she followed the call of the Lord. She joined our congregation in the Mother House of Gemona for the formation to the religious life.

After preparation time, on 21 July 1945, with other young people, she pronounced in the enthusiasm of her youth, religious Vows of obedience, poverty and chastity. Conscious of being in a missionary congregation, she happily accepted her missionary mandate in 1946 to France and more precisely in Tracy le Mont, in the Oise. In 1950, she was in Flers de l'Orne, Sées, serving the seminarians of the diocese where she exercised



her apostolate as a cook and for the Chapel Sees Nearly with older priests.

She has been appreciated as a prayerful, humble, quiet and hardworking religious. For more than sixty years without complaint, she was at the service of the Church in humility and generosity, happy to serve others in the humble work entrusted to her.

In missions where she was sent (Paris and Attichy in the Oise, repeatedly) she remained faithful to her primary commitment to live as a Franciscan Missionary of the Sacred Heart. Wherever she passed, she will be remembered as a fraternal sister, open and welcoming, always with a smile and a good word of encouragement.

Many times, she was nominated local superior. In 2004, she was given the responsibility of the Sisters of the provincial house; she did it in humility, availability and generosity.

In 2010 she retired from all activity, her only apostolate was that of prayer. She prayed a lot and she gladly spent hours in the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament. Franciscan crown for her was the most beautiful prayer to the Virgin Mary; she would never have missed Community activities. She loved life and fraternal sharing with the sisters in joy and simplicity. Dear Sister Rachele, we know that from the heaven you watch over your family; and us. You gave us the best of testimony, that of tenderness and fidelity to your call since last October you have celebrated 70 years of religious life.

Dear sister Rachele intercede for us before the Father of Mercy. May you rest in peace and forever contemplate His face.



### Sr. M. Rosa Cecilia Bozzo of the Sacred Heart

Born: New York City il 9.6.1942

Died: Peekskill NY il 27.7.2016

Sister M. Rose Cecilia (Maria Bozzo) was born in New York City, the 4th child of Joseph and Rose Bozzo and graduated from Ascension Grammar School, and St. Joseph's branch of Cathedral High School. Sister received both her BA in Business Administration and her MS in School Administration and Supervision from Pace University.

After her profession in 1962, Sister taught at St. Joseph's School in West New York, NJ. Her other

assignments were: St. Mary Magdalen School in Philadelphia (1963), The Assisium Business School in NYC (1963-1969), Immaculate Conception School, Irvington, NY (1969-1971), Principal of St. Leo's School in Elmwood Park, NJ (1971-1974), Immaculate Conception, Irvington (1974-1976 as a teacher and 1976-1988 as Principal), Franciscan High School, Mohegan Lake, NY (1988-1991 as Principal), Local Superior and Assistant Provincial of the Franciscan Sisters (1992-1995), Holy Rosary School, Port Chester, NY (1995-1997 as Principal), Provincial Superior (1997-2003), and Villa Saint Francis in Peekskill (2003-2016 as Planner and Administrator). and Provincial Council Member (2012-2016).

Sister Rose had a great love for Italian and Chinese cooking and enjoyed working in the kitchen, creating special treats through her cooking and baking.

She loved music, travel, and spending time with her family and her good friend, Sr. Gian Carla.

Sister took great pride in her help in designing both the renovated Mt. St. Francis and Villa Saint Francis, and made it a priority to keep in communication with her many FMSC Sisters throughout the world, as well as the many students whom she taught throughout her various ministries.

Her illness was a difficult cross that she was asked to carry.

The continued support of her Sisters, her family, and her many friends



helped to make her last days a little easier to face.

We all count on her now, to intercede for each of us and for all the Franciscan Sisters, so we too, will have the courage and strength to handle whatever our Lord has chosen for us.



**Sr. M. Petra Zanghi**  
of the **Miraculous Infant**  
of **Prague**

**Born: Philadelphia il 30.3. 1927**  
**Died: Peekskill NY il 31.7. 2016**

Sister M. Petra was born in Philadelphia, PA and graduated from St. Paul's Grammar School, and Little Flower High School in Philadelphia.

Sister received her BA from Fordham University, a MA in Religious Education from LaSalle University, and a MS in Business Education from New York University.

After her profession in 1950, Sister went St. Veronica's School in NYC, followed by Cathedral High School (1959-1966), St. Joseph's High School, West New York, NJ (1966-1968), St. Maria Goretti High School in Philadelphia (1968-1970), Group Mother at St. Joseph's Home in Peekskill (1970-1972), Principal of St. Mary Magdalen School in Philadelphia (1972-1975).

She then served as a member of the General Council of the International Congregation in Rome from 1975-1987, after which she was the Bursar of Franciscan High School until 1990.

From 1990-1994 Sister taught at Assumption School in Peekskill, taught at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School in Boonton, NJ, worked at Assumption Rectory from 1996-1999, at St. Anthony Parish in the Bronx from 199-2000, taught at Maria Regina High School in Hartsdale from 2000-2002, ministered at Padua House until 2006, and served at Villa St. Francis from 2006-2008.

Sister Petra also served as Vocation Director of the St. Francis Province, was a member of the Provincial Council, and was a long-time moderator of the Lay Associate Membership of the Province.

Sister M. Petra was a fun-loving, friendly, and dedicated religious, always looking for the blessings of God in every situation of her life. She took great delight in welcoming all who came to visit the Sisters at Mt. St. Francis, and always showered them with genuine Franciscan hospitality. Anyone who spent a little time with her usually left knowing how to make an origami frog that hops... and probably had a bag of chocolate covered pretzels and nuts which she delighted in creating. She was loved by many people!

One of her favorite expressions was *"Isn't God good! We are so blessed."* During her last days with us, no longer able to talk, Sister expressed these same sentiments by peacefully and patiently waiting for Jesus to come and take her home.

Right up to her last breath. Sister Petra gave us a living example of being totally comfortable with God's will for her.

Sister Petra, as you celebrate the joys of the fullness of God's kingdom, continue to pray for us so that we all may always strive to imitate the kindness and compassion of our Lord.

