



Voices of our Sisters and the Collaborators

Casa Generalizia,
16, Via Paolo III,
00165, Roma, Italia.

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Editorial

Dear Sisters,

Here we are once again, with news and information of life in our communities and missions. It is a great joy to experience such closeness towards all our sisters throughout the Congregation.

In this issue, we are continuing our reflections on our Charism and Spirituality of St. Emilie. I thank Sister Janet Arrowsmith for being available to share with us through simple reflections that which has been appreciated by and proved helpful to many sisters.

The article *from the archives, 2nd part*, is full of our history. Having read these articles, I began to appreciate, with St. Emilie, many courageous Sisters who did wonders and acted heroically in difficult times in the history of the Congregation. Thanks to their life of witness, today the Congregation stands firm on the foundation built by their sacrifices, dedication and witness. I thank Sr. Margaret Anne for her interest in the research and sharing this article.

I thank all the Sisters who have contributed articles for this bulletin. I appreciate your response to the call to share life and mission with all, thus building together our body and making it ONE.

Our next bulletin will be published at the end of January 2023. Please send in your articles by December 2022.

Thanking you and wishing you well,

Renee Quadros, SJA.



Spirituality and all that Conti

Sr. Janet Arrowsmith

Hello, me again!

When Renee first asked me to write about my ideas on Spirituality, I thought that maybe I would do two articles. That stretched to three. Now she says to me 'where's your article on St. Emilie, can you finish it as soon as possible?' Well, I had to think about it but after spending some time with the Lord, I decided it is good to have the opportunity to share my ideas on our Spirituality. In the last three articles I shared my beliefs in how our Charism is called into being by God and that the Spirituality, that He has endowed us all with, is the factor which unites us. The Spiritual Strengths which give our Spirituality its unique 'flavour' were first gifted to St. Emilie. It is my belief that if we ask Him to show us how to develop and live these gifts, which He chose for us, we can deepen our response and be more effective as we play the part that He wants us to play in the mission of the Incarnate Lord. So I will talk about some of these Spiritual Strengths in a new series of articles.



I am going to start with the gift of RECOLLECTION. We are all very aware of this but first I feel we have to establish what it meant to St. Emilie. She lived over 200 years ago and in that time this word has had a change of meaning. In seeking to know what it meant in her time, I looked at how contemporaries of St. Emilie understood the word. One of these was the Founder of the Marianist Congregation, Father Joseph Chaminade (1761-1850). He wrote frequently about 'Recollection'. In answering one of his priests who enquired about it he said: -



'Recollection has God for its object, in the sense that it helps us to put us and keep us in the presence of God, something that we do, for example, we concentrate our mind to study, that is, we apply it to a reading; but we do not apply it so completely that we do not retain an indirect thought of God, as, when viewing a picture in front of us, we see, nonetheless, from the corner of the eye the objects that are by the side.' Recollection then, for St. Emilie, was a gift from God which enabled her to be aware of always being in the presence of God, even if, at times, that awareness is a bit tenuous or 'shaky'. This was consistently the

understanding of the word for herself and her contemporaries. The word has come to mean something different in our world today. If I were to meet St Emilie and tell her that I was going to a day of recollection, she would look puzzled and reply that that was impossible. You cannot come and go from Recollection because it is a fact of creation that God is always there, no matter what you are doing.

In today's world the word has come to mean the idea of going apart from everyday tasks to spend some quiet time in prayer. During this time a person can reflect on what God is asking of them and receive His graces in order to be able to go back to the mission confided to them in the world in which we live. St. Emilie would see such a day of prayer as exceptionally valuable as a way

to deepen the experience of the gift of Recollection, but not Recollection itself. It is important to understand this distinction because of how important Emilie feels that the gift of Recollection is.

In the 1835 Constitutions, after declaring that the aim of the Congregation is two-fold, the holiness of the members and the good of the neighbour, she states: -

The principal means the Sisters practice to achieve the first aim

The observance of the established rules, particularly the rule of silence, in order to strive unceasingly to attain recollection, which must be like the soul of this Congregation.’ (Chapter 1 Art. 2:2 Const. 1835)

When we talk about our souls, what do we mean? This question used to puzzle me quite a lot. I knew from my catechism that we are body, soul and spirit. The body bit I knew well. I have worked with people and their bodies all my life as a physician. I was privileged to be at many births and equally privileged to be at many more deaths. At the moment of death, the soul and spirit leave and it is very obvious that the body is but the shell in which they were. I once heard a priest describe the distinction between the soul and the spirit by saying that the spirit was that part of us which is closest to God’s own being. He is pure spirit and our spirit, which He endowed us with, is that part



of us closest to Him and where our spirit yearns for and joins in Him. The soul, also God’s creation, is that part of us where our self-awareness is held. We know ourselves as individuals and it is here that our memories, our emotions and our wills reside. In our times many people who experience being on the edge of death, have reported experiencing something of life after death. No matter their background or culture they all report being acutely aware of themselves as unique individuals created, loved and called by God. The soul

is that part of ourselves which survives death and carries the deepest and purest sense of who we are before God. St Emilie may not have described the soul as I have done but I am sure she understood it as the deepest part of ourselves which is being formed by God to respond totally to Him. For her every Sister has been given the gift of Recollection, it is NOT an optional extra, but a touch of God which EACH Sister has been given as a part of God’s intention that she is being formed to live the Gospel in the Congregation. God planted all the gifts He wanted to work in us at our conception. He is the gardener and He has been taking delight in nurturing the gifts throughout our lives. He did not ask our permission to give us these gifts and they are already active in our ministry, even if we do not recognize their effects. However, when we realize that He has given us a particular gift and we ask Him to develop it, He will let it grow in us and it will bear greater fruit. So the gift of Recollection is already active in you as a Sister of St. Joseph of the Apparition. It is part of our soul of the Congregation and we all contribute to who we are before God. Ask Him to let this gift grow and to be a force in our missionary endeavors, especially in this world where so many doubt God’s existence. The gift of Recollection fully developed allows the people He sends us to, to see His presence in and with us as we go about our daily tasks. What a great gift this is for our world today. It makes me want to jump for joy and praise God for Emilie and the Congregation



From the Archives

Part 2

Throughout the Archives there are accounts of the experience of life during World War II. The 'Entre Nous' from 1957 to 1959 records for us some of the harrowing experiences of the War years. Referring to Sr. Virginie Aureille, who was in Sfax where she organized and directed a Red Cross Dispensary for 35 years we find:

The heavy air raid of December 14 1942 put an end to Mother Virginie's activity and obliged the sisters to take refuge in a country house far away from the city.

In 1939 Sr. Archangela Bochu was in Rome attending the ceremonies associated with Beatification of Mother Emilie. At some stage she returned to Marseilles and the account states:

The period from 1940 to 1945 was acutely distressing for our dear Mother as indeed for so many others. First, it was the collapse and invasion of France which resulted in there being no news, over a period of several years either from the Mother House or from the members of her family. Then came Peace, when correspondence was resumed; but it was only to learn some very distressing news: the loss of persons dear to her and the destruction of her home as a result of air raids. She accepted these trials with her usual calm - offering to God her prayers for all those dear to her who had suffered so much.

Sr. Therese of the Child Jesus Guillamel was in Split during these years and it is recorded:

War is raging at its highest. The restrictions seem to multiply. The date of the retreat is fixed, but all that remains as provisions in the house are 10lbs of maize. The Sister thinks it the most elementary prudence to refer the matter to the Superior "But, mother, do you realize it, how can we make a retreat with 10lbs of maize?" Mother Therese replies with the utmost calmness "We shall make our retreat. God will provide for us." And the retreat begins. On the third day a Salesian Father arrives saying "send the gardener with a car for food" Mother can hardly believe what she hears ... Father must be making a mistake, but Providence is never at a loss for means. The Swiss Red Cross had sent foodstuffs for the various convents of the town and thus the community was supplied with provisions for several months.



At this time the house in which the sisters lived had 20,000 Dinars still owing. The Sisters feared they may lose the house.

Mother Therese of the Child Jesus confides the whole thing to the holy Souls in Purgatory. On the 9th day of the Novena, in comes a doctor's maid, this doctor was a friend of the Community, prudently lying low in the neighboring island. "Sister, the doctor sends you these two gold coins to complete the payment of your house; if later on you, are in a position to pay them back well and good if not the doctor gives them to you."

In the height of the war, the town was sometimes bombed about 20 times a day. Churches and chapels were devastated and whole families wiped out, while at times splinters of stone came from afar and landed on the Terrace. Our Convent, one of the most exposed buildings, on account of the nearness of the barrack, was never touched. In moments of danger the people liked to take refuge with the community convinced that the Sisters prayers would protect them. (Entre Nous)

Sr. Emma Burette was in Sofia from 1932-1945. At the time of her death, it is written that:

She shared with her Sisters the anguish of warfare in a country far away from her own, of hours of aerial bombardment, of eventual defeat and of ultimate evacuation.

The records in Myanmar tell of a fateful day:

The canon thundered, the asylum was showered with shrapnel and the music of the machine guns was heard. In the evening the sisters were crouching in a corner, a huge shell had fallen in front of the door. They wanted to touch it as it was burning. It would have sent them to eternity but St Joseph looked after them. ...The Sisters miraculously escaped death.

There are no more trains, nor wagons so difficult to restart classes and the Sisters have not been able to return from Maymyo. They had to shelter under the bridges during the War. ... It is still dangerous to travel because of those who hide in the woods and come out armed when convoys pass.

A letter held in the Myanmar Archives relates the first contact Sr. Attracta Moorehead, who went to Burma in 1927, had with her parents in England at the end of the war. The following are excerpts from this letter:

I am writing to you directly for the first time since our liberation. It gives me a thrill of joy still when I even mention the word and recall the rapture of that memorable day at the end of last month when a small company of British soldiers made contact with us and released us from two years' internment. ... The country has been literally devastated, and we are all refugees depending upon the British for relief. and we are getting it. From the colonels down to the youngest there is manifested the desire to help us. In fact, many of the men of the Company who liberated us told us that it was worth the strain of three hundred miles of desperate fighting to find themselves in a position of liberating the first white women they had not seen for two years. We broke down and when we saw our men, they themselves could hardly speak. At once the emptying of their pockets, a cake of soap here, a tin of cheese there, etc., etc., until we all had a little gift. We'd had only rice and boiled vegetables for months.

But it was not for the sake of material comforts that we waited, we waited for them for relief from mental anxiety. Our morale had been broken, although we still managed a smile and for the last two months, the dread of being taken away by the retreating army was hanging over our heads. Had the British been a week later I do not know where we would have been by now. ... We had some harassing days and still more harassing nights for they threw hand grenades on us and set fire to the village with a view of driving us out into the jungle.



The British soldiers for the whole of that last awful night stood around us beating out the fire, ready with their guns in case of an attack and all the time calm and cheerful thinking of us and the children. Courage, like fear, is contagious. Of course, God's help was as manifest that night as it had been all during those dreadful years and when the day dawned, our hearts were full of gratitude to Him for once again not having failed those who had put all their trust in Him. With daylight came deliverance, jeeps carried off the young and very old and the rest of us trekked it for four miles under military escort. Eventually we reached a point where the jungle cleared and we saw the welcome sight of British trucks waiting to take us to Mandalay.

Here we are now in our broken-down furniture-less convent, happy as the day is long grateful to God and glad that the occupation is over. My heart aches for home news, but yet, I dread a letter. What am I going to hear? Have the three years made any gaps in the family circle? I hope not...My thought has been continually for you all these months. May God bless you all and keep you from all harm.

In 1997 Sr. Dorothy Kiely who spent many years in Burma, writes from Bowden England to the Sisters in Myanmar and refers to the war years.

The war years were sad and frightening. ... Everything became scarce. I remember people crying and running away with a few possessions. We were interned in the Leper Asylum and once a month allowed to go into town and obtain whatever we needed. Word would get around that we were in town and the local populace would come to the pony cart in which we were sitting and bring us small gifts of food or cloth and even sometimes money. This was a time when they had so little.

The Archives in Malta gives us snippets of life in this country during these war years.

In 1939 a good number of Sisters, pupils and past pupils gathered in Rome for the Beatification of our Holy Mother Foundress,



St Emilie de Vialar. ... But very soon this great joy was replaced by a great sadness as the second world war broke out in September. Life on the Island became very difficult and continued to get worse and

worse still September 1943. Our Sisters residing in Valletta and Sliema found themselves living in zones exposed to much bombing. ... In Sliema air raid shelters were built under the Boys school. The school continued for some time until the chapel was bombed and the main building had become uninhabitable.

They decided to evacuate and went as refugees to live in Balzan and B'Kara. Here they opened classes and gave lessons to pupils who were also living in the same area as refugees. The house in Paola was requisitioned as a hospital for the military and the Sisters moved to Palms Street in Paola. Eventually, living in Paola became unbearable and the Sisters were obliged to find refuge at Hal-Bajjada. The Sisters who were living in Cospicua, together with their orphans had to leave their summer house in Marsaskala and found refuge at Marsalforn in Gozo. They remained living there with the children throughout the war years.

In spite of difficulties caused by the war the centenary festivities of the arrival of our Foundress in Malta were celebrated in each of the communities.

The war was no obstacle to the entrance of young girls into the Congregation. In 1943 at Villa Forte, Lija the Sisters opened a Novitiate under the direction of Mother Euphrasie Angiolette. Novices did not go to France but made their first profession here in Malta at the Sliema Convent. The number of novices kept increasing and growing for a number of years.

When in England during the 1980's I recall a Sister telling me of how she and another Sister were confined to a small farm property in a mountain area in France. Due to the situation, they were forced to remain hidden and no one in the Congregation knew where they were. At the end of the war, they both emerged safely and informed those in the Mother House of their survival.

These are a few details I have been able to gather from a variety of sources. No doubt in each Province of the Congregation there are records of similar stories of courage, suffering, unexpected happenings and disconnection from the Congregation, families and friends



IN FLANDERS FIELDS

*the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders Fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though Poppies grow
In Flanders fields.
John McCrae*



My New Mission Experience in Tunisia.

Sr. Oluchi Nwachukwu SJA

On the 18th May 2022 the mission of vocation promotion has led to my transfer from Australia to Tunisia. This mission is to welcome and be with the six aspirants who are coming from Africa. They will arrive here in Tunisia on the 22nd of August 2022, We welcome them for a “**come and see**” experience of the universal vocation of our SJA Congregation. Let us confide this project to St. Emilie and ask her to enlighten and guide us.

While in Tunis I have been learning French, a language not easy to learn, but I have been trying my best. I am involved in parish meetings with the youth and even joined in the youth program held from the 8-10 July 2022. Towards the conclusion of the program, there was a football match played amongst the youth of the Diocese. It was a fabulous program.

The Community held their retreat on 31st July-7th August 2022 at the mountain in which I participated. This was my first retreat here in Tunis and it was wonderful hearing the teachings in French. I used my translator in order to understand the teachings while the facilitator also assisted me in translating some of the more difficult words.

After the retreat I continued with learning French. Interaction and vocation promotion continued online with the ladies who have shown interest in becoming a SJA Sister. I have also been holding zoom meetings with the aspirants with the help of the team, Sr. Anita, Sr. Jacqueline, Sr. Chiara, Sr. Elena, Sr. Kalpna, Sr. Anne and myself. Before this Team, Sr. Jacqueline and I had been accompanying these young ladies for over a year and six months. Steps have now occurred to ensure the release of the six aspirants Visas which was released on Tuesday 9th of August, 2022.

The six aspirants are now ready to come over on the 22nd of August 2022. In preparation for their coming, myself together with the Sisters in my Community have cleaned up the apartment reserved for them. We also went to the market to buy things for the community and for these young ladies to use. I have also arranged with people in Africa who will assist in bringing the ladies together to the place where they will board their flight to Tunis.

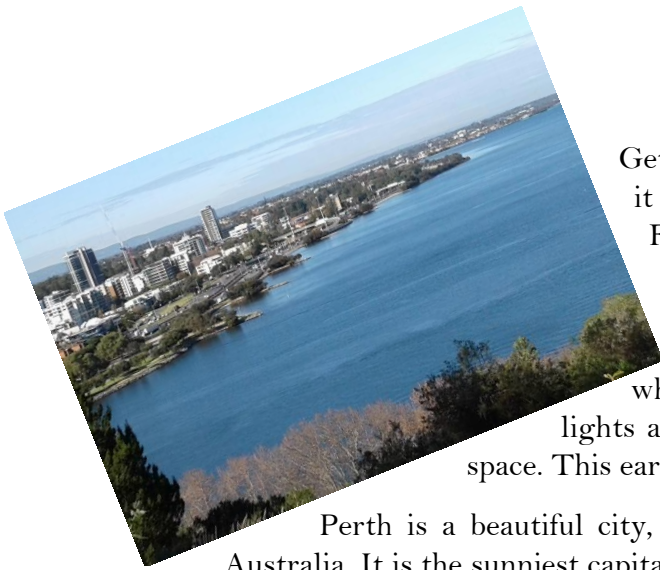
My biological family have also supported me in this mission both spiritually, financially, physically, morally and otherwise. Before we reached this stage now, a lot of commitment and sacrifices have been made for me, my family and Sr. Jacqueline.

It's not easy to be in a place where one cannot understand the language or a particular dialect as it makes communication so difficult sometimes resulting in misunderstandings. I live in peace with the sisters and the people. When I recall the times of St Emilie our Foundress, how she struggled to survive the hard times during her mission, I feel encouraged to do more. I keep praying that the Lord who called me will keep seeing me through. Amen.

I have attached some photos of what has been going on so far.



Hello from the City of Light – PERTH, Australia



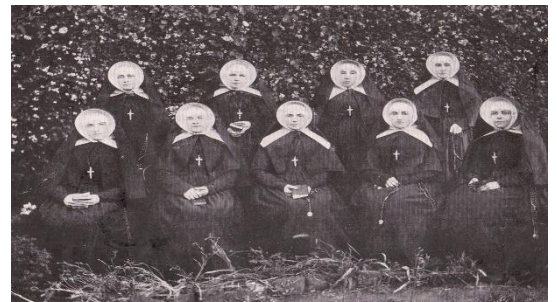
Getting a visa for Australia needed time and patience, it took one whole year! but it was worth waiting for.

Finally, I am in my new mission and would like to share my first experiences here in the City of Light.

This nickname goes back to 1962 when American astronaut, John Glenn, orbited the earth, and when he flew over Perth, everyone turned on their lights and Glenn could see the city sparkling from up in space. This earned Perth the nickname, the City of Light!

Perth is a beautiful city, located in the south-western corner of Western Australia. It is the sunniest capital city in Australia, even in the cold winter months, we can enjoy the sunshine. In spite of the fact that Perth is one of the most isolated capital cities in the world, it is the 2nd highest population growth rate of all Australian capitals, there are always new people arriving in the city. It has the largest city of the Australian state of Western Australia with a population of 2.1 million. The people are friendly, generally optimistic, outgoing, and confident, very informal in their interactions with others. Perth is also a multicultural society composed of different ethnic groups originating from so many countries around the world. A big percent of the population is of European ancestry and the population is made up of immigrants or the descendants of immigrants who arrived here during the last two centuries.

Arriving in Perth was never easy, because I had to deal with the homesickness, missing family and friends, managing certain pressures, adjusting to new surroundings, grieving the loss of the familiar...etc. Fortunately, with our sisters we always feel at home. We, SJA have served in Australia since 1855. The sisters are affectionate, caring, generous and friendly. The warm welcome they give you helps ease the homesickness. I experienced this when gathered to give a farewell to the former provincial, sister Jacqueline, who left for her new mission in Tunis to accompany the young Nigerian women who are interested in our Congregation. I feel lucky to have met and known such a devoted loving Sister. I wish her a fruitful



mission, as well as to sister Anita, our General Councilor, who will be the leader of the delegation for the coming year. I also attended the funeral of sister Monica SJA, who passed away the day of my arrival at the age of 102. The testimony we heard was so wonderful and made me experience how much the charism of Saint Emily is still alive.

Our communities are in Perth. We have 5 multicultural communities not far from each other; a home for our elderly sisters, and in the other communities we find sisters from India, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia... Some sisters study at different universities, others are engaged with Pastoral and Parish work.

I work at a co-educational Catholic College for Years 7 - 12. Since I arrived during the second semester of the Scholastic year, and while waiting for my official papers to be a registered teacher, I assist the English teachers who teach English as a Second Language for foreigners. The College has a long and rich history and offers a first-class education supported by traditional values. They are proud to boast over 60 nationalities among the students; this reflects the diversity of Perth population, and encourages the students to have a global perspective about everything.

Last but not least, I would like to send big warm greetings to my Province that I left only physically because it is and will always be in my heart. Hello to all our sisters in Palestine/Israel province.



Also, I would like to thank each person I met here in Perth since I arrived, for their generosity, their precious help and their caring attention. They are always happy to help with consideration, always available with an attentive ear. I sincerely appreciate their assistance. My heart is filled with gratitude and mostly to my Heavenly Father for always being with me and blessing me abundantly, and I ask you all to pray for me to continue being a faithful SJA sister following the footsteps of our beloved Saint Emilie.

Sister Vicky GIACAMAN SJA



Australian SJA Gathering on 13th August 2022

One sister commented, "It is good for us to be here." It is good to meet up again." We are living in transition times in Church, society and in our Congregation, so we capture "the Now" by being together and rejoicing in the giftedness of each one."

All are Welcome! was the theme of "The Gathering" of all the sisters in Western Australia in the Manning Delegation house on the 13th August

"A Gathering" is the coming together in one place of different communities to simply share stories, pray, drink tea, coffee, beer, eat different food and enjoy each other's company. It is a time "to be" together in our busy lives.

The new community of Manning welcomed all the sisters with great joy, happy to see the house full of senior and younger sisters who were ready to relax and follow the programme of the afternoon

Manning Delegation house had been redecorated and renewed before I arrived in the 15th June 2022 so everyone had the opportunity to visit the two small houses which form one community. Senior sisters who had lived and worked here for many years could appreciate fully the new simple changes in the different rooms.

A short prayerful liturgy followed in which each sister reflected and shared on the words of the hymn. "Let us build a house where love can dwell as Friends of God, Sisters, servants of each other." (John 15). Five sisters who had accepted their new mission in the past months were presented with their obediences and thanked for their willingness to serve in their new communities." "Go and with what you have and will receive do all the good you can". I received a plant as a gift from the Delegation.

Each sister was then presented with an APRON as a symbol of service, shared a WORD OF LIFE and reflected on the question "Will you let me be your servant. Let me be as Christ to you? The beautiful, colored, Italian styled aprons were a gift from the General Council in Rome to the Australian General delegation as a symbol of servant leadership. (See pictures.)

Everyone appreciated the surprise gift and spontaneously put on the aprons and rushed to serve one another drinks, and some intercultural tasty food. There was joy and laughter until evening fell and time to say Good bye. Thanks to all who participated, who created memories which empower us to journey on.

Sr. Anita Callaghan





Will you let me be your servant?



Journey of the Postulants from Thailand to the Philippines.

On 20th June 2022, the Community of Bangkok arranged a liturgy to give thanks to God and asked His blessing on the Postulants going to the Philippines for ongoing formation. The three Postulants are Scholastica Ketsurin, Monsin, Rosa Benjawan Sawaengnam and Therese Kulaphan Ritoo. At the same time, we welcomed Maria Magdalene Witchaya Saisuna to continue her formation as a Pre-Postulant in the Community.

On 21st June 2022, the three Postulants from Thailand were scheduled to travel to The Philippines as the COVID-19 situation is much better. The Philippines has opened up to foreigners. Before travelling to the airport, a PCR examination is required 24 hours before departure. As a result, one Postulant was unable to travel with her two friends as she was infected with Covid-19. Sr. Martina together with two postulants travelled to The Philippines. Sr. Martina took this opportunity to visit our Sisters and the Novices there. It was a good opportunity for the Thai Postulants to join with some of the Postulants from Myanmar who are under the guidance of Sr. Marina. The day we arrived in the Philippines, Sr. Marina came to fetch us and the other Postulants from Myanmar who arrived at the same time as us at the airport. Together we went to our house in Las Pinas. We experienced a warm welcome from Sr. Marina and the Community of Las Pinas. On arrival the two Postulants from Thailand had to self-quarantine at home because they were infected with Covid-19. However, there was nothing to fear as everyone had been vaccinated against Covid-19. Sr. Marina and all the Sisters in Las Pinas Community took care of all very well, and the two recovered from their sickness and were able to join life with their friends.

On 10th June 2022 the other Postulant was able to safely travel to the Philippines and join her friends. The three postulants were excited and happy to join this ongoing formation in the Philippines. It was a new experience and challenge for them as it meant they have to use English as their main language.

They have a firm and determined intention to be formed to follow Him in this vocational path. Therefore, I ask for prayers for all the Postulants in our Congregation. May they have the strength, courage and inspiration to follow Him with love, sacrifice, and a readiness to learn and grow in the interior life. At the same time to learn to be with others, seeing their needs and, ready to sacrifice themselves to follow Him until the end.

Sr. Martina Ngamwong, SJA



GOD
bless
-YOU-



World Vocation Day Celebrated 18th May 2022

A march for World Vocations Day was held on Sunday 8th May 2022. Fr. Gael Raucoules, the vocation director of the Diocese of Albi organized this event. We started with a small picnic with the priests and parishioners. Before going my imagination led me to believe that there would be many young people, because it was about vocations, but sadly when we arrived at the place the reality was not like that. There were four priests, several elderly people and few young families with small children.



Before we started marching at 14.00, we began with a prayer to Mary for more vocations and that the people would respond to the call of God.

A rather long walk took us through the vineyards where there was a nice breeze. We spoke to the people (in French) and were strengthened by God and the beauty of His creation. Moreover, as we went along Deacon Vince Doat shared with us his own vocation story. He told us that in the Diocese of Albi, he was the last deacon. He added *'we really need to pray*

for more vocations, asking God to send more workers into His harvest.' He was ordained in the Cathedral in Albi. There were other faith sharing by parishioners about the Good Samaritan and readings from the Word of God.

At the end of this beautiful day of grace we ended with Evening Prayer at the Notre Dame Church in Montauban. I really felt the presence of God and strongly and that He really listened to our prayer, even though there was no youth to join with us. Hopefully, through the faith of the elders the young will have the courage to respond to God's Call.



Besides this activity I would like to share with you about the Apostolate we are undertaking in Gaillac. We started sharing our musical gifts with the people



and in the Church, playing music and forming a small choir at one of the Parish Masses. We have also begun attending and singing at Mass with the elderly in a retirement Home. We have helped take Communion to some of them in their homes. It is really full of the grace of God, though our French is still weak, it cannot stop us from doing and sharing the love of God for His people.

Please remember us in your prayer., Sr. Pattaravadee Soypradis (Bee), Juniorate Gaillac, France.

The First Professions in the Philippines

"HOW GOOD THE LORD IS FOR THOSE WHO SERVE HIM"!

St. Emilie de Vialar

On June 17, 2022, the feast of our Mother Foundress St. Emilie De Vialar, we celebrated the first Profession at the Holy Cross Parish, Amparo Village, Caloocan City, Philippines. The main celebrant was Rev. Fr. Roger S. Positar, the parish priest, and Rev. Fr. Romeo R. Gallo, the parochial vicar and five more invited priests joined the Eucharistic Celebration. Fifteen of our SJA Sisters and five more from other Congregations, some of our friends and parishioners attended the Mass.



The novices took responsibility of the choirs. Sr. Bernadette Ratree and Sr. Geraldine Swe were at reception with six postulants. The commentator was Sr. Theresa Ja Nan. Sr. Lucy Ciang was the photographer. For live-stream and media, the Holy Cross Parish Media Ministry took the responsibility.

The theme of our first Profession Celebration was: "**HOW GOOD THE LORD IS FOR THOSE WHO SERVE HIM**"! After the commentator had read about the vocation stories of each Sister, the holy Mass started with the procession of four: **Bernadette Ja Hkawn, Veronica May Zaw Aung, Rosa N-bu Ja Nan and Cecilia S Seng Htoi Ra**, and all the attended SJA Sisters and the priests. The first reading was read by Rosa N-bu Ja Nan, psalm sung by Cecilia S Seng Htoi Ra, the second reading and gospel acclamation sung by Veronica May Zaw Aung. In the time of the Rite of the Profession, Sr. May Rose, the formator, called out each of the Novices by name. Then at the presence of Rev. Fr. Roger S. Positar, the Novices pronounced their first Vows into the hands of Sr. Rita Khin San Aye, General Councilor. The priest blessed the Cross, and Sr. Rita wore it on each of the sisters' necks, saying the word of St. Emilie "Fix it in your heart."

Next the young Sisters signed the documents as the proof of their profession. With joy and gratitude, the young Sisters sang the Magnificat. As the symbols of the consecration, Sr. Bernadette Ja Hkawn offered the crucifix, Sr. Veronica May Zaw Aung the bible, Sr. Rosa N-bu Ja Nan the candle, and Sr. Cecilia S Seng Htoi Ra the grape.



Before receiving the Holy Communion, all the SJA Sisters renewed their Vows in front of the Altar. After the Communion, Sr. Bernadette Ja Hkawn said "words of thanks." Then, Sr. Rita Khin San Aye announced each of their Obedience. It was a very exciting moment for all of us. The smiles and hurried steps to the altar were showing how much the newly professed sisters were overwhelmed with joy and excitement for their mission. Sr. Bernadette and Cecilia will be assigned in Myanmar/ Philippines Province and Veronica and Rosa will go to Israel/ Palestine. After the final blessing, we took the memory photos with the priests, Sisters, novices, postulants, friends and parishioners.





After that, we had delicious meal at the Parish Hall. There, we were welcomed with a lovely song by our Sisters, Novices and Postulants. We cut our profession cake, and Fr. Romeo blessed the food. We all enjoyed our lunch together with all the attendants and shared our love and joy. That was a great moment for us. We give thanks to the Lord who has called us to this consecrated life to witness His tender Love for all mankind. Also, we thank our Mother Foundress and the Congregation, and all our Sisters who always support us with love and prayer. Thanks to all our loved ones.





Love from

Central International Novitiate
Philippines

<https://youtu.be/SyWdqZ8AMx4> link for more photos.

The Feast of St. Emilie de Vialar

“How satisfying for the heart when it is given to bring happiness to someone and to relieve suffering humanity”

St. Emilie



We, the young sisters in Gaillac, were blessed and privileged to celebrate St. Emilie's feast in her hometown.

On 17 June 2022, feast of St. Emilie de Vialar, was celebrated with solemn Mass, presided by Bishop John Legrez and twelve priests at St. Peter's Church in Gaillac. The Sisters amazed the crowd, and ourselves, by our melodious singing IN FRENCH. It was a magnificent and marvelous Eucharistic witness. The participants congratulated the Sisters for their angelic voices and clapped with joy and all appreciated the presence of the

young Sisters. At the offertory, some Sisters processed towards the alter in colourful national costumes. They carried a Bible, Emilie's habit, the Constitutions and the Formula of Vows. All representing our consecration and commitment. The Sisters present, the Gaillac and Sant-Affrique Communities, renewed their vows before communion, which gave testimony to our religious life. St. Emilie must have been happy to have us around her. The people were filled with joy to see all the Sisters united in the spirit of St. Emilie.



After the Eucharistic celebration, to further mark this **Bonne Fête**, we had a shared 'aperitifs' at the back of the Church. The Sisters again amazed the parishioners and friends by some traditional foods from their countries - which delighted them. We were moved with joy to see the people enjoying the food. In this way we thanked God and glorified Him for His presence in our midst and His gift of our holy Mother St. Emilie.



I will give thanks to you,

O Lord my God,

With all my heart,

And will glorify your name forever.

Psalm 86:12

Sr.Punita Tirkey, SJA

A Spiritual Experience

During a Pilgrimage to the small town of Lourdes, from 29/7/2022 to 1/8/2022, this is what I learnt by caring for the sick and the experience of worshipping together.



Presence: Our presence among those needing care gave them strength and hope because many of them said that the Church was still alive with the presence of young Sisters. That our presence for each of them was a source of encouragement, to see volunteers, giving free service and constantly preparing for each action. Added to this was the very real sense of the presence of Jesus among the crowds and as a result of our ministry.

Look: There was a difficulty for us Sisters and that was not to be able to speak good French. As we couldn't say a lot, our looks and our smiles were understood because they expressed love. Like the vision of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they expressed love, tenderness and mercy for the human person.

Smile: The smile present on the faces of each of the volunteers, despite insomnia and fatigue, and continuous service, was inspiring. The smile was a source of strength and joy for us and urged us to finish our task as volunteers. Despite fatigue we appreciated the smiles we saw on the faces of the patients.



Attention: Attention to the patients was the most important thing. It was as if this person was my family, which I could not abandon. The patients too endured the fatigue of the day and gave strength to the young people, a strength which flowed from our Christian faith. Also our love for our Mother, the Virgin Mary, made us dive deeper into our faith.

Prayer: Prayer is a miracle in itself. Prayer has given us strength and unity with each other. Our

participation together in the ceremonies formed a bridge of communication between us and the young people.



Joy: Joy renews people. We saw in the young people an indescribable joy which created hope in the hearts of the sick. It gave them confidence and strength to complete the spiritual journey with our Mother Mary and the Lord

Sr. Christina Butrus
Juniorate, Gaillac



FRATERNITY OF CAVALLASCA-MAY JUNE 2022

"A little bit of life lived"

It is with joy that we wish to communicate to you, aspects of our fraternal life.

The feast of St. Joseph, was lived with much simplicity. We prepared ourselves as a Community with a triduum that was well prayed by all. We participated in and enjoyed a simple Eucharistic celebration followed by a festive lunch. With us were Mrs. Lucia Beltramelli, Mr. Matteo Scola and the staff who were on duty that day. After lunch, we had recreational time together and the celebration ended in joy.

A day to remember is 17 May when as a Community, we concluded our monthly retreat with a different day at Don Gabriele's Community in Como. We all enjoyed it, and getting out of our own environment was good-despite the weather and some things due to the pandemic.

The feast of St Emilia, started with receiving greetings from the *Allez Circle*. We rededicated ourselves and welcomed in prayer our charism. We entrusted to St Emilia, the whole Congregation, thanking the Lord as suggested by Sr. Monika in her letter. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Fr. Flavio Feroldi-archpriest of the cathedral-and four other priests. They were our pastor Fr. Teresio, Fr. Gabriel who during the year has given us the gift of the Word at our monthly retreats and Fr. George-Superior of the Comboni Fathers. These give us the gift of daily Eucharist for which we are grateful. Present also was Fr. Luigi, parish priest of Albate-Muggiò where Sister Simona Benzoni works on behalf of the Community. After the homily, Don Flavio asked each priest present to say a word to the Community. It was a testimony of faith, communion and thanksgiving for which together we rejoice and give thanks to the Lord.

The invitation to be missionaries and to live the gospel today echoed during the homily. We thank the Lord, for the presence of these priests who shared the Eucharist with us -a sign of the good they want us to accomplish. The Eucharist was followed by lunch and a time of celebration and joy. Songs cheered up the assembly. Joining us in this our family feast were, in addition to the ladies who were on duty in the morning, Mrs. Lucia Beltramelli, Mrs. Malvina Zanardelli, nurse Francesca Borzatta and two other employees who came for the Eucharist. One brought her youngest child with her. To all 'Thanks' validated by prayer.

For the fraternity
Sister Rocchina Varasano

***“The Mission is a Passion for Jesus,
but at the same time,
it is a Passion for his People” (Pope Francis).***

We are a community of three sisters who in a simple way long to accompany the life of people in Tejar, Guatemala. With the grace of the Spirit of Jesus, we stand in solidarity with the reality they live. With an attentive listening, the Lord allows us to feel the reality that they live and this enlightens us to be able to transmit a word of encouragement or to seek means to alleviate the pain of those who are suffering.

Faith is the guarantee of what is expected, the certainty of what is not seen: Each family lives a different reality and sometimes in very difficult situations. In meeting them we travel together the paths of light and hope arising from an experience of faith.

We share the situation of a girl, Katherine del Rosario Coroy Patzan, who at the age of 9 was diagnosed with a brain tumour. During the month of April, she received eight chemotherapy treatments and in June thirteen radiotherapies. The doctors do not recommend an operation due to the location of the tumour. It is not easy for the family to experience this situation. We try to strengthen them by being close to them and accompanying them with our prayers.

We experienced a similar case with the family of Emily Paola. She is 5 years old and was diagnosed with a tumour in her right eye. At a young age, she received four chemotherapies and then they removed her tumour and had to extract her eye. Currently she is receiving further Chemotherapy. We trust in the tenderness of God and we place our hope in him so that we can continue to make ourselves sensitive to her pain.

"I was sick and you visited me." As part of our apostolic service, we visit the sick and bring them Holy Communion and a word of encouragement, thus manifesting the love of God. It fills us with joy to see how the sick and their families await with joy this visit from Jesus who, through us, reaches them comforting their life of faith and filling them with hope.

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also”: At the parish level, we collaborate and accompany the Missionary Childhood which is made up of children between the ages of four and eight. They are part of a missionary stage where before their First Communion they receive some formation. Accompaniment is provided through a group of young “childhood assessors”, children who have already made their First Communion. Throughout the year formation is carried out through different recreational and training activities.

During this time, we celebrated a Eucharist where the parish priest blessed the children, their parents and assessors and has sent them to announce Jesus. During this celebration and as a missionary sign, each child received a pair of Rosary Beads.

We also accompany the formation of young men and women who are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Within this service, God gives us the Grace of contemplating the

dedication and generosity of the catechists, who give their time and are in charge of giving catechesis to these young people.

"The harvest is rich and the labourers are few" With our trust placed in God, we try to involve young women in our apostolate in order to help them discover their vocation from a simple and generous dedication. Likewise, we prepare some vocational meetings and this helps them to feel close to us and to come to know our mission.

"The path of synodality is the path that God expects from the Church." With the invitation from the Pope about the Synod and synodality, we are working with the catechists on the various themes proposed so as to walk together as a Church.



"The disciples and missionaries of Christ must illuminate all areas of social life with the light of the Gospel" (Pope Francis) We continue to live in the midst of an environment influenced by the pandemic which has affected the economy of families. The high cost of a Basic Food Basket is being strongly felt. We cannot be indifferent to this reality.

We have sought to respond through a project supported by the Archdiocesan Caritas, where 33 families have benefited. Every two months they are supplied with food. The weight and height of the children enrolled are checked monthly to verify their nutritional status. The families are very grateful for the support of this program as it supports the nutrition of their children.

We continually discover that education is a basic need and the reason why we continue to support this process for young men and women with the help of the Rafael Landivar University. For families it is a great help allowing their children the possibility and experience a different future.

We conclude by sharing the experience of a small Community called "Lourdes" which was born from the death of a lady who had cancer. When she died, her friends decided to pray a novena. This experience of praying together led them to decide to continue meeting and currently, they have the accompaniment of the Parish. Our community is committed to bringing them the Blessed Sacrament

once a month and they have organized themselves to worship the Blessed Sacrament. We thank the Lord because we see that it is a community that has been strengthened in faith.

We thank God for making us part of this people and we ask for his grace to always be attentive and willing to continue discerning the signs of the times. We believe that the challenges that we face today are an invitation to overcome them with joy, audacity and hope and self-giving arising from a missionary spirit.

Tejar Community, Guatemala





SHEEPSKIN



A festive celebration in Romania

Sheepskin is an old custom in Oas County. Here, every spring this festival called "*Sâmbra oilor*". Sheep's is celebrated through music and dance in traditional costume; it takes place at the «*Ruptul Sterpelor*», which means the separation and counting of sheep as well as the measurement of milk by shepherds who set out with their flocks to the meadows in the mountains. It is the largest country festival, related to the traditional occupation of the shepherd. It takes place annually in May and symbolizes the coming of spring and the departure of sheep to graze.

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On the winding road that connects «Țara Oașului» with «Maramureș», right on the border between the two counties, «Pasul Huta» becomes the host of one of the oldest traditions in the country. "*Sâmbra oilor*" marks the

beginning of the pastoral season in these northern lands. It is a good opportunity for a beautiful country party, where, after the problems of shepherding have been settled, they eat and drink. Before going up the mountain, both the sheep and their owners are sprinkled with holy water for



purification, and bathing in the clean water of the mountain streams. The washing with dew of plants, preparing ritual food or pronouncing magic formulas are part of local holiday customs. After all this, the milk given by the sheep to each «*sambras*» is measured and raised on a rake. Based on this sign, the amount of cheese is calculated for the coming Autumn when the sheepfold is broken. This year, the sheep «*sâmbra*» festival celebrated its sixty-fourth edition.

edited by: Cami, Giulia, Iasmina, Maria, Alex, Marian, Tudor – Catechism Children.



Celebration of the season of Creation 2022.

16, Via Paolo III, Rome

It was a great joy for us to welcome the religious brothers, fathers and Sisters of our neighborhood on 3rd September 2022 to celebrate the first part of the season of creation in our campus. It is a beautiful initiative taken by a group of religious of our street Via Aurelia since 2021 and the purpose is; to *share experiences for a better response to Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti in the Church today, to know each other better, and make our friendship to blossom into prayer with our neighbors.*

This year too we have it organized in 4 parts, celebrated each Saturday evening in different religious houses. We had 58 religious present for the prayer in our campus and the theme was, 1st part of The Burning Bush.

1st week: **Blazing not consumed**

2nd week: Turn Aside

3rd week: Take off your shoes

4th week: I have observed, I have heard, I know, I will deliver.

We united ourselves with the entire creation raising our hearts and voices in beautiful prayer, reflections and melody. We had fraternal gathering and opportunity to know each other during refreshment that followed. It is a moment worth sharing with you all.

Sr. Renee Quadros



Blazing and yet not consumed



HEARTBEAT

FULNESS OF JOY IN YOUR PRESENCE
(Ps 16.11)

This is the theme that accompanied the Grest (Summer Oratory) this year. In 5 weeks we explored the fascinating world of emotions in dialogue with our mind, allowing us to fully access the truth of ourselves and build more authentic relationships.



Pope Francis says that "God speaks silently to the heart", so it is good to know and call by name what inhabits, moves, warms and hurts it. Then bravely learn to freely decide and choose, without fear or conditioning. As Christians in welcoming our emotional experience means obeying the complexity of our being creatures and accessing the truth of ourselves deep within. This is a great and precious gift that opens an important communication channel so that God can truly

speak to our life without masks or makeup. Through the characters in the story of the "Wizard of Oz" by L. Frank Baum, we have come to know and recognize the primary and secondary emotions in ourselves and others. We learn to call them by name, communicate them and to empathically feel the heartbeat of the other trying to suspend judgment. All this is in an experiential, dynamic and joyful way. A challenge that the Pastoral Community of Albate-Muggiò wanted to embrace.



The workshops through moments of play, reflection and participative prayer, focused on emotions by means of Lego. The silhouettes or secret book of emotions the children and teenagers, with their animators, were able to begin to know and express their inner world.



Together we have learned that the emotions of themselves, are neither right nor wrong and do not define me. What defines me is what I decide to do by paying attention to what I feel.



As Christians united with Jesus, growing up in friendship with him, and letting his Spirit and Love flow within us, we will be "masters" of our emotions. We will learn to recognize and manage them in order to bear good fruit and make a difference in this world. As consecrated religious, I realized that the oratory activities and among these particularly Grest (summer camps), have become today THE PLACE OF THE FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GOOD NEWS of God who, in Jesus of Nazareth, shared and shares everything about our humanity. For many children and young people, it is the first time they hear about Jesus. It is fundamental and pastorally important to prepare carefully this first announcement and to dedicate time, energy, prayer and works, so that the testimony of life may be in harmony with the One we



**WE MADE OUR HEART BEAT
and the result was:
"FULL JOY IN YOUR PRESENCE!"**

announce. The Gospel is full of pages through which we meet the emotions felt by Jesus, his friends and so many other people whom he encountered. We tried to enter at an emotional level some pages of the Gospel, and listen with respect and pay attention to each other. During the games we tried to put it into practice with the companions', animators, Priests, Sisters and educators.

*Sr. Simona Benzoni,
July 2022*

L'ABBE GROULT COMMUNITY
TEAM TO ASSIST THE GENERAL BURSAR

We are one community composed of seven sisters: Marilena Argentieri General Bursar and project manager. From the Provinces there is Kati Tatov Europe, Anne Marie Thailand, Rose Mary Myint Myanmar / Philippines, Ingrid Vargas Latin America, Alma Kispotta India/Haiti and Seham Hanna Israel / Palestine. Being here in Paris is a grace for each of us, as we come from different parts of the world.



The AIM is to respond to the “Desideratum” approved by the General Chapter 2019. It is a formation for the administration of the assets of the Congregation. This year we have started deepening our spirituality using Saint Emilie’s letters, learning the French language and participating in courses in Leadership and Team Building by Silvia.

The leadership course has been a “journey” for us where we are accompanied and helped to face the reality of being a new community. Every stage has proved to be a step where we can grow in our relationship with God and the community around us. All helping us become more responsible in the role which we hold today in our hands.

Being together is an opportunity to come to know one another and participate from our own points of view. In our journey, we undertake different kinds of experiences some of which are challenging.

(Language, community life, culture, etc.) These push us to look forward and work for the good of the Congregation.



In our discernment for a common vision, we made the decision to change the role of superior every six months. In order to fulfil our mission as a team our aim is to be collaborative in our understanding and living the two roles in community - a member and a superior.

At different moments we have had the opportunity to meet some of our Sisters from different communities in France. The encounter with them has been fruitful for each of us. We were glad to spend a few weeks with our sisters in Plouguenast. The reality of life there helps us to live depth moments. We also feel very grateful to the community of Vanves for helping us to improve our French language.

In the hands of God, we continue journeying together in the footsteps of Our Mother Saint Emilie.

L'Abbe Groult Community, Paris.

A Year of Blessings in Ethiopia



August, 2022

In October 2019 our General Superior, Sister Monika, made a strong call for three missions which were in great need of reinforcements. I never considered myself strong enough to face very tough situations but I had the desire to give it a try. From the time when the community of our sisters opened in Addis Ababa I felt fascinated by Ethiopia, an amazing country with a rich culture, warmhearted people, wonderful landscapes, but also with many contrasts and social problems.

Here I am, at the end of one year of mission which I consider was full of blessings, although at times it was not easy. The community in Addis Ababa welcomed me with joy and warmth. I went in February-March 2021, then for a school year from October 2021 to July 2022.

In November 2021 the civil war extended in several areas and the government declared a state of emergency. The capital itself was threatened by the separatists and many people were called to arms. The people carry more and more the heavy burden of the consequences of this conflict. The Christians are united in prayer promoting unceasingly messages of peace and reconciliation towards the ones who are responsible.

As Christmas approached, some signs of good will and an attempt to stop the violence were evident. Many foreign citizens were invited by their Embassies to leave the country because of security concerns. Consecrated people decided to remain and continue their mission at the service of this nation experiencing war and poverty. Some religious and their lay collaborators were even imprisoned. The meetings of the religious with the Apostolic Nuncio were a real support and encouragement. We realized how much our presence is important and meaningful. On several occasions we met for prayer and sharing. There was always a strong collaboration and solidarity between different Congregations or Ecclesial groups. There seemed to be a calm period after a truce was signed by the representatives of the Government and the opposing forces. However, much violence continues.



Even in very tense moments, the activities in Addis Ababa never stopped so school continued. My mission was to teach Ethical

Education in Lideta Catholic Cathedral School to students of Grades 7 and 8 (12 sections). This was my first experience of teaching in English having taught religion or catechism in Romanian or Italian.

New topics, new environment, new challenges. I felt overwhelmed when I realized that every week more than 500 pairs of eyes, (beyond the masks which couldn't allow to see their smiles or face expression) were staring curiously at the only "foreign" teacher they had ... the first impact seemed positive from both sides. After some days I was told there was an office that I could use during break time (there are 2 breaks which last approximately one hour each). Suddenly an idea came to my mind: to propose to the students who were interested in music to come and learn how to play the Ukulele. There were more than 30 willing to join the Ukulele Club and I welcomed them in groups of five in my office...3.5 m x 1.5m...the space was really small ... but nobody became discouraged, after a while the members of the Music & Ukulele Club became more numerous. We prepared some Christmas songs, and participated in school events and club presentations. Some of the best players were very gifted. They learned by themselves the National Anthem and performed it several times during the Flag Ceremony. More than 40 students from Grades 5 to 8 participated in the presentation of a (possible) School Anthem which I was inspired to compose. Many students were very creative in drawing and coloring charts with the themes of the songs we were performing. We had a fruitful collaboration with the English Club in the sections 1 to 6, where Sister Carmen is the Academic Director. Hundreds of students welcomed our group with great joy and enthusiasm. When I see the children's and teenagers' smiles and interest to play and learn new songs, I can only say that Music does miracles even with very simple instruments and little space.





I had a very intense time getting to know many people and visiting different places. I am very grateful to God, who always gave me the graces I needed at the right moment. I felt a great protection from Our Lady, Saint Joseph and Saint Emilie. I thank our Superiors who gave me this chance, our Sisters in Addis and some benefactors who supported our mission in

Ethiopia. I am hopeful that the Lord will continue to bless this mission and send new vocations. Let us keep dearly in our prayer Ethiopia, as the Cardinal invited the faithful to “share the suffering and sorrow of those who have endured war, the traumatized and those suffering from moral breakdown, the displaced and injured, and those that have lost their parents and families”. In the local language they say “Hello!” with the word: “Selam!” which means “Peace!”, so may the Wonderful Peace of God flow on all the Earth, especially there where it is most needed!

Sr. Gabriella Pestesan, SJA



Session in Rome for sisters under 60 from the Europe Province: end of Canonical Visitation

This summer, from August 12 to 29, the Province of Europe experienced an exceptional event. It is about the meeting with the Sisters under 60 years old. This session is divided into 4 major categories mainly in Rome where: the first 5 days (13th - 18th) we took time to study/analyse the realities of the Province, accompanied by Etienne, the facilitator. The following 2 days (19th -20th), through ZOOM, Brother Yago introduces us to some new approaches to conflict management. Then, from (21th -26th), we were divided into 5 groups to go to 5 respective communities to spend our holidays: Policoro, Cavallasca, Firenze, Castiglioncello and Rome. Finally, the last 2 days (27th -29th) we summarized our meeting with Sr. Agnès, provincial and the councillors. There are lots of things we like to share in depth. However, we chose to present to you a few aspects that seemed to be the most striking and the most important.

Confronting the Realities of the Province with Etienne



Etienne's method helped us to enter into the realities of the Province in a better way. We managed to put into words and express our reality without being afraid, even if sometimes it was hard to realize them. We expressed our reality with drawings, taking into account our richness and weaknesses, enabling us to become free and more confident. Slowness of the Province was presented with snails, turtles, and the fragilities were presented by a broken tree. However, our strengths, unity in diversity, and flexibility were symbolized by bamboo and a rainbow. The repeated themes were: interculturality, leadership, language barriers, interpersonal tensions, injustice, inequality, uncertainty and insecurity. We are also aware that some of our ways of 'being and doing' need to be revised and re-evangelized so that we can be bearers of the Good News. The "U" process helped us to meet the challenges at our level: what we, Sisters under 60, **have to let go/die** so that each one lives and is renewed or reborn. The favouritism, partiality, competition, jealousy, aggressiveness, power abuse, inability to forgive, negativity, mental patterns, excessive expectation of others and

victimization surfaced. These points call for vigilance and require solid professional, human and continuous training.

Spotting the Invisible Ghosts Within Us with Brother Yago



Although we have a deep desire to "listen to the Lord and hear his call", the analysis of our reality shows us that suffering and conflicts are always present within ourselves, the community and the mission. Brother Yago presented us with practical exercises for managing conflicts and told us where to find resources and the inalienable power of these sources. He gave us concrete ways to be friends with conflict which he calls our invisible ghosts (internal enemy). He began by saying that conflict is part of our lives and should not be avoided but rather welcomed. This awareness invites us not to focus on the external aspects, what is wrong or what we are not doing well enough. He affirmed that "we are not in deep democracy with ourselves". This means that we do not sufficiently take into account the strong points of our reality and may avoid putting them at the service of community. Realising our limitations is something we find difficult to enter into but is part of the journey requiring humility and patience.

A Synodal approach, in other words "a practice of deep democracy"

Our sharing groups required a climate of confidentiality. Generative listening helped us to let the words flow freely and not cut them off when a Sister picks it up. She is an elected representative who speaks on behalf of the team in a large group. The presence of the general team during the plenary feedback, without influencing us, is both a sign of support and reassures us that our points of view and reflections will be taken into account later. The fact of expressing our "*dreams about our missions, our formation, our community life*" is part of a practice of deep democracy: Our confidence was raised and our energies and our tensions at the provincial, community, and personal level allowed us to dream for our future together, but without idealizing it.



In a synodal approach, all voices are important and each point of view is to be taken into account, heard and respected. Consequently, this right to think and express freely requires evaluation work. This is why, every evening, the representatives of the groups were invited to take part with the general team: How do we feel at the end of the day? What are we holding back? Did the day meet our expectations? And finally, what do we want to deal with the next day? The creation of a WhatsApp group allowed us to exchange news and give practical information faster, broader and in a more synodal way. A way in which to continue.

Free time beyond the program

Beyond the planned program, we can also notice that there are free times. Each of us will have our own way of sharing this same experience. Isn't it that we are affected in different ways by the same experience. Liturgies were in 3 languages: English, French, Italian, in turn were very impressive. The audience on Wednesday that we animated the songs while waiting for Pope Francis was very much appreciated. The



festive meals in the dining room or on the terrace, the evening dance and other festive/friendly moments such as Etienne's goodbye, the sisters' parties and birthdays really nourished our minds, bodies and the soul! A lot of sisters say they have gained weight...

Here in a few words, each holiday group shares on the places visited: communities, pilgrimage, tourism, mountain-sea walk!





Policoro

On the 21st of August 2022, a strange group of sisters: Sr. Perpetua (originally from Myanmar but on mission in Cyprus), Sr. Veronica (from Myanmar in France), Sr. Intisar (from Iraq in Malta), Sr. Salomi (from India in Ethiopia), Sr. Gabi (Romanian, coming back from the mission in Ethiopia) and Sr. Enza (Italian, on mission in Policoro), took the bus from Rome to Policoro, a faraway small town in South Italy. In the community we found Sr. Pasqualina who welcomed us warmly and gladly. The first day we got to know the place and had a nice day by the sea which included a walk to the parish, where we attended Mass and met the priest and some parishioners. The second day we visited the ancient city of Matera, a wonderful place where religion, architecture, history, traditions and culture intertwine, allowing those who step on the roads and enter churches or museums feel the atmosphere of centuries past.



The next visit was a little farther away, in the place where Saint Padre Pio da Pietralcina lived: San Giovanni Rotondo. We travelled for more than three hours and had a wonderful experience. A guide accompanied us in the convent and explained the rooms and the objects linked to the daily life of the Saint. He referred to the impressive number of letters he received. He explained about the most important events and the moment Padre Pio received the stigmata. We saw the church where he said Mass and was the confessor to a large number of people. We attended Mass in the new sanctuary and queued to see his body in a very beautifully decorated chapel. The mosaics were made by Father Marco Rupnik and his team, representing the parallel between moments in the Life of Saint Francis of Assisi and those of the life of Padre

Pio. There were also other biblical scenes covering the walls in the new sanctuary which are amazing. We could stay for hours in contemplation and prayer. This pilgrimage gave to each one a great satisfaction and inner peace. The next day was actually the last. Some went to visit an archaeological museum, and some to the sea. In the evening we had adoration and Mass in a very nice church not far from the beach. Every evening we shared our supper with some friends of the Sisters who



came to greet us and we spent an enjoyable time together. We felt in harmony despite different origins, cultures, and backgrounds and were able to put into practice some challenges from the session that we had been part of. It was a great idea to include a time of holiday before we finished our meeting. A hearty "Thank you!" to Sister Monika and all those who made it possible. Thank you also to Sr. Enza and Sr. Pasqualina for their care, patience and welcome which they prepared for us!

Castiglione Cello

"When will I gather the clouds on the earth and the arch will appear on the clouds I will remember my covenant which is between you and me. " (Gen 9, 14-15)

During the session we lived in Rome in the second half of August, this biblical sign had accompanied our reflection and our work twice: once in the middle and once at the end. We felt this embrace of God on our stories, on our Province of Europe and on our Congregation and has renewed in all of us the certainty that the faithful love of God continues to accompany



us, Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition in time and history, history marked sometimes by difficulties and uncertainties for the future. God continues to count on us! I have a deep feeling of hope and gratitude towards the Lord, Sister Monika and her Council, Sister Agnes and her Council, for having gathered us together to meet, to listen

to each other, to know each other in transparency. We worked together, having only one desire in the heart: to spend our lives and energies for the greatest glory of God and the good of the neighbor, as Saint Emilia said.



Accompanied by Mr. Etienne, we tried to live the "Synodality", as Pope Francis invites us, in an atmosphere of generative mutual listening in which each has something to learn and all are in search for the Voice of the Spirit, the only one who knows what he is pleasing to God.

We looked at reality of our Province of Europe through the stages of the "U" route, trying to listen together the calls of God for us SJA today, thinking how to respond in a concrete way. We have

discovered our strengths and our frailties, the good energies that are moving us for the best, and the negative energies which, if not recognized, can generate conflicts in ourselves, in our communities and in the mission. We really opened ourselves, we took up the challenge of thinking and working together, welcoming each other's diversity of culture, race and origin. We tried to find the Dream that God has on us, SJA Province of Europe. With sr. Noella (from Myanmar missionary in England), sr. Helena, sr. Sharmen, sr. Lucia (from Myanmar in France), sr. Roshni (from India in Ireland) and sr. Nela (from Romania), I lived part of the route to Castiglione del Piano with the aim to put into practice, in everyday life, the stimuli and the challenges received. In a "holiday time" program thought together and shared, we put ourselves to the test in welcoming our diversity, by deciding together, seeking the balance between time of prayer and personal or community time with our sisters, taking care of each other, trying to live in the charity and the unity in diversity, so dear to Saint Emilia, which are a living and visible witness of the Risen Christ.



Thank you! merci!



Cavallasca

After an intense week of session for the under-sixty sisters of the Province of Europe in Rome, the 31 sisters present at the session were sent in small groups to five communities in Italy for a week's vacation. There were seven of us who went to the community of Cavallasca: Ramona (Romanian awaiting obedience), Kalpna (Indian awaiting to go to Tunisia for the mission), Rosa (Italian on mission in Prato), Theresa (Burmese on mission in France), Regina (Ghanaian on mission in Malta), Jyoti (Indian awaiting obedience), Bed (Haitian on mission in France).

We had a warm welcome from the sisters of the community and from Lorena, a consecrated lay person who lives in the former formation house of the community. We were all very happy to discover the community and to meet the sisters of Cavallasca. What touched us the most is the joy of living that dwells in each of the sisters, their fraternal love and their great missionary experience. Despite the limitations of old age, they have the joy of living, they love each other, help each other and support each other. Most of them were missionaries abroad. Some were in Peru and in Haiti, in Libia, and others, founders of the mission in Romania. This witness of the sisters revived in us our missionary spirit and reminded us of the reason for which we are gathered in community: "God and his greater glory, the love of neighbour (especially of our sisters in community) and the desire to be useful to him (Sainte Emilie de Vialar).

This vacation time also the magnificent city of cathedral, its beautiful landscapes, its museums. We had in particular the Guanella, Italian founder of the



allowed us to discover Como, its sumptuous lake, its breath-taking botanical gardens and the chance to discover museum of Don Luigi Catholic priest, Daughters of Saint



Mary of Divine Providence and the Servants of Charity. The abandonment of this Saint to Providence and his devotion to Saint Joseph strongly reminds us of the life of our foundress Saint Emilie de Vialar. This made us realize once again that the Saints are just living the gospel, each in his own way. This is a strong call for each of us: we are called to live the Gospel and be rooted in Christ.



We thank the Generalate and the provincial council who allowed us to live this beautiful experience of discovery and resourcing. A special thank you to the sisters of Cavallasca who welcomed us with joy and great generosity, sister Marilena and sister Roquina who did everything so that we lacked nothing. Thank you, dear sisters! We will never forget this time spent with you.

"More than once I have told my Sisters that instead of eleven or twelve houses, I would prefer to have only one, rather than not seeing the spirit of Charity reign in others" Saint Emilie

Thank you!

Florence

Having successfully participated in all the sessions from 12th to 20th of August, the Generalate community divided all the participants into groups according to our choices. My group members were Sr. Kati Tatov (Romanian in formation in France), Sr. Annie Myint Cho (Burmese missionary in



Italy), Sr. Emiliana Cua Xar (Guatemalan missionary in France), Sr. Hanna Boutros (Egyptian missionary in Tunisia) and Sr. Suchita Xess(from India mission in Malta). On 21/8/2022 morning we, five of us travelled to Florence, and the visit was organized by the Generalate community. The visit to Florence was very fruitful and excellent. We



were very glad to meet the members of the community. Our visit brought joy to the sisters of the community. The community is made up by two sisters, they welcomed us with joy and love. We were very much impressed by their commitment and dedication in their ministry. We spent five days in that community. We had ample chances to go and visit the most important and Historical places, churches, and Schools, which enriched us with historical knowledge, new insights and with beautiful ideas. Our impression was so great that we felt that the places and the people are amazing. At

the same time, we had the opportunity to visit two other communities of our sisters, which is Montecatini, where there are elderly sisters and Lucca-Marlia. The sisters were very happy to see us, even they thanked us. They expressed their joy seeing us and they said, "we saw after long time young sisters", and some of them were in tears. We were very glad to meet them. We learnt a lot, experienced and witnessed the reality of the sisters in Europe, which made us more strong in our vocation. Our group was very nice, we try to help each other, by accepting our limitations which also gave us joy and comfort. Our only one limitation was, our language, at times we could not communicate or share with elderly sisters, yet our gestures and presence generated a lot of joy and healthy wonderful time with sisters beautiful presence. We hope With a joyful note and returned back to Rome on enjoyed journey and was a wonderful and



laughter. We had very and we enjoyed their to meet them again. grateful heart, we the 26/8/2022. We travelling by Train. It amazing experience.

All the roads lead to Rome



Memories of those vacations



Wonderful places that this city has offered us, but also the wonderful Assisi with its special places of prayer.

On August 24 - an important feast for us Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition - we gathered, with Sister Monika and her Council, before the heart of Saint Emille in order to entrust all our intentions and desires to her.





Wonderful places that this city has offered us, but also the wonderful Assisi with its special places of prayer.

Visiting the Sanctuary of Santa Maria Goretti was a moment of wonder, thinking of this young girl who gave to the Lord what was most precious to her: her life. The sea with its soft "sound" enchanted and relaxed us.



Now that each has returned to her daily life, we can continue our life enriched by this beautiful experience, and be grateful to the Lord and to all those who have made all this possible. In conclusion, we can say that “Psalm 150” expresses all our feelings of the timeshare in Rome:

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary;
Praise Him in His mighty expanse. Praise Him for His mighty deeds;
Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with trumpet sound; Praise Him with harp and lyre. Praise Him with tambourine and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flute. Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with resounding cymbals. Everything that has breath shall praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

A big thank you !

That was unprecedented event, we met each other in persons first time at Province level. This gave us a better knowledge among ourselves, of our missions, of our communities and its richness in cultures, languages, specialties, origins, but also the complexities. A huge thank to Sr. Monika and her council for bringing us together to experience this exceptional event. You allowed us to put our words into realities at the community and at personal level, to dream together for our future in 8-year (22-30) perspective. We were happy to share our experiences with our Provincial Sister Agnes Paleailogou, who spent the last two days of the session with us.

At the end of the session, we see more of the realities of the Province with its riches and its weaknesses, but we now have the resources to face them in order to move forward better together. We realized that all transformations must begin at the personal level: what am I, Sr. X... called to be and to do?... We are ready to live this reality with humility, willingness and hope, and to accept both of our weaknesses and strengths. In fact, the consequences of the session will with the meetings of the Provincial Council from September 8 to 16, 2022.

We hope that all the topics we discussed will help them in their meetings.



