



Voices of our Sisters and the Collaborators

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Dear Sisters, wherever you are in the world,

With great joy, I invite you to open the pages of this Bulletin and take a journey with us; a journey that crosses borders, cultures and continents, and brings us closer to one another.

As I read the many articles sent from different parts of the world, my heart was filled with gratitude and joy. What a beautiful gift to discover how communities everywhere have celebrated the **75th anniversary of the canonisation of Saint Emilie de Vialar!** Each celebration has its own colour, its own story and its own special fragrance, yet behind them all we can recognize the same spirit: the living charism that Saint Emilie entrusted to us.

How beautiful it is to discover that the flame kindled by Saint Emilie is still burning brightly today! Her courage, her trust in Divine Providence, her missionary spirit and her love for those most in need continue to take root in new places and new hearts. The charism is not simply something we have inherited from the past; it is a living seed, continually growing, flowering and bearing fruit in the world of today.

And so, dear Sisters, **please continue to write and share!** Your stories may seem small to you, but they can become precious treasures for someone who reads them from the other side of the world. A simple celebration, a moment of joy, a new mission, a difficult experience or a small sign of hope can touch another Sister's heart and give her encouragement for her own journey.

Every article is like a small window. When we open it, we discover another community, another country, another mission, another face; and suddenly the world of our Congregation feels a little smaller and our family a little closer.

With gratitude and joy,
Sister Vicky Giacaman (Australia)
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75 Years of Saint Emilie de Vialar
A Message That Lives on in Every Generation
“Go with all that you have and do good—all the good you can.”

Seventy-five years have passed since the canonisation of Saint Emilie de Vialar, yet the light of her life and mission continues to shine in the Church and throughout the world. Her life confirms that holiness is not merely a memory of the past, but a renewed call for every believer to live the Gospel in the details of daily life.



For us, the members of the Saint Emilie de Vialar Group at the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition in Ramallah, (Palestine) this occasion is not simply a historical celebration. It is a spiritual moment in which we reflect on our journey

and renew our commitment to be witnesses of Christ in our families, workplaces, and community.

Saint Emilie lived a profound faith in God. The secret of her strength was her absolute trust in Divine Providence. She believed that:

“Trust in God must be without limits.”

It was this trust that enabled her to face difficulties courageously, cross borders, and establish an apostolic mission that continues to bear fruit throughout the world.

A Congregation That Shapes People and Mission

Our belonging to the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition has had a profound influence on the formation of our personalities and our spiritual journey. There, we learned that education is a mission before it is a profession, that service is a practical expression of love, and that the human person remains at the heart of every educational and humanitarian mission.

The Institution instilled in us the values of commitment, humility, generosity, teamwork, and the belief that every small act carried out with love becomes great in the eyes of God. Through this heritage, the



spirituality of Saint Emilie has become a light that accompanies us throughout the different stages of our lives.

A Celebration Carrying a Message for Future Generations

We lived this blessed anniversary in a spirit of prayer, gratitude, and joy. We celebrated the Holy Mass, thanking God for the gift of Saint Emilie and renewing our commitment to continue her mission.

We also reflected on her life, so rich in generosity and dedication, and paused to consider her words, which are still full of life today. We discovered how her words can become a guide for us in a world that needs hope more than ever.

During the Rosary, we connected the Joyful Mysteries with reflections inspired by the words of Saint Emilie. Prayer became an opportunity for us to live the Gospel in the spirit of Emilie and to draw from her strength, perseverance, and true joy.

We also visited the Sisters at the convent to share with them the joy of the Jubilee. We exchanged symbolic gifts and gathered around the dinner table in a family atmosphere filled with love and gratitude, expressing the unity of the spiritual family that brings us together.

One of the special initiatives for this occasion was the preparation of a documentary film by the students at the school. The film presented the journey of Saint Emilie de Vialar's life, highlighted the most important stages of her mission, and connected her words with our contemporary reality through profound reflections. The film was published as a message of life and hope, preserving the Saint's legacy and passing it on to future generations, affirming that holiness is not a story of the past but a continuing call for every person.



A Spirituality That Inspires Our Lives

The spirituality of Saint Emilie continues to inspire us in our family lives. She teaches us to build our homes on love, forgiveness, and trust in God, and to become signs of peace in a world filled with challenges.

In our educational mission, she calls us to see in every boy and girl a human person with unique dignity. We are invited to accompany them with love, to plant values in their hearts before knowledge, and to witness through our actions before our words.

In our pastoral and social lives, she encourages us to remain close to every person in need and to those who are suffering, making our service a reflection of Christ's love.

Perhaps the most beautiful proof that Saint Emilie's mission is still alive is the impact her spirituality continues to have on the lives of those who encounter it. The following testimony from one of the members of our group beautifully expresses how the Saint's words became a true-life experience.

A Testimony of Life... A Grace We Have Received

I never imagined that a simple encounter could change the course of my life.

During my younger years, I believed that happiness was found in appearances, in caring about what others thought, and in pursuing everything that made me feel special. I filled my time with these things, but deep inside there was an emptiness and many questions for which I could find no answers.

One day, I came to the church for social reasons and nothing more. There I met one of the Sisters, who welcomed me with love. I returned another time, and eventually I became a member of the Saint Emilie Group. That was where a new journey began.



At first, the change was not easy. I felt torn between what the world was attracting me towards and the peace I was beginning to experience in the presence of God. But the more deeply I entered into the life of Saint Émilie and reflected on her words, the more convinced I became that true joy cannot be bought—it must be lived.

Emilie deeply touched me because, while still young, she chose to leave behind a life of comfort in order to make her life a mission of love and service. Through her, I learned to trust in God and in His Divine Providence, and I discovered that the value of a person does not lie in what they possess, but in what they give to others.

Today, I can say that joining the Saint Emilie Group was a grace from God. This journey changed the way I see life. I discovered that one of the most beautiful forms of joy is to share love with others, to serve without discrimination, and to live each

day with a spirit of generosity, convinced that the good we do in the lives of others is the only thing that truly remains.

Just as this personal testimony reveals the impact of Saint Emilie's spirituality, her invitation remains addressed to each one of us: to transform faith into service, love into action, and hope into life.

A Legacy That Remains Alive

Seventy-five years after the canonisation of Saint Emilie de Vialar, we realise that the greatest way to celebrate her is to continue her mission and transform her words into a way of life, so that our actions may become a living witness to love and hope.

Our responsibility today is to carry this precious spiritual legacy and pass it on to future generations through sincere faith, faithful service, and practical love, so that the light of Saint Emilie may continue to shine in our hearts and in our world.

And may her final instruction continue to accompany us every day:

“Go with all that you have and do good—all the good you can.”



**Friends of Saint Emilie
Ramallah (Israel/Palestine)**

Seventy-Five Years, and Holiness Still Lives



There are people who leave their mark on their own time, and there are saints who become a light for all generations. Saint Émilie de Vialar is one of these. What she planted in the

nineteenth century continues to bear fruit today in the Church, in the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition, and in the hearts of all who draw from her spirituality. Saint Émilie de Vialar is a flame of hope passed on from one generation to another.

Saint Émilie de Vialar was not simply the foundress of a religious congregation; she was a woman whose heart was filled with the love of Christ, and she left a mark that continues to live in all who follow in her footsteps. She believed that God calls every person to be an apostle of love and a witness to Christ. She therefore founded the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition so that their first witness would be service to the human person wherever they are, especially the poor, the marginalised, and those who suffer, so that they might encounter Christ himself: “Let us see Jesus in everyone we meet.”

Her legacy is not limited to the Sisters; it also extends to the friends of the Congregation. We are called to be a living continuation of her mission and to live her spirit, showing the face of Christ in our homes and in our daily mission. We bear witness that the Gospel is lived through everyday love, a sincere smile, an encouraging word, and a helping hand extended to those in need.

In the family:

When we forgive, listen, sow hope, and choose reconciliation instead of conflict.

In the parish:

When our generosity and service become an encounter with Christ present in every person, and when we serve with joy and humility.

In society:

When we draw close to people, listen to their pain, and share in their joys.

Saint Émilie de Vialar teaches us to look at every person with the eyes of Christ: not to judge anyone, but to extend a helping hand and to become guardians of love and reconciliation.

She lived hope as a daily experience. She knew suffering, experienced rejection, and faced poverty and misunderstanding. Yet she never allowed these things to extinguish the fire of the call that God had placed in her heart. She believed that Divine Providence goes before our steps and that those who trust in God can always begin again.

“Let us trust in God, for He will never abandon those who place their hope in Him.”

This is the legacy Saint Émilie left us: a way of life rooted in trust in God, courage, self-giving, and hope. This legacy remains alive only when it is passed from heart to heart and from one generation to another.

“Saint Émilie, teach us to love as you loved, to serve as you served, and to trust in God as you trusted.
May Christ be visible in all that we say and do.”



**Sarika Twemeh
Friend of Saint Emilie
Bethlehem (Israel/Palestine)**

Friends of Saint Emilie / Jordan



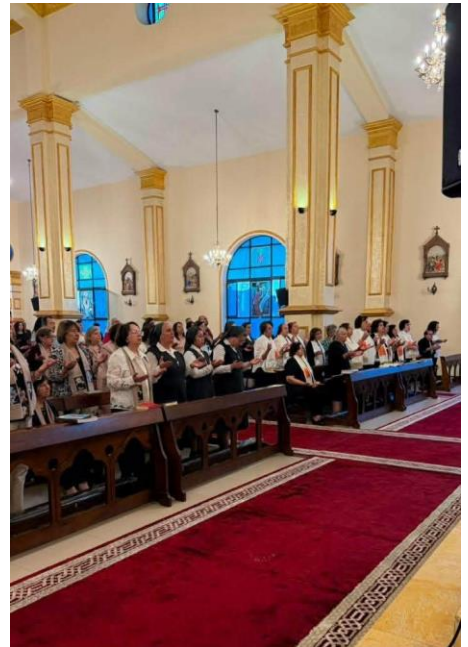
In a deeply prayerful and joyful atmosphere, we gathered on **17 April** at the **Martyrs of Jordan Church in Marj Al-Hamam** to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the canonisation of **Saint Émilie de Vialar**, foundress of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition.

The Holy Mass was presided over by the Reverend Father **Rachid Mustarih**, accompanied by the parish priest, Reverend Father **Ashraf Al-Nimri**. We were blessed by the presence of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, together with the friends of Saint Emilie de Vialar, who wore scarves bearing the image of Saint Émilie. The distinguished ladies of the **Holy Family Confraternity** were also present, along with a large gathering of the faithful and friends.

With reverence and joy, our prayers rose to heaven as we asked for the intercession of Saint Emilie and drew from her inspiring life the meaning of faith, perseverance, love, and sincere service.

The church was beautifully decorated with magnificent bouquets of flowers and candles placed before the altar of the Lord and beside the image of Saint Emilie de Vialar.

It was truly an evening adorned with prayer and filled with the fragrance of holiness. The voices of the singers mingled with the scent of incense, creating a deeply spiritual atmosphere that left a beautiful impression on our hearts and strengthened within us our sense of belonging and our faith.



At the end of the Mass, our dear Sisters received congratulations and blessings from those present, accompanied by the music of the church's Scout Band.

Thank you to everyone who shared this grace with us through your presence.

May our dear Sisters always be blessed through the intercession of Saint Émilie. May the Lord protect our families and shower us with His peace and blessings.

Celebrating 75 Years of Grace & Charism

On this profound occasion of the 75th anniversary of the canonization of St Emily de Vialar, my heart overflows with gratitude and joy...

Looking back on this milestone, I can't help but reflect on my own path. For over 28 years, I have been deeply blessed to walk alongside the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition in Jordan as a lay associate. Walking in the footsteps of St Emily for nearly 28 years has been a defining chapter of my life. It has taught me the true meaning of boundless charity, faith and devotion to God's will. I can honestly say St Emily has been walking with me the whole way. I did not meet her in books, I met her in the Sisters.

As we honor St Emily's lasting legacy, today I am grateful for:

The Sisters of St Joseph, who guided me, inspired and walked with me.

The shared mission of being God's love to the corners of the world that need it most.

The blessing of being a part of this spiritual family for over 28 wonderful years.

I am moved by the life and example of St. Emily, which had become a light in my own journey of faith.

In 2020, During the COVID-19 lockdown, for six long months, we stayed at home, isolated from the world and with no real contact with anyone outside our household. In that quiet and uncertain time, it would have been easy to simply sit and wait for life to resume.

Through the holy spirit and prayer, I could not help but visualize St Emily's life: she sailed to Algeria during a cholera epidemic. People told her it was dangerous. She went anyway. She said, 'Nothing can stop you if you have this courage.'

Inspired by her example, I reached out to our Friends of St. Emily group, hoping to bring help to those who were suffering in such a difficult time. To my joy, my call was met with the same generosity and enthusiasm. Together, we began collecting money, clothing, food — anything and everything each person could offer — to be distributed through the Sisters of St. Joseph.

As I remember it, my car was soon filled with the donations we had gathered, and I drove them myself to the sisters' home.

In that moment, I truly understood her. She had a ship to Algeria; I had a phone and a car. Yet it was the same God at work through both of us.

Nothing stops you if you have this courage. Not sickness, not fear, not lockdown.”

May St Emily’s courage and love continue to ignite our hearts, and may we continue to walk hand in hand, carrying her legacy forward into the future.

Happy Feast Day to all...

St Emily, pray for us.

Sylvia Marcos
Friend of Saint Emily/ Jordan





75th Anniversary of the Canonisation of Saint Emilie de Vialar

"I am convinced that our Congregation, founded and established on the Cross, will survive me, and that when I am no more it will be the object of God's special protection. It will continue long to work for His glory.

As a guarantee I have not only the conviction of the truth of my own vocation but also the admirable cooperation of my Sisters. They have been, and always will be, daughters of devotedness and of sacrifice. After me they will perpetuate the spirit God gave me, and the impetus of Divine Charity which the Holy Spirit put in our work,"

To sr. Pauline Ginest - Algiers, 6th June, 1840

Saint Emilie de Vialar lived a spirituality deeply rooted in trust in Divine Providence—how do you experience and live that trust in your daily mission today?

Sister Riches, Rabat community in Malta

St Emilie has been a source of inspiration for me since my formation days, and I am always in full admiration at her trust in Divine Providence especially when faced with difficult situations. There are moments when courage fails me too and it is at that time that I try to follow St Emilie's example by placing my trust in God, knowing that help will not be lacking.

Each new day brings along with it something new and during my Meditation in the morning, I place myself in the hands of the Lord entrusting to Him my day and the people I would meet during that day as I set out for my mission at School. In my contacts with the school Administration and Teachers, I try to help out as best I can. It is with attentive ears that I listen to what they have to share with me. Thank God that a very good spirit reigns in the school and we can work together on the spiritual level for the benefit of all. We make sure that each person is accepted and loved in that way we are witnesses to the tenderness of God. Importance is given to spiritual and human values and to be a reflection in practice of Divine Providence. In their difficulties we encourage the students to entrust all to the Lord as He is always there to see to their needs.

At the beginning of each scholastic year, I am happy to meet the new staff members of our 3 schools for a day of Induction Seminar. At this Seminar I generally reflect on the Two major experiences which marked the life of St Emilie, namely; The Apparition of the angel to St Joseph and the vision of Christ with the 5 wounds. These coloured her whole spiritual life, as well that which she wished, for our Congregation. The aim of this induction seminar is to familiarise our new educators, Teachers, Asst heads and Learning support assistants with the charism and mission of our foundress, St Emilie de Vialar, and of the Sisters of the Congregation of St Joseph of the Apparition. For the second part of the morning one of the Teachers from the Pastoral Team speaks about what it means to teach in a Church School today and help them to assure one's responsibility for the mission entrusted to us. Trusting this formation is received with an open heart and mind. These opportunities have strengthened my trust in Him as He is always there in time of need. ...and with St Emilie I can say that God gives me support I when it is needed.

Saint Emilie had a strong missionary zeal that took her beyond her homeland—how does this missionary spirit shape your understanding of being "sent" in today's world?

Sister Anita Callaghan, one of the general councillors of the Congregation

I have been a sister of St Joseph for forty-four years now and I understand that mission is about being sent. I take as my model Joseph who listened to the word of God, he listened to the Angels word to him. He had to change his plans and he accepted and he believed. For me, I believe that God has chosen me as he said in the Gospel of John "You did not choose me no I chose you." So I am chosen by God to do something that only he knows but my aim in life is to discover what his plan is for me.

To be a missionary for me is therefore to be ready to be sent, to be ready to go, to be ready to change my plans. I see it linked strongly to obedience to listen to the word of God, to listen to the word spoken through my sisters and to listen to the word spoken through daily life. For me mission also involves recognising that I am called to go out from myself to the other. So mission can be a call to go to a different country but more often, for me, it is a call to go out of my self, to out of my comfort zone towards the other.

For Emilie, mission was revealing God's love to anyone, everywhere. For me to be a missionary is to be ready to be sent, to anyone, anywhere, anyhow. So, I thank God for the gift of my vocation and for St Emilie and for St Joseph and like him I ask for the grace to receive the mystery of the incarnation.

Saint Emilie showed remarkable courage in the face of misunderstanding and opposition—how does her example sustain you when you encounter difficulties or uncertainty in your vocation?

Sister Rachel Rahault the Congregation's general bursar

I shall begin by quoting Emilie. She writes to Father Bourgade: *'What consoles me in my sorrows is that God allows all that troubles me only for the greater good. Pray for me; I need your prayers to bear all the suffering I endure.'* She also writes to Sister Eugénie: *"Let us therefore love the crosses that Divine Providence sends us, and bear them, at least with great strength and resignation."* Emilie, a woman who was both human and wholly devoted to God, possessed great clarity in all that she was. Everything was directed towards God, for God. From this she drew her strength and allowed herself to be guided by His love. Emilie, a woman of faith and prayer. Émilie is pruned throughout her holy life. Her trust and her faith are purified and unfold. Peace never leaves her. She writes to Father Bourgade: *"In this tumult of trials, I am nonetheless very at peace."*

How does Émilie's example sustain me? One day, I answered 'Yes' to God's call, and I am constantly invited to turn towards the One who is the centre of my life. Émilie's faith in God alone, her fidelity to the love of God poured out within her, her tenderness towards all the sisters, and her inner freedom—these are points of reference that help me move forward, even when the path is sometimes obscured. As a Sister of Saint Joseph, I am called to take the same sure path, knowing that God is there, present with me in all that is my life and my mission. It is not always easy, but God is present. God gives me what I need for my life today. I believe this; he is my shepherd; he is my rock.

To conclude, I will simply quote one last sentence from Saint Émilie, which she wrote to Father Bourgade: *'I have no shortage of moral suffering. And I have absolutely no one but God to console me.'*

How do you see the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition responding to contemporary forms of poverty, especially those that are less visible?

Sister Thérèse Armouet, the community in Vanves, France

Some aspects of St Emilie's early charism in her life before the foundation: Emilie came from an aristocratic family, and social classes were strictly segregated in the society of the time. The young Emilie moved in circles that took no notice of the poor. And yet "in the 1830s, in Gaillac, there were 800 destitute people, most of them elderly and sick. Parents sent children over the age of 10 to beg in the streets and at the doors of churches" (Gaillac archives).

It was no doubt upon seeing them that Émilie did not hesitate to enquire and went herself to the homes of these poor people, which we would today call the outskirts. She took her friends from her own social circle there, who would later become the first Sisters of St Joseph. She went further and brought 'the beggars', as her father put it, into her middle-class home. Thus, we can clearly see that, even before the foundation, Émilie's charism was to 'respond to the forms of poverty of her time, those that are least visible'

This is how the idea of organising a kind of association to help the poor took root in Émilie's heart. *"The devoted care I gave to the sick in their homes led me to think of setting up a work so that I could assist them day and night, and where we would prepare the food and medicines they might need,"* she said. Shortly after the foundation, we find in the first Constitutions of 1835: 'The principal means by which the Sisters seek to promote the material and spiritual good of their neighbours are: *The Christian education of children, especially poor children. The care of the sick at home, in hospitals, in prisons, and generally wherever their services are required, including shelters*'

Here too we can clearly see St Emilie's concern for marginalised and less visible forms of poverty as the congregation grew in Gaillac. And in Gaillac, the Sisters of St Joseph were responsible for the education of children, and their school was free of charge. They provided aid in the form of soup, linen and medicines to the destitute, and cared for the sick of all backgrounds.

First foundation outside France: At the request of her brother Augustin, she prepared the Sisters for the services they would need to provide. Eugénie de Guérin, a writer from Gaillac and a friend of Émilie, wrote: *"A group of Sisters is to leave the convent in Gaillac to go and teach young Arab girls.... The Sisters will care for the poor and the wounded and the abandoned children... Little Reunier took lessons in dressing wounds with Dr Rigal before leaving..."* But when she arrived in Algiers, cholera was running rampant. Émilie did not hesitate and put the Sisters to work in the hospitals. Here too we can clearly see Émilie's concern for 'the poor, those who are most in need of care'.

How is St Emilie's charism manifested today? *"Through the works of charity to which the Sisters devote themselves, the Congregation is, by vocation, a living sign today of God's love, which is made flesh and reaches people through human gestures. Wherever it is present, it bears witness to the Father's infinite tenderness for humanity, so that through this manifested love, people may recognise the extraordinary greatness of the vocation to which all are called."* (C 4)

"The Congregation is called to spread to different parts of the world. It is open to all forms of apostolate inspired by charity, in keeping with the spirit of the Institute: education, care for the sick, and social works. Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom to the poor, fighting in the spirit of the Gospel against poverty and all forms of injustice, the Congregation is particularly attentive to calls from non-Christian countries, from de-Christianised regions, and from peoples whose fundamental rights are ignored or disregarded." (C5)

In current foundations and works (N.B. I mention only what I know)

In Myanmar, a Sister founded, together with a Buddhist nun, a project to take in children born with AIDS, at a time when the Burmese state denied the reality of AIDS in the country. Shortly afterwards, other communities opened centres for these children. Also in Myanmar, health centres are open to all, but primarily to those who cannot afford medical treatment.

In Guatemala, the PETEN community, on the border with Mexico, is undoubtedly moving in this direction by reaching out to the least visible forms of poverty (perhaps the other communities are too!!!).

In Haiti, the fact that we are trying to return to continue helping the poorest is also a sign of living out our charism.

In India, the foundations established amongst the Dalits or in the slums are in keeping with the charism.

In France, the decision (already made a long time ago) to spend our old age living amongst other elderly people was also in line with this. Its consequences today could be experienced as sharing in the loneliness of the elderly, in an environment that is not always inspiring in EHPADs (the name for care homes). Is ageing in Europe not one of the least visible forms of poverty?

In Italy, the community of Policoro, far from other communities in Italy, is holding out as long as possible because there are genuine needs there for a disadvantaged community.

Emilie combined deep contemplation with very active service—how does your community maintain this balance between prayer and action?

Sister Mekdes Alemu, Adis Abeba community

“In our community, we try to maintain the balance between prayer and action by following the example of St. Emilie, who combined deep contemplation with active service. As our Mother St. Emilie said, *‘Recollection is the soul of the congregation.’* This reminds us that prayer is not separate from our mission, but the source of everything we do. Here in Ethiopia, we are young sisters in the community, who are engaged in Mission and different responsibilities. As we are busy with apostolic works, serving people, teaching, and carrying out daily duties. In spite of all these activities, we try to remain connected to the presence of God. We remind ourselves that our service becomes meaningful when it comes from prayer and union with the Lord.

We maintain this balance through our daily community prayer, Holy Mass, personal prayer, meditation, and moments of silence. These moments help us to renew our strength and aware why we are serving. At the same time, while we are occupied with many activities, we try to live recollection to recall the presence of the Lord even in the middle of our work, God walks with us and works through us. Of course, it is not always easy because sometimes the mission is very demanding but community life helps us. We encourage one another to return to prayer, to take time for silence, and to remain centred in Christ. In this way, prayer nourishes our action, and action becomes an expression of our prayer. Like St. Emilie, we desire to contemplate God deeply and serve others generously.

In what ways does the spirit of openness to different cultures and peoples, so central to Emilie’s mission, influence your community life and ministry today?

Sister Emiliana, Cua Xar, the Champigny community in France

Today, I would like to share with you what lies at the heart of our mission. In our Constitutions, there is a beautiful sentence that reads: *‘The Spirit of Saint Emilie is a Spirit open to universality.’* And we experience this universality first and foremost within our community. Our community is international. Coming from different countries is a richness, but it is also a choice we make every moment. Every day, we are called to embrace a spirit of openness: to understand one another, to support one another, and to accept our differences so that we may move forward in unity. And this strength that we draw together is exactly what we convey to the outside world. On the ground, the spirit of Saint Emilie is almost palpable. Whether in our parishes or on the street corner, we share the daily lives of people from such diverse cultures.

Faced with the temptation to turn inwards or to adopt a narrow, community-centred mindset (which is very prevalent in today’s society), our mission is to build bridges. Openness to universality (C102) means that no one is excluded from God’s love. Whether the differences are religious, cultural or social, the sister’s outlook must be that of Saint Emilie: an outlook that sees in every human being a brother or sister in humanity. I feel this deeply: without this open-mindedness, we could not respond to God’s call where we are sent today. Our mission is to live amongst everyone, without distinction, by building bridges. That is the Spirit of Saint Emilie!

Living amongst people, in parishes and neighbourhoods, reminds us of the mystery of the Incarnation: Christ did not merely pass through our world; he became flesh within a culture. In the same way, the spirit of Saint Emilie urges us to break down the invisible barriers of prejudice so that we may fully engage with the lives of those we serve.

Can you share a personal experience where you felt especially guided by the spirit or intercession of Saint Emilie de Vialar?

Sister Rosemary Thang Kee Hlaing, the Champigny community in France

I am delighted to share with you an experience in which I felt particularly guided by the intercession of Saint Emilie de Vialar, our foundress. It was a time when I felt the need to make an important decision for the good of my religious, spiritual and personal life. I knew exactly what I wanted, but I did not know what the Lord truly wanted for me. So, I began a novena to Saint Emilie, as I often do at important times, especially before making a decision. I entrusted to her everything that was in my heart, asking her to pray for me and also to help me discern. At times, I prayed with tears in my eyes.

To my great surprise, on the evening of the eighth day of the Novena, I received an unexpected phone call that changed everything I had imagined. I finished the Novena anyway. Afterwards, I took a few more days to pray and reflect. I was convinced that Saint Emilie was guiding me. In the end, I accepted a mission that was completely different from what I had initially hoped for. Yet, deep in my heart, I felt that this came from God. I also felt that Saint Emilie was showing me the way. This experience left a deep impression on me. It was a beautiful sign of Saint Emilie's guidance in my life. Thank you to the Mission and Vocation team of the European Province for this invitation, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition a happy Feast of Saint Emilie.

What elements of Emilie's spirituality do you think are most urgent for the Church to rediscover in our present time?

Sister Anne Marie Prinzezi and sisters from Greece

The Missionary Spirituality of Saint Emilie de Vialar: A Source of Inspiration for the Church Today
Saint Emilie de Vialar stands out above all as a woman deeply close to God and a great missionary. Her life and work offer the Church a precious model rooted in the perfect balance between contemplation and action. At the heart of her spirituality lies a profound life of prayer and contemplation. It was in Adoration and from the Eucharist that Emilie drew all her strength. This intimate union with God was not disembodied but served as the driving force behind an active contemplation of God's immense love. For her, this divine love must be embodied every day through our actions, in our daily lives. The Church can thus rediscover the importance of revealing to humanity the face of God who is Love and of radiating this Saving Love through our lives.

This spiritual strength manifested itself in boundless love, characterised by deep respect and obedience towards the Church, but also by a radiant charity. Émilie showed tender dedication to each of her sisters, without distinction, and held a profound and special love for the poor.

Today, the Church can rediscover this missionary spirit through several concrete dimensions:

- The drive towards the peripheries: the boldness to go out specifically to the most neglected and to places where the name of God is not yet known.
- Collaboration and solidarity: working together, in sharing and solidarity, to build a better world.
- Docility to the Holy Spirit: showing great openness to the Spirit's unpredictable interventions through the various events of our present world.
- Universal service to human development: placing oneself at the disposal of various services aimed at the growth of every human being (children, young people, parents, poor or rich), without any distinction of language, people or nation.

In short, the spiritual and missionary legacy that Émilie left to her sisters perfectly sums up the

invitation that the Church can rediscover: “Go forth and, with what you have, do all the good you can.”

If you had to express the heart of Emilie’s charism in one message for young people today, what would it be and why?

Sister Cecilia Schembri, Community of Rabat, Malta

Charism is a spiritual gift given by God to a person not for oneself but for others. St Emilie’s charism is that of a FOUNDESS of a MISSIONARY CONGREGATION.

In the case of St Emilie, the gift to found the Congregation was given to her for the benefit of the Church (originally the local Church under the Bishop of Albi) and the poor people in Gaillac, France. Within three years, this spiritual gift Emilie extended to the foreign missions, starting with Africa, providentially through a request from her brother, living in Africa. Hence, the congregation was regarded not only as an apostolic Congregation, but as a missionary one as well.

Emilie was eventually so sure of her calling, always helped by priests she trusted, that she sacrificed all her personal goods to found the Congregation and to maintain it. In fact, in 24 years she founded 42 houses in 4 continents. The continued growth of the Congregation was confirmed by other Bishops and finally by the Pope Himself. The soft inner call one may feel or hear, requires generosity to light up the flame within.

I would like to conclude by saying that a vocation is a calling, it is a relationship to be lived with the one WHO calls, namely God. Finding one’s purpose in life requires patience, searching and sharing with someone we trust. May God’s love embrace you all!

Go! With what you have and will receive, do all the good you can (St. Emilie de Vialar)



Happy Feast Of Saint Emilie De Vialar!

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Canonisation
of Saint Emilie de Vialar
24th June 1951-2026 / Rabat Malta

The community of the Sisters in Rabat joyfully celebrated the **75th anniversary of the canonisation of St. Emilie de Vialar**, giving thanks for the life and legacy of our beloved Foundress.

The celebration began with a reflection on the historic events surrounding St. Emilie's canonisation.

It is Sunday, 24th June 1951.....

In St Peter's Basilica in Rome, in a moving ceremony filled with great pomp, colour and timeless pageantry and in the presence of some 500 participants who filled the nave of the great Basilica – many of whom were Sisters of ST Joseph of the Apparition – Pope Pius the XII solemnly proclaimed:

In honour of the holy and undivided Trinity, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the expansion of Christianity, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, after careful reflection and imploring heavenly help, we decree and define the Blessed Emilie de Vialar to be a Saint.

Amid great acclamation and cheers from the crowd assembled in the Basilica's nave, Saint Emilie de Vialar was raised in the glory of Bernini; in other words, a painting of Saint Emilie was ceremonially raised above the magnificent high altar at the moment of the Pope's official proclamation.

Saint Emilie de Vialar.... This was the declaration, the formal solemn closure, the moment so patiently anticipated for almost 100 years, almost a century of prayer and thorough, selfless work dedicated to the cause which was the canonisation of Emilie de Vialar. Her daughters, Sisters who had come to Rome from so many parts of the world, heard Pope Pius the XII's solemn proclamation. All those who had remained at their mission were able to follow the grand ceremony on radio.

Saint Emilie de Vialar was inscribed in the calendar of the universal Church.

This woman, so richly endowed by God with extraordinary gifts and qualities, had placed her ability, her heart, all her material resources and the sum of her human and spiritual energies at the service of God's glory and the good of the neighbour – a neighbour whom she did not choose but whom the will of God put on her path, whatever that neighbour's name, religion or need.

Remembering this significant milestone in the history of our Congregation renewed our gratitude for her witness of faith, courage, and unwavering trust in God's providence.

The sisters then united their voices in singing hymns in honour of St. Emilie. One hymn, in particular, touched every heart:



*We raise our eyes to thee, O Holy Mother Emilie.
From thy seat in the courts above, O guard thy children with thy love.
Teach us to travel close within The path traced out by thee;
To follow on where'er it goes, Leading us to charity.
St. Emilie, pray for us.*

The celebration continued with a time of personal sharing. Each sister chose a favourite quotation from St. Emilie and reflected on why those words held special meaning in her own life and vocation. It was a beautiful opportunity to rediscover the richness of our Foundress's spirituality and how her wisdom continues to inspire us today.

Among the quotations shared were:

"The Divine Providence foresees our needs and watches over us always."

"Those who bring happiness and healing into the lives of others are repaid by interior joy."

"Let us have no other wish than to work for God's greater glory. Let us at the same time rejoice in the work done by others. These two attitudes are true charity."

"God is present everywhere. He carries you engraved on the palm of His hand; you are His child."

Each reflection revealed how St. Emilie's words continue to guide the sisters in their daily mission of faith, charity, gentleness, and reconciliation.

The celebration concluded with a prayer of thanksgiving:

"Thank you, Lord, for giving us St. Emilie as our Mother and Foundress. She showed us the way of gentleness and reconciliation and the enduring nature of true love. With your grace, Lord, let us tread in her footsteps, translating the meaning of the Gospel into living terms, as she leads each one of us to your Son. Amen."

As the community gathered in prayer and thanksgiving, the celebration became more than a remembrance of an historic event. It was a renewed commitment to live the Gospel in the spirit of St. Emilie, trusting in Divine Providence and carrying Christ's love to all whom we meet.



CELEBRATING the 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE CANNONISATION OF ST EMILE DE VIALAR

The work, we had in Community, laid out by the General Council, made us delve into the life of St Emilie, her thoughts and aspirations, so our hearts were eagerly waiting for the Celebration marking such a landmark for this year – the 75th Anniversary of the canonisation.

Our Superior, Sr Dorothy Vella-Zarb, prepared a very touching celebration. Sister did not spare herself efforts to make sure that our Foundress gets all the praise and honour she deserves.

This prayer was marked by a note of “thanksgiving” to God for Blessing our Congregation. Thousands of Sisters, living and dead, who keep up the Spirit of St Emilie, were helped to persevere in prayer and loving service trying to relieve the wounds of society.

Sr Dorothy, with the help of two or three Sisters made the Chapel so welcoming. It inspired us with awe and grace. The prayer leaflet itself, attractively done, was another means to enhance the prayerful atmosphere.

Lost as we were in this spirit, we were called down to earth by the opening hymn inviting us to open our eyes, to see and touch the wonder around us:

*“Let the trumpets sound, let the music play,
Let the praise of God resound
Throughout Heaven and Earth.”*

The reading of the solemn proclamation of Pope Pius XII declaring that Blessed Emilie de Vialar is now Saint Emilie, brought tears to our eyes and again we were moved to hear: “Yes, now St Emilie de Vialar is inscribed in the calendar of the universal church. So we sang in full voice:

*“We raise our eyes to Thee,
O Holy mother Emile
Guard thy children with thy love
Leading us to Charity.”*

The “Laudate Omnes Gentes” so very dear to St Emilie followed as the antiphon to the Psalm

All was conducted so well and prayerfully to finally arrive to the climax of this celebration – the moment of grace enfolded itself to us – The sharing of Quotes of St Emilie by each Sister present. How elevating to hear the string of quotes – a clear sign that we still look upon St Emilie as our guide, Our Mother Foundress, to whom we still run for all our needs, as a child goes to her mother. Didn’t she say when still on earth “when you are sad, come to me, I’m your mother” Indeed she is!!

Each quote was received with joy, in profound holy recollection. (*See photo below*). We could do nothing better than sing:

“O Ste Emilie guide nous dans la voix de l’Amour”

[On a personal note: After my last obedience which I found very hard to accept, I had a period of malaise, wandering away from St Emilie and from God at times..

Encouraged by St Emilie's faith in God who does not know how to refuse anything to His children, during this celebration, I felt a strong urge to renew my belonging to Him and be once more a true follower of St Emilie.]

We concluded our prayer by presenting our aspirations to our loving Father, asking Him to make us tread in St Emilie's footsteps, translating the meaning of the Gospel into living terms as she leads each one of us to Him.

A well-chosen concluding hymn was:

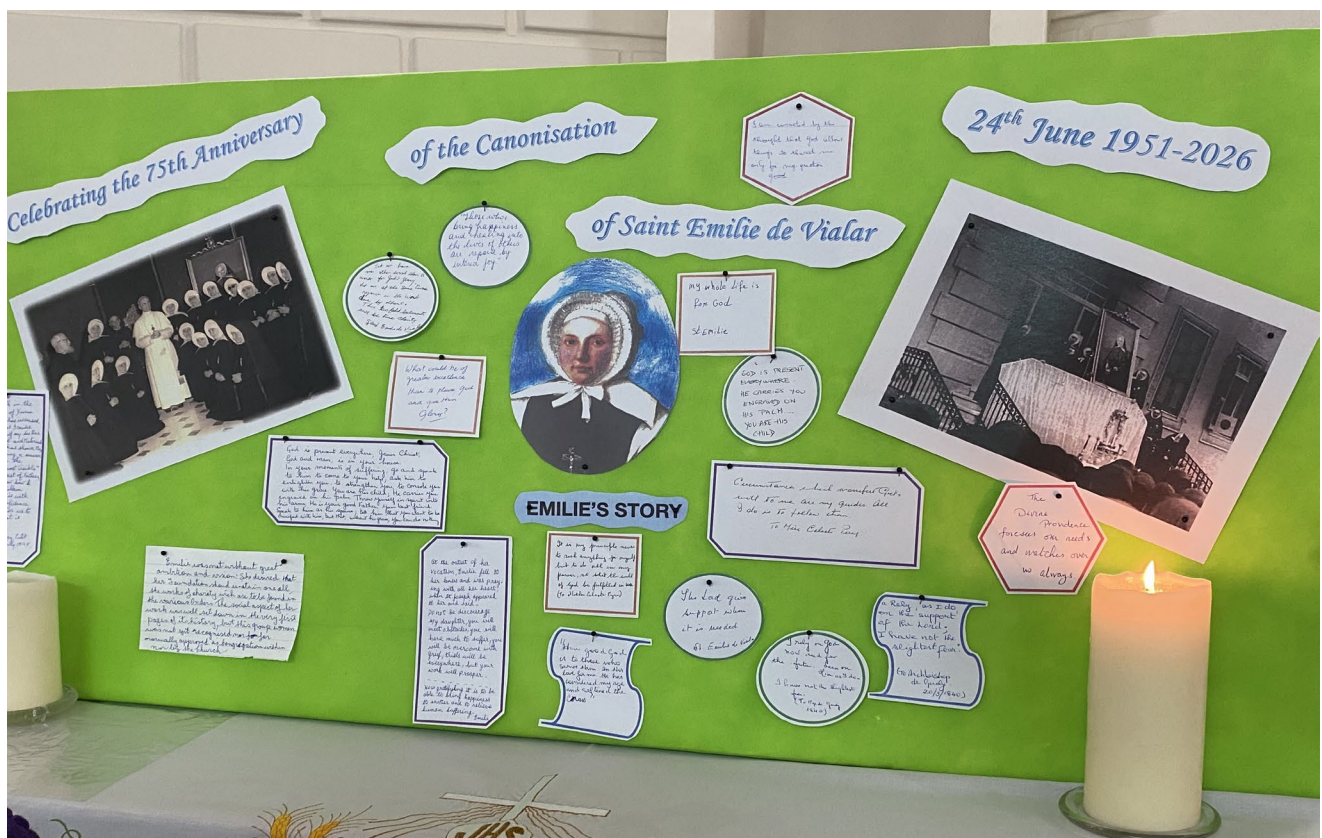
"La source d'amour a jailli".

This expressed the sum total of our Praise and Thanksgiving.

Sr Bernadette Gafa

St Joseph Convent

Rabat, Malta.



Saint Emilie and the Little Greeks

In response to an invitation from our school in Volos, Greece.

It was with great joy that two sisters from our community responded: Together with Sr Victoria, the only Burmese sister currently in Greece,



and the only community based in Heraclea, a suburb of Athens, we travelled to Volos on Monday 8 June 2026. Our small primary school, which includes a nursery, held its end-of-year performance: two teachers – the one who teaches English to all year groups and the head of

the upper years (11–12-year-olds) – had the ingenious idea of getting these pupils to perform Shakespeare's *A Thousand and One Nights*... in English.

How can we encourage them? How can we recognise their wonderful work, which carries on the legacy of the Sisters of St Joseph? By being there for them! That said: setting off at 3 pm and getting back after midnight... Of course,



by taxi, as our age no longer allows us to drive (320 km). We were truly impressed by the effort and the marvellous work of these two teachers and their 24 pupils, who are in their final year this academic year! We applauded them, along with their parents and all the

teachers at this small Catholic school, where only two teachers and three pupils are Catholic.

As we were leaving, the headteacher of the school, who is well known to all of us and also to the Congregation, Mrs Sophie TSARDACA, gave us the 'pages' drawn by the children in Year 1 (aged 6) following a short video about Saint Emilie. Primary schools finish term on 15 June. So they'll be on summer holiday from the 17th!!



Attached are a few drawings about St Emilie. What can I say? What am I to make of these drawings by six-year-olds, at the end of their school year?



A huge thank you to Mrs Sophie and the team at St Joseph's School in Volos... the mission continues thanks to them.

Community of Héraclée
Sr Alberta
8 June 2026

Celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Canonisation of Saint Emilie



On 24 June 2026, we had the joy of gathering in our chapel to **commemorate and celebrate the anniversary of the canonisation of our beloved Saint Émilie**. We felt a deep sense of togetherness, united with all our Sisters throughout the world. The gathering on 20 June with the whole Congregation strengthened this deep bond.

During this time of prayer, we allowed ourselves to be imbued with **the Word of God**: *'the importance of building the house upon the rock...'* (Ps. 126), *'The Lord who fills us with strength to bring the times to their fulfilment'* (Eph. 1), *'For those who love God, he works all things together for their good, since they are called according to the purpose of his love...'* (Rom. 8:28–30). Yes, we believe that the Spirit is at work today and always. We were also inspired



by the texts from the meeting on 20 June, which we were delighted to receive from the Generalate. We selected a few extracts from them which helped us to delve into a little history through the message of Mother Thérèse Moret, who, drawing on the words of Saint Paul, reminds us that to walk in Émilie's footsteps is to follow Christ... it is *'to be rooted and grounded in Him'* (Col. 2:6–7). She also reminds us not to forget *'that it was through the cross that Saint Émilie reached such heights...'* In doing so, we learn to accept the *'cracks in our lives'* and to take the necessary risks for the glory of God. We also enjoyed praying the litany of Saint Émilie.

Through moments of silence, moments of free expression and songs, we gave thanks to the Lord for the gift of Saint Emilie, and we implored Him to open our hearts to listen to His Spirit so that we might faithfully follow the call He addresses to us today. May this help us to keep the flame of our charism alive as we seek to meet the challenges of our time in the here and now of our lives.



Sr Yvonne Gruppetta
In the name of the community of Vanves, France

Thailand Province Celebrates the 75th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Emilie de Vialar



The Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition in the Thailand Province joyfully celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Emilie de Vialar, giving thanks for the life and witness of our Foundress, whose missionary spirit continues to inspire our communities and apostolates.

As a visible sign of our unity as one Congregation, neighboring communities gathered together to celebrate the Feast of St. Emilie on 17 June through the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The Mae Chaem Community joined the



Saraphi Community, while the Phrae Community celebrated together with the Khlong Lan



Community. A particularly joyful celebration took place in Ubon Ratchathani, home of St. Emilie School, which proudly bears the name of our Foundress. On the morning of 17 June, the sisters of the Ubon Ratchathani Community,

together with the school's teachers and students, celebrated the feast with great joy. The celebration included a procession in honor of St. Emilie, followed by the offering of floral tributes as a sign of gratitude and admiration for her life and mission.



Through prayer, songs, and reflection, the school community remembered St. Emilie and was encouraged to live the Gospel values she exemplified.



In the evening, the celebration continued with the Holy Eucharist. Sisters from the neighboring communities of **Surin**, **Payakkhaphum Phisai**, and **Maha Sarakham** joined the **Ubon Ratchathani Community** after completing their school ministries,

as the feast fell on a weekday. The Eucharistic celebration was also attended by the **Friends of Saint Emilie**, who renewed their commitment to live according to the spirit and example of St. Emilie de Vialar. Sharing the Eucharist and the fellowship that followed,



sisters and lay members alike gave joyful witness that the charism of St. Emilie continues to flourish in the Church and in the lives of those who seek to follow her example.

Because of pastoral commitments on the feast day, the **Bangkok Community** celebrated the jubilee in advance on 13 June, allowing the sisters to participate wholeheartedly while remaining faithful to their apostolic responsibilities.



The jubilee celebration was also an opportunity to strengthen the formation of our younger sisters. On 13 June, the **Ubon Ratchathani Community** welcomed the Junior Sisters for a day of spiritual renewal in preparation for the renewal of their religious vows. They were privileged to receive a conference from

Fr. Augustine Paiboon Udomdej, CSSR, whose reflections invited them to deepen their relationship with Christ and to renew their commitment to





consecrated life with generosity, joy, and hope. The afternoon of reflection prepared their hearts for the Eucharistic celebration and for the renewal of the "yes" they have generously offered to the Lord.

Throughout these celebrations, we experienced the beauty of communion as sisters gathered from different communities to pray, celebrate, and give thanks together.

The Eucharist, shared meals, and joyful fellowship reflected the spirit of St. Emilie, who dreamed of a Congregation united in love and dedicated to proclaiming God's compassionate presence wherever the mission calls.



As we commemorate the **75th Anniversary of St. Emilie de Vialar's canonization**,

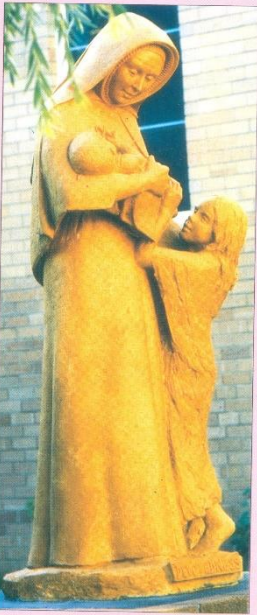
we renew our gratitude for the precious gift of our Foundress and recommit ourselves to living her charism with courage and fidelity. Inspired by her example, may we continue to be joyful witnesses of the Gospel and instruments of God's love for all, especially those most in need.

"How good God is! Let us trust Him always and give ourselves entirely to His service."

— Saint Emilie de Vialar —

Sr. Martina Ngamwong

St Emilie - A Personal Reflection



The true nature of a person lies in the way a person listens to God and is prepared to respond by wanting the things God wants. This is the basis of true love. Emilie believed, she loved. She trusted. The real victory of faith is trusting God in the dark. Emilie once commented that there are moments in life that are so critical that one can only stand firm by calling to mind certain texts of scripture, the example of our Saviour and that of the saints. We know that in her early life she was not perfect, nor completely taken up with God.

For example, as a child, she had got into the habit of telling lies to avoid getting into trouble. A little older she forgot about the special graces God had given her and even gave up receiving the sacraments for some time. But God was leading her, and his response was to draw her into ever closer intimacy with himself, granting

further special favours and a deeper relationship in which she was able to trust implicitly in all that was asked of her.

During the lengthy period that elapsed between God's initial call and the founding of the congregation in 1832, God was quietly working away in her heart, inspiring, leading, providing the right environment and experiences that would lead to the accomplishment of his will - and she allowed God to work in her.



One is touched by Emilie's 'matter-of-fact' statement that she cured some sick people the doctors had given up on. No preamble, no surprise on her part. She knew that God worked through her - that she only had to accomplish his will, trust his love. Through her trust in God and the circumstances that evolved she was able to recognize when the time was right for her foundation.

In the early days of her Congregation, she had the special ability of drawing young women to join her. She didn't use any particular strategy or theology. It was the power that God created within her through their mutual trust and from the conviction of her own commitment. She was able to attract others because of her deep personal rootedness in God.

She had first surrendered herself to God's care and this was her security. She had experienced suffering and self-sacrifice, and the joy of being chosen, which enabled her to draw others to a life of devotedness. As a result of her prayer and contemplation, she gained the strength to withstand hardships and opposition in a mature, steadfast and resolute manner, always faithful to what she understood to be the will of God, through the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, or in her own words - "Divine Providence."

In the face of harsh trials, public scorn and derision, internal betrayals, opposition within the Church, suspicion and constant criticism, gossip and character assassination, the miscarriage of justice, physical weariness and total impoverishment, Emilie de Vialar never wavered, or gave way to discouragement.

She was able to stand firm in the midst of constant trials and ordeals in her life, certain that the path she was treading was God's will for her and for the mission God had entrusted to her. Of course there were occasions of much joy for her, especially in being able to spread the Kingdom of God by means of her missionary foundations.

Emilie's survival in the face of so much opposition was based on Her relationship with God, her prayer life, her contemplation: *"spent many hours in my cherished contemplation, which I dare to believe, is also cherished by Jesus Christ"* (to Fr Bourgade 1843)

Her trust in God, in Divine Providence: *"My trust in God was complete; I relied on him for all my needs"* (Account of Grace) Her acceptance of circumstances, her desire to accomplish God's will: *"To please the Lord, to give him glory - isn't this the greatest good?"* (To Sister Mary Petit 1855)

She was granted extraordinary spiritual favours by the Lord, but in her humility and simplicity, for the most part she kept these to herself. At the same time, she was very practical and down to earth in her day-to-day activities.

It was the great Mystery of the Incarnation which captured her heart during the course of her contemplation, and which prompted her to begin a work to banish ignorance and human misery of every kind, to reveal to the world the hidden presence of God and his great love for all people. The Son of God came to save people from those things that would restrict their development as persons, and their relationship with the Father - such things as the power of evil, ignorance, hunger, sickness and disease.

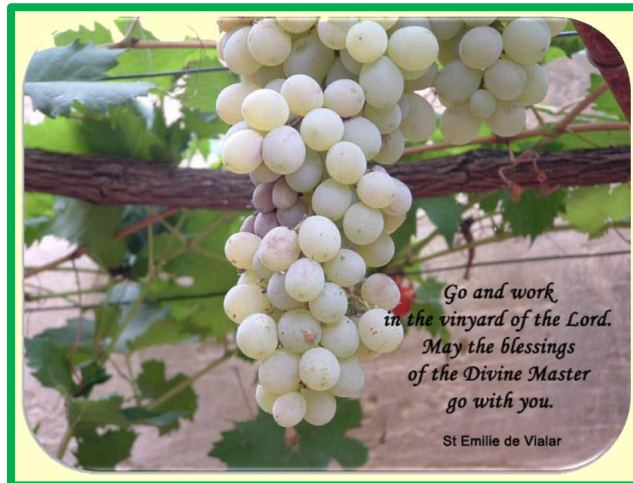


So, Emilie dedicated her own life and made it the aim of the congregation to spread the knowledge of God's love and compassion, and to give him praise and thanks for his wonderful gifts to us. St Joseph was the silent, devoted and humble first witness to the accomplishment of the Incarnation, so it was fitting that Emilie should dedicate her institution to this saint, and specifically to the apparition in which Joseph received the revelation of the Incarnation – hence the title St Joseph of the Apparition.

At Emilie's untimely death the sisters were convinced that she was in heaven: *“Pray for the repose of her soul, we are fully confident that she already enjoys eternal rest and that she is crowned as much with joy as with the good works that she carried on throughout the course of her life.”* (Sr Baptistine wrote to other sisters in 1856)

Following St Emilie means walking alongside her, in the context of our own time in history, being profoundly influenced by her, while still retaining our own identity and personality. Staying near enough to be influenced by her life and spirituality, yet far enough away to have perspective on how these can influence us in our own times.

St Emilie de Vialar watch over your family with loving care.



Sister Zoe Milne
Perth, Australia

75th anniversary of the canonisation of Saint Emilie de Vialar Greece – July 2026



Fabienne : Hello, Sister Nadia ! Since we last met two months ago, I've been so looking forward to seeing you again to find out how you experienced the 75th anniversary of Saint Emilie's canonisation.

Sr Nadia: Hello Fabienne, and thank you for your friendship. This feast day celebration took place at the end of our annual spiritual retreat. Together with my community, I experienced a true act of thanksgiving which turned into a conversion of the heart. I became aware of the gift God bestowed upon Saint Emilie, and I felt his presence deeply in my life. What struck me was the very strong unity of our community throughout the retreat, through contemplation, inner silence, liturgical preparation and mutual support. And this, despite the fact that we had visitors from France, including our Provincial of Europe!



Fabienne : Wow ! Tell me, what aspects touched you the most?



Sr Nadia: The daily presence of the Eucharist, together with the relic of Émilie, on the altar. This made me realise that we are not self-sufficient. As a missionary sister of Saint Joseph of the Apparition (SJA) in Greece, my heart was filled with a deep joy, rooted in humility and gratitude towards God and towards Émilie.

Fabienne: Fabienne: Would it be possible to hear what other sisters in your community have to say about this extraordinary event?

Sr Nadia : Of course! I'd like to invite you to our refectory for a cup of coffee. You'll find the sisters there having their afternoon tea.

(In the refectory)

Fabienne : Hello, Sister Blandine! I'd really like to know what moved you most during the solemn Mass on 29 June 2026, which marked the end of your retreat.



Sr Blandine : Yes, thank you. First of all, I am French, but I have spent my whole life as a missionary here in Greece. For me personally, the Eucharist is the visible act through which Christ gives us His Body and His Blood. It is an extraordinary grace to receive Christ Himself every day. Thank you.

Fabienne: what about you, Sister Lucie? What has the Eucharist meant to you on this very special day?

Sr Lucie: Yes, thank you. First of all, I am Syrian (from Aleppo) and I have lived in Greece for many years. The Eucharist is my daily source of strength; it strengthens my faith. It is an act of Christ's love for me, and I thank the Lord for His Body and His Blood. Thank you.



Fabienne: I'd like to ask Sister Alberta the same question.

Sr Alberta: First of all, I'm Greek. For me, the Eucharist is a source of joy. It's a daily joy to receive it, and I'd like to thank our priests for not forgetting us. Thank you.

Fabienne: I understand, Sister Nadia, that the Eucharist is the special place of the encounter with God.

Sr Nadia: Yes, exactly. It is the ultimate place for encountering the Lord, where He makes Himself present once more amongst His disciples, as in the story of

Emmaus in Luke 24:13–35.

Fabienne: So, it is above all in communion with Jesus in the Eucharist that you draw the capacity to love and forgive?

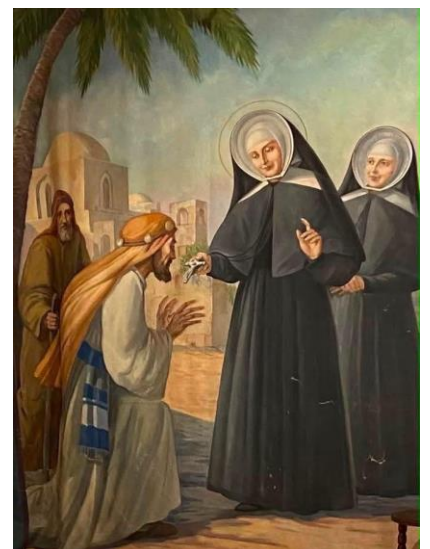
Sr Nadia: Absolutely. Moreover, every celebration must become an opportunity to renew our commitment to give our lives for one another, through hospitality and service. For, as Scripture says: *'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them'* (Mt 18:20).

Fabienne: Do your rules mention the importance of the Eucharistic presence?

Sr Nadia: Listen, Fabienne, in this year marking the 75th anniversary of Émilie's canonisation, I'd like to share with you a few thoughts taken from the **Relation des grâces** written by our holy foundress:

'This piety, which God was pleased to nurture within me, enabled me to avoid all the obstacles that might have prevented me from attending Mass every day.'

In another account, she writes: *'I received Holy Communion three times a week without any pangs of conscience.'* And this guideline is also found in the Rules of the House of Gaillac:



They (the sisters) shall attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass every day as far as possible.'

Fabienne: Thank you, Nadia, for that insight. And how did the Mass end?

Sr Nadia: Together, as a community and before the Blessed Sacrament, we renewed our vows. Then Father Daniel (SJ) gave us his blessing. Afterwards, everyone made their way to the garden in procession, holding a lit candle. We walked slowly towards the statue of Saint Émilie, singing: *"O Saint Emilie, guide us along the path of Love."* Each sister then placed her candle before her.



And to round off the celebrations in style, our community of six sisters treated ourselves to a trip to Voûla. Together, we shared some delicious ice cream. Our gratitude to God is boundless.

Thank you, Emilie, and goodbye, Fabienne! Happy feast day to all the SJA sisters!



The Community of Héraclée – Greece July 2026

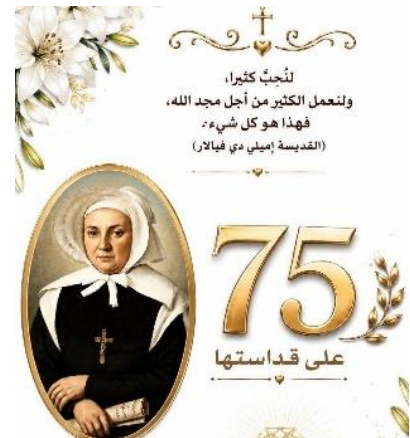
Sr Nadia LAHOUD sj



The Friends of Saint Emilie of Nazareth Give Thanks on the 75th Anniversary of the Canonisation of Saint Émilie de Vialar

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the canonisation of Saint Émilie de Vialar, the Friends of Saint Émilie of Nazareth organised several gatherings and celebrations to give thanks for her life, her witness of faith, and her spiritual legacy.

On 6 June 2026, the Friends of Saint Emilie gathered with Sister Roudaina to prepare the different activities planned for this special celebration, including the Mass, the meetings, and moments of sharing with the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition.



On 18 June 2026, a solemn Mass was celebrated in the chapel of the school of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition by Father Amjad Sabbara, in the presence of the Sisters of the Congregation, who renewed their vows, as well as the Friends of Saint Emilie.

During his homily, Father Amjad spoke about the life of Saint Emilie de Vialar before the foundation of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition.



He especially highlighted her deep spirituality, inspired by the trust, humility, and availability of Saint Joseph, a model of faith and service.

After the Eucharistic celebration, a

warm and fraternal gathering brought together the Sisters and the Friends of Saint Émilie. Participants shared their joy and reflections on the holiness of Émilie, her love of God, and her commitment to serving those most in need.

On 20 June 2026, the Friends of Saint Emilie participated, through Zoom, in an international gathering bringing together Sisters and Friends of Saint Emilie groups from around the world. A representative of the Nazareth group had the joy of

presenting their community and discovering the experiences, activities, and richness of the other groups present throughout the world.

On 2 July 2026, the Sisters, the Friends of Saint Emilie, and their families participated in the procession for the feast of Mary, Our Lady of the Ark of the Covenant, in Abu Ghosh – Jerusalem, followed by the celebration of the Eucharist presided over by Monsignor Rafic Nahra in the church.



These moments of prayer, fraternity, and sharing allowed everyone to rediscover the beauty of the message of Saint Emilie de Vialar: a life completely offered to God and dedicated to the service of her brothers and sisters.

In September 2026, the Friends of Saint Emilie will resume their meetings and activities, continuing to keep alive her spirit of faith, charity, and availability.



Friends of Saint Emilie

Nazareth

From Maad... in the Footsteps of Saint Émilie

I am writing these few lines from Maad, a village that holds a special place in this story. Two of its daughters entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition, consecrated their lives to God, and chose, too, to follow in the footsteps of Saint Émilie: Sister Marie Hanna, who has been called home to the Father, and Sister Catherine Issa, who is still among us.

I cannot help but think that my presence today in this school is not a matter of chance, but rather the fruit of Providence, which has led me, step by step, along the path of Saint Émilie and her mission.

My journey within the school of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition has been a truly human, professional, and spiritual adventure. Over the years, I have had the grace of meeting several religious sisters who have been part of our school community. Each one, in her own way, has left a lasting mark on my heart and on my journey.

Through them, I have learned the meaning of self-giving, availability, patience, kindness, courage, and, above all, the ability to serve with humility, discretion, and love.

Over the years, my relationship with Saint Émilie has taken on an increasingly deeper place in my life. The research I have done into her life and mission has allowed me to discover her anew. The more I read about her story, the more I discovered a woman of faith, courage, and service, whose values deeply resonate with what I seek to live each day in my work with children and colleagues.

Little by little, Saint Émilie ceased to be simply a foundress and became a companion on my journey. In moments of doubt, tiredness, or when I have to make a difficult decision, I turn to her and simply ask her to accompany me, to guide me, and to help me continue my mission with love and confidence.

I place the days ahead in God's hands and continue to move forward with serenity, knowing that I am never alone on this journey. Saint Émilie remains for me a quiet and faithful presence, a light in my mission and a faithful companion who, in silence, supports my steps and helps me move forward along the path that God has chosen for me.

Seventy-Five Years Since Her Canonisation: What Does This Jubilee Mean to Me?

It is a responsibility to pass on her values and a hope that her life will continue to be a source of inspiration for future generations.

From Maad to the Ends of the Earth

May the flame that Saint Émilie kindled in Maad never cease to shine and illuminate our paths throughout the world.

*Arlette Wehbé
Maad, Lebanon*

My Impression of Saint Émilie

By Tr. Siriporn Santhaweesook

A Member of the Friends of St. Emilie, Thailand Province



Although I am a Buddhist, I feel truly grateful to be a teacher at Saint Emilie School and a member of the Friends of St. Emilie. Being part of this school community has allowed me to learn about the life of St. Emilie, whose example has touched my heart in many meaningful ways.

To me, St. Emilie is much more than the patron saint of our school. She is a remarkable example of love, compassion, generosity, and selfless service. Her life reminds us that true greatness is found not in power or wealth, but in caring for others with kindness and sincerity.

One of the things that impresses me most is her unconditional love for people, especially those who were poor, suffering, and in need. She devoted her life to helping others without expecting anything in return.

As a teacher, her example encourages me to treat every student with patience, understanding, and respect, believing that each child has unique value and deserves the opportunity to grow.

St. Emilie also believed deeply in the importance of education. She understood that education is not only about gaining knowledge but also about developing good character, honesty, humility, and responsibility. These values are universal and can inspire people of every faith and culture.

They remind me that teaching is not simply a profession but a vocation to help shape young people into compassionate and responsible members of society.

Every day at Saint Emilie School, I witness how her spirit continues to inspire students, teachers, and staff. Her example creates a warm and caring environment where people support one another and strive to do good.



Her life reflects the light of Christ for Christians, while for me as a Buddhist, it reflects the universal values of loving-kindness, compassion, and selfless service that all humanity can appreciate.

Whenever I face challenges or difficulties in my work, I think of St. Emilie's perseverance and courage.

She teaches me that even small acts of

kindness can make a great difference in the

lives of others. She inspires me to continue doing good every

day with a joyful heart, even when the path is not easy.

Being a member of the Friends of St. Emilie has helped me realize that goodness knows no boundaries of religion. Love, compassion, honesty, humility, and service are values that unite us all.

I sincerely hope to continue following these values and to be a positive example for my students, just as St. Emilie continues to inspire countless people around the world.

Thank you, St. Emilie, for reminding me that a life lived with love, compassion, and service is a life that brings hope and light to others.



A “YES” that has shaped my life for 25 years

Twenty-five years ago, I received a phone call asking me:

“Would you like to work as an accountant at the school of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition in West Beirut?”

I belonged to the generation that lived through the Lebanese Civil War, and as a Christian from the Beirut region, I was not accustomed to going to West Beirut. I was afraid and hesitant. Then I thought that I could stay for one year, while taking advantage of the relatively short working hours to continue my higher education.

Yet one year became two, then five, then ten... and here I am, 25 years later.

Even today, I remain deeply attached to this Congregation, to its values, its mission, and to the many people I have met throughout the years. What was meant to be a temporary experience has become a true story of faithfulness, commitment, and belonging.

Through my travels and Zoom encounters, I have often heard about groups of lay people, the **Friends of Saint Émilie**, who meet regularly with the Sisters, once a month or once a quarter. Perhaps this type of gathering is something we are missing in Lebanon—not because of a lack of time or willingness, but because we experience our connection to and belonging to the mission in a different way.

We believe that a family does not necessarily need to set specific times for meetings; a family lives together in everyday life.

This is precisely our reality in Lebanon. Among the lay people and the Sisters, we feel that we belong to one great SJA family. We share our stories, our joys, our sorrows, our worries, and our hopes.

I feel comfortable speaking on behalf of “**we**,” because this is the feeling shared by many lay people who have always experienced this deep sense of belonging.

We have been fortunate to work and collaborate closely with the Sisters in Lebanon and in other countries, particularly in Italy, Greece, and France. This experience has enriched us and taught us to think in terms of unity among our different schools and institutions.

Today, we think of ourselves as part of the “**SJA Lebanon**” **school network**, and tomorrow, we dream of building a truly **international SJA network**.

The life of Saint Émilie deeply inspires us. Her words accompany us every day; they are shared during our meetings, celebrations, and the events that mark our lives. We often connect what we experience to a thought or a quotation from our Foundress.

We feel that we are part of this great family that began almost 200 years ago and that remains, even today, a symbol of charity, kindness, and love for others.

In Lebanon, our schools continue to faithfully live out Saint Émilie's vision: to welcome everyone, without distinction of rite, religion, or origin. Under the same roof and in the same classroom, we see Lebanese people from all communities sitting side by side.

This is the work of Saint Émilie.

“How good is the one who makes you do these things.”

This year, on the occasion of the **75th anniversary of the canonisation of Saint Émilie de Vialar**, we renewed our sense of belonging to our Foundress through a celebration organised by **Sister Amal Mouawad**, Superior of the Kléat community. Surrounded by **Sister Joséphine Haddad** and **Sister Miriam Nicolas**, and supported by a dedicated team of collaborators, she wanted this great celebration to bring together the entire **SJA Lebanon family** in the chapel of the convent, so that we could experience a moment of communion, prayer, and fraternity.

Our unity is our strength, and we support one another as we face and overcome difficulties.

Robert Khourieh
Lebanon

A message from the community of Plouguenast

We are octogenarians—myself, and the other sisters in the community are nonagenarians—so we are experiencing events such as departures for the life beyond.

This year, two of our sisters left us, just one month apart: Sister Céline Chériaux and Sister Thérèse Penhard. These events make us reflect and give us an opportunity to deepen our trust in the One who awaits us and promises us eternal happiness.

All our community prayers, the Divine Office, and the Eucharist speak to us of the happiness of eternity and of the Lord's return at the end of time.

I know very well that this is not the account of these events that you are asking us to give, but this is nevertheless what we are living through now, as our own lives are drawing to a close.

Our days are therefore marked by a special attentiveness to prayer: taking time for personal prayer and for community prayer. Opening our hearts to what is happening around us—in our village, in our Diocese, in the Church, and in our Congregation. Opening ourselves to a world so deeply torn apart by evil and war, but also to the many beautiful things that are happening if we know how to open our eyes and see them.

We want to make our community a place of peace and genuine sisterhood. Our strength is diminishing, but we want to keep our hearts open, loving, and generous.

May the Lord be praised for giving us this time to live together in the beautiful surroundings that you know, having visited us here a few years ago now.

This is what we wanted to share with you, since you have reached out to us.



Sister Thérèse le Baron
Sister Maryvonne Journal
Sister Simone Bedel

75 Years of Holiness: Gaillac Celebrates Its Saint, Émilie de Vialar!

On the occasion of the **75th anniversary of the Canonization** of Saint Émilie de Vialar, the community of Gaillac gathered joyfully to honour our beloved holy Foundress. We were blessed to mark this event on two occasions: on 17 June 2026 at Saint Peter's Church for the feast of Saint Émilie, during Mass presided over by Bishop Jean Louis Balsa in the presence of several priests; and then on 24 June, the anniversary of her Canonization, around our parish priest, Father Gaël, together with Fathers Pierre and Bernard, at the community chapel.

Whether priests, close collaborators, friends, or long-standing parishioners, everyone experienced these moments as a profound **experience of Faith and Communion**.

Many thanks to the parish for the warm aperitif offered on this occasion. It was a beautiful time of fellowship and fraternal sharing.

Here, you can discover the different perspectives and moving testimonies of those who experienced this great moment of communion.

Testimony of Father Gaël RAUCOULES (Parish Priest)

"As parish priest of Gaillac, this is the second time I have had the joy of honouring Saint Émilie. This year, I was privileged to welcome Bishop Balsa, our Archbishop, and to introduce him, together with the community of Sisters in Gaillac, to the local daughter who founded her Congregation. The visit to Émilie's birthplace before Mass enabled Bishop Balsa to appreciate the strength and greatness of Émilie's character, as well as the influence she had throughout the world, and also her courage in her dealings with the various authorities of the Church. Thus, during the Mass, our Archbishop was able to encourage our Sisters to embrace and further develop the charism of Émilie and of the Congregation, for the world of today—not only here in France and in Gaillac, but also in the different countries of the world where the Sisters will return on mission.

The following week, the Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist nevertheless provided an opportunity to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Émilie's Canonization. I was therefore able to reflect in my homily on the prophetic character of our Saint, as well as on the form of martyrdom she experienced through her trials, always carrying joy in her heart as she proclaimed the Gospel and served others.

For my part, I am filled with great joy, as was my predecessor, Father Mercier, to support and encourage the Congregation and to celebrate its Foundress, confident that she intercedes for our entire parish and its ministries, and that she supports our Sisters in their mission here in Gaillac!"

Testimony of Rose-Line (Head of the Universal Mission Service for the Diocese of Albi)

"The love of Jesus, fraternal communion, kindness, and perseverance"—these are what struck me most during the celebration on 17 June.

Testimony of Pascale BONZON (Teacher, Catechist and Pastoral Coordinator at St JO College)

"What I remember most is the fervour and prayerful atmosphere of everyone, but especially of the Sisters. I think we were all deeply moved to be able to celebrate Émilie and the total gift she freely made of her life to the Lord and to others, all the more so in the chapel of the house where the Foundress's missionary charism first awakened. I thought again of something Émilie said: that the love of God is made incarnate through human gestures. For me, this is truly what I see today in the Congregation as a whole, and particularly in the community of Gaillac, which I often have the opportunity to be around, where one can always feel Émilie's heart beating. For me, this celebration was a moment of thanksgiving for the life of Saint Émilie and for the vitality of her Congregation."

Thérèse Shares Her Testimony (Parish Flower Arranging Team)

“When I entered the church, I was struck by how beautiful it was—beautifully decorated and filled with flowers in many different colours... The chairs arranged all along the central aisle, the altar, and the various places from which the Word was proclaimed—MAGNIFICENT!

It was a beautifully prepared Mass where we could sing, pray, and celebrate—a real FEAST! A beautiful celebration for our Émilie de Vialar.”

Testimony of Dr François AURIOL (Parish Cantor)

“Providence arranged things beautifully: I happened to be on leave that week, which allowed me to take part in this celebration (under normal circumstances, I would not have been able to). I joined Isabelle in leading the singing, and we were both very happy to be able to share in the fervour of this ceremony in honour of Saint Émilie and her daughters.

I particularly wanted to be present, mainly for two reasons, both of which ultimately have to do with communion.

The first is the communion of saints. Émilie is our saint, born here in the town of Gaillac, whose memory we continue to honour in a very special way. She is a testimony to the presence of the Holy Spirit even in a small provincial town in France. She is a tangible sign of that spiritual lineage which has made the Church, from the time of Christ and the Apostles, like a relay race, ensuring that the Good News continues to inhabit human history in every age.

Émilie reminds us of an evangelisation that transcends time. And the Sisters who were present that evening, visible to all of us, were themselves, in turn, living, concrete, joyful and smiling signs of the grace of evangelisation.

The second is the communion of saints (!). In our small parish, we are honoured and amazed to see before us Sisters who have come from every country and continent, sometimes wearing their colourful habits, speaking in such different ways, and each with her own particular way of praying, greeting or laughing. It is as though the whole world had gathered in Gaillac!

You, the Sisters, oblige us to step outside our routine (perhaps a little self-centred?) and contemplate the universality, the “catholicity”, of our Church and her children.

What joy, no doubt, for Saint Émilie to see her daughters continuing her work as Sowers of the Gospel, and even to see them return to the cradle of the Congregation, to the house where she was born, to evangelise through their presence in lands where the faith has grown cold. That evening, the Sisters were witnesses and signs of the Gospel carried to the ends of the earth.

“It was this closeness—something visible and tangible—that moved me, as it surely did all the parishioners who were present. These were not abstract ideas or ethereal concepts, but truly the presence (I would not dare to say ‘real’!) of the Sisters and, through them, of Saint Émilie herself, there before us, beyond time and distance. In communion.”

Recollections of Father Bernard AZÉMAR (Priest from Gaillac and Eyewitness)

“On 24 June 1951, I was 11 years old. I was at the Saint-Sulpice Minor Seminary, finishing my sixth year. I was very young then to understand and appreciate the importance of what was happening in Gaillac between this illustrious fellow citizen—a believer and a religious woman—and the parishes and human community of our town... Émilie de Vialar had been declared a Saint by Pope Pius XII.

8–11 May 1952. In our grounds, carpeted with myriads of daisies, giving them the appearance of a little ‘antechamber’ of Paradise, there were so many of us gathered to celebrate our local Saint joyfully, with the singing of our faithful hearts. And the whole of Gaillac was decked out in celebration.

As a child, I was filled with wonder by this immense celebration. If someone had asked me about it then, I would not have had many words to express my happiness—and I hardly have any more today! Except for this sudden inspiration, this evening!

17–24 June 2026 – Celebrations of Saint Émilie and the 75th anniversary of her Canonization. It was already two months ago! I truly appreciated these simple and beautiful, radiant celebrations, but I would not know how to say much more about them now! I can still see myself as an altar server at Saint Michael's Church, where we loved to pray to Émilie, and I remember the times when I would go to serve Mass at the Sisters of Saint Joseph, for celebrations or their annual retreats.

I will almost conclude my reflections with a thought that came to me, and which I sometimes expressed during that distant time: why does Gaillac 'distinguish itself' by its low level of Sunday Mass attendance (this is nothing new!) and, at the same time, manage to give birth to, nurture and shape a Saint? The secret and mystery of God!

Émilie said to her Sisters: 'With what you have, and with what you receive, do all the good you can.' What a beautiful instruction, and how useful it is for us today! May Gaillac—and 'all our little towns and communities'—awaken many people to acts of charity, before—and with a view to—giving birth to other Charity actors."

Testimony of Marie ESCRIVE (College Chaplaincy Coordinator)

"I would like to thank Sister Veronica and the community of Sisters of Saint Émilie de Vialar for allowing us to experience this beautiful moment of sharing, joy and communion as we celebrated the 75th anniversary of Saint Émilie's Canonization. I was deeply touched by the communion and the love of God and of others that radiated from the community. What a joy it was to see these servants of God devoted to the service of others! Thank you for the beautiful testimony given by Sister Marie Cho, recounting her life and her missions."

THESE TESTIMONIES remind us powerfully that the spiritual legacy of Émilie de Vialar transcends borders, spans generations, and continues to illuminate our lives.

Personally, having arrived in Gaillac almost a year ago, celebrating this 75th anniversary of her Canonization in the very birthplace of our Congregation is an immense joy. Walking in Émilie's footsteps, living in this house of the first foundation, where her heart was filled with the desire for mission, deeply roots my commitment and gives profound meaning to my presence among the people of Gaillac.

On the occasion of this Jubilee, the community of Sisters wishes to express its heartfelt thanks to all those who have shown us their closeness, support, and friendship. Our gratitude goes especially to our Archbishop, Bishop Balsa, and to our Parish Priest, Father Gaël Roucoules, who honoured us by presiding over these beautiful celebrations. We warmly thank them for their precious pastoral care and for their deeply encouraging spiritual support.

By celebrating this event, Gaillac has shown in a very concrete way the deep bond of affection that unites the parishioners with the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition...

As for us, our hearts were filled with profound joy as we sang this hymn at the end of Mass:

*"Receive, Lord, our joyful songs, to you be praise and glory,
for giving us Saint Émilie, living the Gospel, a sign of your presence!"*

Inspired by these words of our holy Foundress:

"Go, and with what you have and what you receive, do all the good you can!"

may we, together, awaken charity around us and sow the love of God in our daily lives...

For the community, Sister Veronica





Pilgrimage to Albany

Our Sisters have had a very long association with Albany. Shortly after our arrival in Perth in 1855 Sr Julie Cabaginol, one of the foundation members from France, was moved to Albany to join the Community there. This community was terminated in 2009. A hundred Sisters spent some of their mission time in Albany.

Mother Julia, superior of the community, was very much esteemed by the local Albany community and by the Civil authorities. Moving forward our many Sisters who worked in the Albany surroundings seemed to have had a very fruitful mission. Some are alive to tell the tale. It was fitting then that we received an invitation to attend celebrations entitled “Diocesan Shrine weekend”

The oldest church in the Dioceses of Bunbury, named St Joseph’s, was a key factor in the celebrations and was inaugurated by the recently appointed Bishop of the Diocese. His idea was to have St Joseph’s Church, which is in the town Centre, to be a place of pilgrimage.

Eight Sisters, including Sr Renee, our General Superior and one of her councillors, Sr Anita, who happened to be here on visitation, plus our own Leader of our Delegation Sr Lilian, were joined by Sisters Josephine, Martina, Noelline, Pat and Bernadette. Quite a good representative of our Sisters, including five nationalities. It was an early morning take off as the journey to Albany is over 400 Kilometres with a few stops in mind.

We travelled out of town for accommodation. We attended the first exercise in the late afternoon which consisted of Mass in St Joseph’s followed by a Holy Hour. We returned to our accommodation for the night and after a good night sleep returned to St Joseph’s Church in the town of Albany and from here, we commenced our pilgrimage, The early beginnings of Albany Parish.

Site One: MASS ROCKS

This is the sight of the first Mass in the settlement of Western Australia. In 1838 a French Chaplain gathered a few Catholics to this place and offered Mass. The Albany Port Authority, in 1977 erected a plaque to mark this site where Catholic worship first began.

Site 2: ST JOSEPH’S CHURCH AND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Population growth created the need for a bigger Church. This was realized on 28th April 1878, when a larger St Joseph’s Church was dedicated and blessed. With the advent of our Sisters arriving in Western Australia in 1855, the Sisters were sent to Albany in 1878 to start a new outpost and school led by Mother Julie Cabaginol.

SITE 3: St JOSEPHS CONVENT

The construction of St Joseph's Convent followed and the Sisters moved into their new residence on 21st June 1881. This building comprised a two storey, eight roomed building. It was known as the first Secondary School and Boarding House established in a country area in Western Australia. It was known as St Joseph's School for young ladies and offered a curriculum for Higher Learning.

SITE 4.

After the arrival of the Sisters the Christian Brothers at an invitation arrived to facilitate the education of Boys. In 1898 the latter came about. This school was named "Camfield".

SITE 5: NEW CAMPFIELD

Built in 1894 for Fr Mateu, the presbytery named "New Campfield" houses the Christian Brothers on their return to Albany in 1955 and was used for Classroom teaching . Upon the departure of the Christian Brothers returned to the parish and now serves as the Parish Office and Centre

SITE 6: ALBANY CEMETERY

Over 100 Sisters in Albany spent time serving in Albany between 1878 and 2009. There are twelve Sisters buried there. Mother Julie's esteem was so widespread that she was accorded a public funeral with the Town Flags flown Half Mast.

Next day, 22nd March, came the Solemn Declaration of St Joseph's Catholic Church Albany, the main Celebrant of the Eucharist being Rev George Kolodziej, the Diocesan Bishop. The Eucharist was well prepared and the Church was filled to capacity. The Bishop highlighted the meaning of a shrine. Following are some interesting points.

For St Joseph's Church to live it's calling as a Shrine
Means becoming more and more a house of prayer for all
A beacon of hope for the town and region
School of Faith for children and young people and
A harbour of welcome for visitors and those searching.

It is a great privilege for any community to be entrusted with a shrine. It means the Lord is inviting the Parish to open its doors and its heart in a special way to be a place where many can find Him.

The Sisters were honoured to be involved in the Offertory Procession and received many mentions during the celebration. Fittingly there was a social side

when people greeted each other joyfully for the privilege bestowed on St Joseph's Church.

Finally, it was time to return to Perth and each Sister who attended found it to be a very spiritual exercise and a certain pride for the wonderful work our Congregation had achieved in St Joseph's Parish Albany.

**Sr Bernadette Casey
Perth Australia**

Photos from our Stay in Albany for the Celebrations



View from where we stayed



Another view from where we stayed



From L to R: Srs Josephine, Pat, Renee, Bernadette Anita Noelline and Lilian

Outside of St Joseph's Church now declared a Shrine

Parishioners and Sisters on Pilgrimage to the Albany Cemetery



Srs Anita, Bernadette and Lilian
with Fr Pat Rooney at Mass
Rock Albany

From l to R: a parishioner, Srs Lilian, Pat, Anita,
Bishop George, Noelline, Martina, Bernadette,
Renee and Josephine



From L to R : In Parish Grounds with Kath,
Martina, Noelline Bernadette, Renee,
Emeritus Bishop Gerry Houlahan, Anita,
Josephine, Pat and Lilia

"The Apple of My Eyes" Saint Emilie

To mark the 75th anniversary of the canonisation of Saint Émilie de



Vialar, we are delighted to introduce you to our mission in the only Muslim country within our congregation's European province.

During her lifetime, Saint Émilie de Vialar travelled to Tunisia to found schools and houses there, and established a highly successful mission in this country, which she regarded as the apple of her eye, as she wrote in her letters.

Even today, the older generation remembers the sisters from our community, whom they met whilst they were volunteering at the hospital, in their schools or teaching sewing.

The schools were handed over to other religious orders, and our mission has since focused on social services.



Our community in the towns of Sousse and Monastir currently consists of two sisters: Michèle, who is French, and Hana, who is Egyptian.

In Sousse, Sr Hana looks after children with autism, dyslexia and specific learning needs. This project is the only one of its kind in the entire Archdiocese of Tunis, and some families travel from very distant regions to benefit from this free support. Sr Hana's team consists of a teacher, a volunteer educator and an assistant.



In Monastir, our centre welcomes primary school children for French language tuition. Sr Michèle Blomme organises and leads the Tunisian

teaching team throughout the school year and for one month during the summer.



The school year concludes with a party bringing together parents, pupils and volunteers for songs, short plays, games and a delicious afternoon snack, all in a wonderfully friendly atmosphere.

Sewing classes are also offered to retired or stay-at-home women who wish to learn a new skill. Two Tunisian instructors lead this training programme.

These groups of women form a friendship club of Ste Emilie with Sr Hana. They organise meetings and outings in a spirit of solidarity and good humour. They use these opportunities to identify families in need in the area and offer them practical assistance. For example, during Ramadan or for the Eid festival, they collect and distribute food;



and at the start of the school year, they provide school supplies. They are always on hand to help the poorest people in the town.

In Monastir, there is no church. It is only through our presence that

residents, students and foreigners living in Tunisia are able to attend Sunday Mass, celebrated by a parish priest from Sousse.

Although the size of our community has diminished considerably since the time of St Emilie de Vialar, its missionary objectives endure:

*‘God and His greater glory, service to one’s neighbour,
and the ardent desire to be of service to Him’.*

Srs. Michèle and Hana
Tunis



Shakespeare at St Joseph's School-Greece

A true **"Midsummer Night's Dream"** was experienced on Monday, June 8th, 2026, by the students and teachers of the Primary School of Saint Joseph in Volos, enchanting both young and adult spectators who had the joy of attending the farewell celebration of the 6th grade.

Through the iconic work of the English playwright **William Shakespeare**, the young actors, guided by their teachers, Mrs. Zittra and Mrs. Kalaitzaki, gave their very best as they brought their characters to life. With wonderful scenery and costumes, they transported the audience into the world of the play, where the protagonists, through the games and adventures of love and magic, discovered the fulfillment of their noble feelings. The performance was presented mainly in English, with the ever-valuable support of Greek, highlighting once again the children's ability to learn foreign languages at school and to become individuals who enjoy communicating through them.

A particularly emotional touch was added to the evening by the presence of the sisters Victoria and Alberta, who praised the teachers and children for their efforts and achievements in both knowledge and social skills.





Recognising the Beauty in and within our sisters.
How the Australia Delegation Sisters celebrated the “*Sixth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly*”
The Theme this year is: “I will never Forget You” (Isaiah 49:15)

The celebration begins with most sisters gathered for mass celebrated by Fr. Patrick Lim followed by a delicious lunch cooked by our own staff!

Each of us received a gift from the delegation for the occasion.

The highlight of the celebration continues after lunch... thanks to Sr Vicky working very hard organising together with younger members the four parts of games which all who participated truly enjoyed it!

The first part of the game which is recognising the younger version of our sisters were certainly intriguing and not easy. However, it was worth all the effort seeing the beautiful pictures of our very own sisters laid out in front of us!

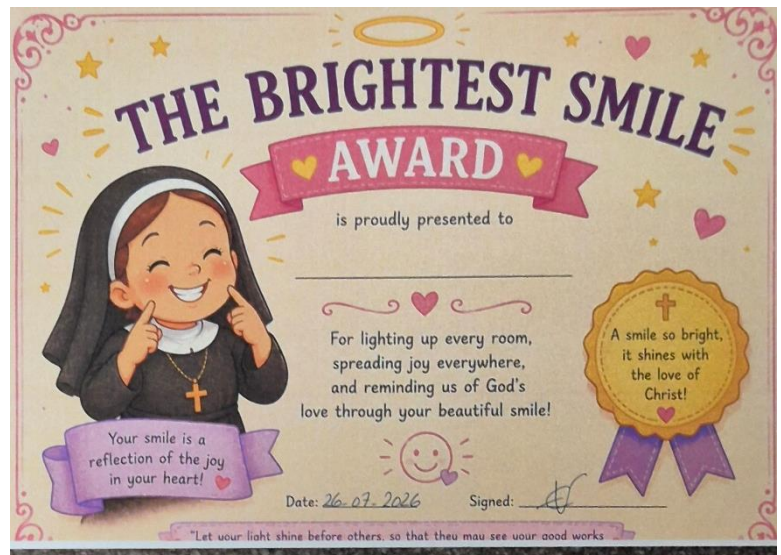


The answers of Who (younger version of sister) against the present version was revealed after the game

Everyone was a winner in this game...

We were treated with more surprises following this game! ... Each sister/s who agreed to participate in this game were presented with special awards for example below:

(Guess who is this sister in her younger version??)



This sister was being awarded “The Brightest Smile Award”

More games and songs followed after the award and gift giving. Overall, it was a good day of celebration.

We also celebrated the birthday of Sr Josephine Guruswamy who turned 70 years young! These activities have opened us to recognise the beauty of each of us and reaffirmed us through Isaiah 49: 15 that “God will not forget us” even as we grow older day by day.



Sister Lilian
Australia

Vote of Thanks and Farewell / Sister Gracy Anthony, Gaillac



“The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.”

Psalm 126:3

Dear Sisters, Fathers, and Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

There is a season for every journey and a time for every mission under heaven. As Scripture reminds us, *“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.”* (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

Five years ago, the Lord called me from India to this blessed land of Gaillac. I did not know what lay ahead, but I knew the One who was calling me. Like Abraham, I simply set out, trusting not in my own plans, but in the faithful promise of God.

Through the obedience entrusted to me by our former General, Sr. Monika, I arrived here on 4 September 2021 to accompany our junior sisters. The Lord had already gone before me and prepared the way. He welcomed me through the loving heart of Sr. Janet Arrowsmith. Her kindness became my first home in Gaillac. Though she now rests in the Father’s house, her goodness remains alive in my heart. As the Psalm says, *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His faithful ones.”* (Psalm 116:15)

Soon, sisters arrived from many nations, speaking different languages and coming from different cultures. Yet, little by little, we discovered that love speaks one language. We came as strangers, but we became sisters. We experienced the truth of St Paul’s words: *“There is one body and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”* (Ephesians 4:4–5)

Each day, God was forming not only the junior sisters; He was also forming me. While I was teaching, the Lord was teaching me. While I was accompanying others, the Good Shepherd was accompanying me. Indeed, I came here as a formator, but I leave as one who has also been formed.

Today, my heart overflows with gratitude. I thank our former and present General Teams, whose trust became the wind beneath my wings. Thank you for believing in me, for your encouragement, and for your faithful prayers throughout these years.

I am also deeply grateful to our Gaillac community. Like every family, we have experienced moments of joy, moments of misunderstanding, and moments of growth. Yet, through everything, St. Émilie continued to whisper to us: **“Be united in charity.”** Those words became more than a motto; they became a daily invitation and a pilgrimage for us. They reminded us again and again that communion is not simply something we speak about, but something we are called to build every day.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to our dear priests, especially Fr. Andrew and Fr. Gaël, who faithfully broke open for us the Bread of the Word and the Bread of Life. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, our hearts often burned within us as Christ spoke to us through your ministry. (Luke 24:32) Thank you for your pastoral presence, your patience, your friendship, and for walking with our community.

My heartfelt thanks also go to Jackie and Jean-Pierre, our first friends in Gaillac. You taught us much more than French. You taught us that kindness has no accent, that friendship needs no translation, and that love can be understood in every language. Thank you for your generosity, your friendship, and for making us feel at home.

Thank you, Pascale, for building bridges between the school and our community. Your presence and collaboration have helped us to strengthen the connection between the young people, the school, and the Sisters. As Scripture says, *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.”* (Matthew 5:9)

To all our dear parishioners, I say a very special thank you. You welcomed us not as visitors, but as family. You opened your homes, your hearts, and your lives to us. You accompanied us, encouraged us, and shared in our joys and our celebrations. May the Lord, who can never be outdone in generosity, reward each one of you abundantly.

When I first entered this church, I saw only a few people, and even the roof bore signs of age. Yet prayer taught me never to judge by appearances. The Lord reminded me of the words of Scripture: *“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.”* (Psalm 127:1)

Today, I see a Church filled with new life: hearts seeking God, families returning, young people praying, and faith growing quietly, like the mustard seed that becomes a great tree. (Matthew 13:31–32) For all that has happened and for all that continues to grow here, all glory belongs to God.

Many years ago, I came here for the 150th anniversary of St. Émilie. I remember dancing with joy. Never did I imagine that one day I would actually live where she lived, pray where she prayed, and walk where she walked. Before coming here, I knew St. Émilie mainly through books. Today, I know her through life. Her courage has become my courage; her missionary zeal has become my inspiration; and her love for God has become part of my daily prayer. In the words of St. Paul, *“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”* (Galatians 2:20)

I would also like to remember the words of our Archbishop, Bishop Jean Louis Balsa. He reminded our junior sisters that during their time here in France, there would certainly be difficulties. Learning French is not easy! But he encouraged them because they are courageous. Above all, he reminded them that the most important thing is to learn and live the charism of St. Émilie. These words are a precious reminder not only for the junior sisters, but for all of us: whatever language we speak, wherever we are sent, and whatever difficulties we encounter, we are called to know, live, and share the charism entrusted to us.

To Our Dear Junior Sisters

Dear Sisters, your juniorate journey now comes to its completion, but your religious life is only beginning to blossom. As Jesus tells us, *“Freely you have received; freely give.”* (Matthew 10:8)

As you leave Gaillac and continue your journey, carry home not only your certificates, but, above all, your transformed hearts. Carry with you the friendships you have made, the lessons you have learned, the experiences you have shared, and the memories that God has given you here.

Above all, remember always St. Émilie’s invitation: **“Be united in charity.”** Wherever you go, let your life become an answer to that call. Where there is division, be a source of unity. Where there is darkness, be light. Where there is loneliness, be companionship. Where there is suffering, be compassion. Where there is fear, be hope. And where there is despair, bring the presence of Christ.

My prayer for each of you is simple: May you be a light to the world. May you be a blessing wherever you go. May you become living Gospels, read not on paper but through the witness of your lives. Jesus tells us, *“You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others.”* (Matthew 5:14–16)

Dear friends, our journey together does not end here. It simply changes direction. The same God who brought us together is now sending us forth. We may be separated by distance and by different missions, but the communion we have experienced will remain in our hearts. As Scripture promises, *“The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in, both now and forevermore.”* (Psalm 121:8)

And so, with grateful hearts, let us leave this sacred place not only with words, but also with joy. Let us celebrate, let us smile, let us sing, and even let us dance, because **our God is a God of joy!**

As I return to India, I do not leave empty-handed. I carry with me the spirit of St. Émilie, the love of this community, the friendships God has given me, and countless memories that will remain forever in my heart. I will carry Gaillac with me, just as I hope that a little part of me will remain here with you.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He make His face shine upon you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24–26)

Amen.

May the Lord continue to bless each one of you and keep you always in His love. Please remember me in your prayers, as I will remember you in mine. Until we meet again, may the peace of Christ remain in our hearts.

**Thank you, and God bless you all.
Sister Gracy Anthony
Junior Formator**

Saint Joseph Hospital in Jerusalem: Seventy Years of Service, Growth, and a New Era of Healthcare



Saint Joseph Hospital Jerusalem: A Mission of Compassion and Service

For nearly seven decades, **Saint Joseph Hospital in Jerusalem** has been an important healthcare institution serving the people of Jerusalem and beyond. Founded in **1956 by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition**, the Hospital was established with a mission to combine professional healthcare with compassion, human dignity, and service to all, without discrimination.



Located in **Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem**, Saint Joseph Hospital is a non-profit general hospital owned by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition. Its mission remains to provide high-quality, compassionate

healthcare grounded in faith, dignity, and respect, and accessible to people regardless of their circumstances.

Over the years, the Hospital has grown from a modest institution into a major healthcare centre, offering a wide range of medical and surgical services. These include **internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, neonatal care, emergency and critical care, orthopaedics, radiology, laboratory and blood bank services, cardiology, and specialised outpatient clinics**. Its four operating theatres provide both emergency and elective surgery, including minimally invasive procedures.

Saint Joseph Hospital also plays an important role in the wider healthcare network of **East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and, when access permits, Gaza**, providing essential referral and specialist services.



Today, **447 employees** work at the Hospital, which provided care to **more than 124,000 patients**, around 20% more than in 2024. These figures reflect not only the Hospital's growth, but also its continuing importance to



the community as a trusted provider of healthcare and a place of service and hope.

As Saint Joseph Hospital looks towards the future, its founding mission continues to guide its development through **clinical advancement, new technologies, expansion, and investment in healthcare infrastructure**, always placing people and their dignity at the heart of its service.

A Period of Major Clinical Expansion

The past five years have marked an important period of growth for **Saint Joseph Hospital**. The Hospital has invested not only in maintaining its existing services but also in developing new specialties and technologies, allowing more patients to receive advanced care locally.



One of the major developments has been the introduction of **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)**, significantly strengthening the Hospital's diagnostic capabilities and supporting more comprehensive care in areas such as neurology, orthopaedics, oncology, paediatrics, and surgery.

The Hospital has also established **Vascular and Endovascular Surgery**, providing specialised treatment for complex arterial and venous conditions, including peripheral vascular disease, diabetic complications, carotid disease, and aneurysms.

Another important area of development is **advanced paediatric surgery**.

In **October 2025**, Saint Joseph Hospital signed a three-year cooperation agreement with **Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital in Rome** to strengthen specialist paediatric training and collaboration in the management of complex cases. This partnership supports the Hospital's commitment to providing highly specialised care for children in the Holy Land.



A dedicated **Dialysis Unit** has also been opened, providing essential, long-term care for patients with advanced kidney disease and strengthening the Hospital's Internal Medicine services.

These developments have been accompanied by major improvements to existing facilities. During **2025 and 2026**, the Operating Theatres and Adult Intensive Care Unit were renovated

and modernised, while the Hospital continued to recruit specialists in various medical and surgical fields.

Together, these developments—**MRI, vascular surgery, advanced paediatric surgery, dialysis, modernised critical care, and upgraded operating theatres**—represent an important step in the Hospital's transformation into a more comprehensive centre capable of providing increasingly specialised and complex healthcare.

.The New Outpatient Building: A Transformational Investment One of the most significant developments in the modern history of **Saint Joseph Hospital** is the construction of its new **Outpatient Building**. In **June 2026**, the Hospital began the construction and finishing works of this major project, which covers more than **13,000 square metres** and forms part of a wider expansion programme to increase the Hospital's capacity.

The new building is much more than an increase in physical space. It responds to the growing importance of **outpatient care, day procedures, specialist consultations, diagnostics, and chronic disease management.**

By expanding and separating outpatient services from inpatient care, the building will help **reduce congestion, improve patient flow, provide better facilities for consultations and diagnostic procedures, and allow inpatient areas to focus on patients requiring hospitalisation and complex care.**

It will also provide space for **new specialties, multidisciplinary clinics, teaching, and future technological development.**



This project therefore represents not simply a new building, but a **major investment in the future of Saint Joseph Hospital and its ability to serve the community.**

From Jerusalem to Bethlehem: Healthcare That Reaches the Patient



The opening of **Saint Joseph Medical Center in Bethlehem in August 2026** marks another important milestone for Saint Joseph Hospital—this time by extending its mission geographically.

For many years, Saint Joseph Hospital has welcomed patients from Bethlehem and surrounding areas. However, reaching Jerusalem has become increasingly difficult for many Palestinian patients because of movement restrictions, permits, checkpoints, economic challenges, and the wider circumstances affecting the Holy Land.

In response, the Sisters of Saint Joseph and the Hospital leadership embraced a simple but important principle: **when patients cannot easily reach healthcare, healthcare must find a way to reach them.**

The Bethlehem Medical Center brings the mission and expertise of Saint Joseph Hospital closer to the communities it serves, reducing the need for patients to travel to Jerusalem while maintaining the Hospital's professional standards.

The Center offers specialised services including **Maternal and Fetal Medicine, Breast Diseases and Oncology, and Cardiology**, supported by diagnostic services such as echocardiography, exercise stress testing, and Holter monitoring. Other specialties are also provided by physicians and specialists from Saint Joseph Hospital in Jerusalem.

The new Center is therefore more than an extension of healthcare services. It is a **sign of solidarity and commitment to the Bethlehem community**, improving access to specialised care, extending the Hospital's expertise, and creating local employment opportunities. With around **40% of Saint Joseph Hospital's workforce coming from the Bethlehem district**, the Center builds on a long-standing relationship with the local community.



A New Chapter in a Seventy-Year Mission

The recent developments at **Saint Joseph Hospital** reflect a major new chapter in its history. **MRI** has strengthened diagnostic services; **vascular and advanced paediatric surgery** have expanded specialised care; the **Dialysis Unit** provides essential long-term treatment; and the modernisation of the **Operating Theatres and Intensive Care Unit** has strengthened the Hospital's ability to care for seriously ill patients. The new **Outpatient Building** prepares the Hospital for future growth, while the **Saint Joseph Medical Center in Bethlehem** extends its expertise beyond Jerusalem.

Together, these developments represent a deliberate move towards a **more integrated, specialised, and comprehensive healthcare institution**.

Yet, despite these advances in technology, facilities, and medical services, the heart of Saint Joseph Hospital remains unchanged. Since **1956**, its mission has been rooted in the belief that healthcare is inseparable from **human dignity, compassion, and respect for every person**, regardless of background or circumstances.

As Saint Joseph Hospital approaches its **seventieth year**, it is entering one of the most ambitious periods of development in its history. The goal is not simply to become larger, but to become **more accessible, more specialised, more integrated, and better prepared to meet the future needs of the community**.

From its historic campus in **Sheikh Jarrah**, to the new Outpatient Building, and from **Jerusalem to Bethlehem**, Saint Joseph Hospital continues to show that its

strength lies in **preserving its values while responding courageously to the changing needs of the people it serves**.



Sister Lyda Marqus



Celebrating 175 Years of Compassion and Care

On the feast day of St Louis, the patron saint of our hospital in Jerusalem, we celebrated 175 years for the foundation of our unique hospital. This Jubilee is a special occasion to remember and give thanks to all the sisters who have dedicated their lives to this humanitarian mission. Through their faith, compassion, and commitment, they have served countless patients and families with love and dignity. It is a celebration of our history; of people, faith, service, compassion, and hope.

St. Louis French Hospital serves as a vital beacon of peace and mutual respect. Run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition, the institution remains open to patients of all faiths Christians, Muslims, and Jews alike offering a lived example of community harmony. It has a diverse and dedicated team of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim doctors and nurses, together with international volunteers working together to provide compassionate care for patients from all backgrounds and communities.

The Hospital is unique due to its important humanitarian and charitable mission as it cares for patients at the end of their lives, and provides them with dignity, care, compassion, and quality treatment. Despite its location in the heart of Jerusalem and in the middle of surrounding tensions, clashes, and divisions, the hospital is present as a beacon of hope where Christians, Muslims, Jews, Palestinians, Israelis and others come together for treatment under one roof of Catholic care.

We also celebrate the completion of the big infrastructure renovations that took place in the hospital last year, it was a great occasion at the jubilee celebration to show the great things that have been achieved. We also celebrated with all our staff members, doctors, nurses, caregivers, volunteers, and collaborators who believed in our mission and made it their own. Their dedication and teamwork have helped St. Louis Hospital continue its mission of caring for people from all backgrounds.



The Holy Eucharist was presided over by His Beatitude Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, and concelebrated by Cardinal Rainer Woelki, Archbishop of Cologne, Germany who is a great supporter to our hospital and has generously donated towards our recent infrastructure project. Members of the local Church, and the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church, H.B. Patriarch Theophilos III, members of religious institutes, our hospital

residents and their families, staff, and friends joined us for the celebrations.

In the Homily, Cardinal Pizzaballa mentioned that *“175-year milestone (1851–2026) not just as a historical achievement, but as an enduring testament to a spiritual, medical, and humanitarian mission deeply rooted in the heart of Jerusalem. He commended the hospital’s unique dedication to geriatric and palliative care, emphasizing its core motto: “We cannot add days to their life, but we can add life to their days.”* The homily underscored the role of caregivers in walking alongside the terminally ill with dignity, love, and compassion.

This Eucharistic celebration was a beautiful moment of thanksgiving, unity, and communion. We entrusted to the Lord the past 175 years of our mission and asked for His continued grace and guidance as we move forward, serving the people of Jerusalem with love, compassion, dignity, and hope.

We have received a letter from His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, encouraging and motivating us to continue moving forward with the same spirit of faith, courage, and dedication. His message reminds us of what our foundress, Mother Emilie de Vialar, always desired for us: *“to remain faithful to our mission, working for the glory of God and for the good of our neighbors.”* May the example of Mother Emilie and the encouragement of the Holy Father inspire us to continue building a place where everyone is welcomed, respected, and cared for, regardless of their background, religion, or culture. May St. Louis Hospital continue to be a sign of peace, unity, and compassionate service in Jerusalem, witnessing that diversity can truly become a beautiful expression of unity.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to those who have been instrumental in supporting our mission, especially our Provincial Superior, Sr. Valentina Sala., whose constant encouragement and support help our institutions preserve and carry forward the mission and spirit entrusted to us.

We are also deeply grateful to our General Director, Mr. Alex Hadweh, for his dedicated leadership, commitment, and spirit of service to St. Louis Hospital. We greatly appreciate his

tireless efforts to promote and continually improve the quality of care we provide to our patients. His vision, openness to the future, and desire to seek new ways of strengthening our mission inspire us to continue developing the hospital while remaining faithful to the values entrusted to us. Through his leadership, St. Louis Hospital continues to strive to be a place of compassionate care, dignity, peace, and hope for the people of Jerusalem.

May God continue to guide and bless him,

our Sisters, staff, volunteers, and all those who generously contribute to this mission.

With grateful hearts, we look back at our journey and look forward to continuing this mission together for the years to come .



Sr. Elizabeth Phyu Hnin Thet
St Louis Hospital, Jerusalem



Sister Marie de L'Espérance Nabout

"You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your Master." (Matthew 25:21)



With hearts filled with sorrow, yet comforted by the hope that does not disappoint, today we bid farewell to a sister who dedicated her life to God and to the service of humanity—**Sister Marie de L'Espérance**—who lived her vocation faithfully until her very last breath.

Sister Marie was born in the village of Amyoun in northern Lebanon into a distinguished Orthodox family. At the age of sixteen, while still in the bloom of her youth, she heard the Lord's call inviting her to belong entirely to Him. As is often the case with many vocations, her decision was met with strong opposition from her family because of her young age. Yet her deep faith and steadfast determination led her to trust that the One who calls is also the One who opens the way, and that nothing is impossible before the will of God.

She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition in Beirut, and later moved to Marseille, where she completed her novitiate and professed her first vows, thus beginning a long journey of generous service and self-giving.

Her first mission was in Cyprus, where she served in the school, bearing witness to love, joy, and dedicated service, giving wholeheartedly to everyone she encountered.

In 1956, Divine Providence brought her to Ramallah, where she began a new chapter in her mission. There, she embraced the kindergarten children with the tenderness of a loving mother. She became for them a mother, an educator, and a teacher, planting in their hearts the seeds of love and faith, and accompanying their first steps with boundless care.

In the early 1970s, she was entrusted with teaching French at the Saint Joseph Sisters' School in Ramallah across all grade levels. She devoted **seventy years** of her life to this mission. She did not simply teach a language; she shared a culture, instilled values, and inspired generations through her love of learning, her unwavering dedication, and the smile that never left her face.

Sister Marie lived her consecrated life with fidelity and perseverance. Until her final days, she remained steadfast in the service of the Lord, convinced that whoever chooses Christ never loses, but triumphs through love, faithfulness, and perseverance.

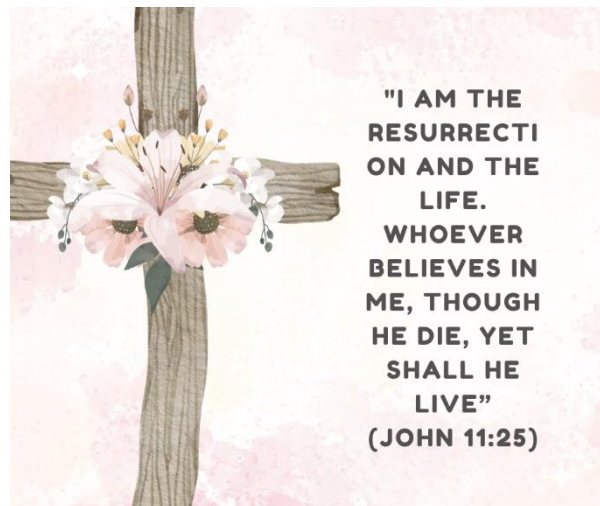
Today, as we bid her farewell, we do not say a final goodbye. Rather, we raise our prayers in thanksgiving to God for the gift of her life and for all the goodness, love, and faith she planted in so many hearts. We place our trust in Christ's promise:

"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live." (John 11:25)

May Sister Marie rest in the peace of Christ, whom she loved and served with her whole being. May her blessed legacy continue to be a guiding light for future generations and a living witness that a life consecrated to God is never in vain, but bears fruit that endures forever.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let Your perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.

Your community in Ramallah / Palestine



Upon Learning of the Death of Sr. Nicoletta



"To give means to share what we truly possess—whether it is little or much. It should be enough for us simply to be able to give what we have."

Carlo Maria Martini

These were the words that came to my mind when I learned of the passing of **Sr. Nicoletta** on **25 June 2026**.

At first, there were tears. Then, immediately afterwards, a prayer of thanksgiving for all that Sr. Nicoletta had been to me.

She cherished the words of Scripture: *"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'"* She did not simply repeat this verse—she lived it every day. She radiated joy wherever she went and in everything she did.

She arrived in **Policoro** on **30 October 1970**, following the expulsion of the entire community from **Libya, North Africa**.

I first met her at the summer holiday camp by the sea. We were eighteen girls in our first year of high school. She would often tell us, *"Put a little love into it for the Lord."* She frequently stood up for us whenever Sr. Angelica wanted to scold us! We loved her from the very beginning. She was the first religious sister to whom I entrusted my desire to become a religious sister myself.

In **October 1978**, I had the opportunity to visit **Fiesole** with Sr. Fernanda. We met again amid joyful cries and tears of happiness. When it was time for us to leave, she asked Sr. Fernanda, *"How can you take her back? Isn't Rocchina going to stay with us?"* Sadly, it was not yet the right time.

Sr. Nicoletta remained one of my guides throughout my religious life, and she continues to watch over me—and over all of us—from heaven.

Sr. Rocchina Varasano



August 10, 2026

Dear Sisters,

Below is what **Sister Christiane Fenouil** left us on Sunday evening, the eve of her death. Tired, she was unable to come to Vespers and entrusted us with this image, which she loved very much, together with this Word of God for the day, so that she could take part in our sharing.

Yes, Christiane left us suddenly, quietly, one might say. Thank you to each one of you for your loving messages, your phone calls, and your prayers. The family was very present, physically, but also through correspondence and help with the necessary arrangements.

The Mass, without Christiane's body—since she had donated her body to science—was celebrated this Thursday, August 6, the feast of the Transfiguration, by our parish priest, Fr. Roger, at St. Benedict Church, our parish. The readings of the day, reflected upon by Fr. Roger, were very appropriate to Sister Christiane's faith and trust.

The family was there (about twenty people), as well as parishioners who know us well and religious sisters from Issy-les-Moulineaux. It was a singing congregation, led by one of Sister Christiane's nephews, who is a wonderful organist.

We then welcomed them into our home to share some time together, especially allowing the family, as well as our closest friends, to come together.

Now there are three of us remaining, and we will continue to live on, with the sense of her absence, but also with the faith that Sister Christiane is watching over all of us from the mysterious place where she now is, and that nothing can separate us from the love God has for each one of us.

At the moment, we are fortunate to have Sister Janet with us, an Indian Sister who goes to the Alliance Française throughout the week to learn the language before joining her mission in Gaillac, where she will accompany the junior sisters. She has adapted very well to our way of life and brings us her youth and freshness.

United in prayer and fraternal affection, I embrace you all.

Thérèse

In the name of Sr Yvonne et Sr Marie-Pierre.

Testimonies from 2 nieces of Sr Christiane

Christiane,

I do not want to speak about you in the past tense. You have always looked towards the future; you do not dwell on what has been, but you draw strength from it to move forward.

If we are all here today, it is because each of us has shared part of the journey with you, and since your own journey has lasted more than 90 years, that is no small thing.

I do not want to speak about you with sadness; you are joy itself. Everyone here remembers you smiling, laughing, and even having those wonderful fits of laughter—we all have those memories in our hearts.

I do not want to speak about you in a selfish way; you have always been turned towards others. You made caring for others both your profession and your vocation. Being open, taking a genuine interest in others, listening to them without ever judging them, supporting them without ever overwhelming them. Everyone here can bear witness to this.

I do not want to mourn your absence, because I, like everyone here, have been immensely blessed to have known you.

Give us your strength, your joy, your simplicity, your kindness, and your generosity.

Your niece, Viviane

Testimony from Sr Christiane's Niece, Caroline

Thank you, dear Christiane, dear “Auntie Octo,” for always sharing your life with us and all its funny and serious details through your annual letter to the whole family. You showed us how essential it is to live and work with joy.

Thank you for the many religious retreats we have shared together, just the two of us, since I was fifteen. They all followed the same unchanging and precise plan: each of us does whatever she wishes; we meet for the services to pray; we go to the garden once a day to chat; and at sunset, we admire God's creation.

Through your gentle witness, you helped my faith, my hope, and my love grow and deepen.

Thank you for having, for so many years, surrounded the little garden shrine at Beaune-les-Mines with your prayers for our whole family.

Since you always invoke Our Lady of the Foliage while thinking of us, it will be easy for us to find you there, continuing your work of love, listening, and protection for us.

Your niece, Caroline

TESTIMONY
Funeral Mass for Sr. Christiane FENOUIL
At St Benoît Parish



Christiane, your sudden departure has left us speechless. And yet, when we look at your life, your long life, it seems that you lived it to the full, right to the very end.

After completing your studies, you felt called to religious life, but you tested this calling by spending a year teaching, to make sure that you were choosing the right path. It was with the Servant Sisters of Mary that you began to give yourself entirely to God and to those whom you wished to serve.

Corsica was your first mission. You joined this very special land with some apprehension. But very quickly, you grew attached to this lively and vibrant people! What joy it was for you to watch those kindergarten children grow, children whose memories you treasured for so many years. Their parents, their friends, and the parishioners became like a new family to you, and you followed three generations of families through your little classroom. You even had a football champion in your class, if I remember correctly, of whom you were very proud.

Twenty-five years later, when your superiors sent you to Marseille, it was a real wrench for you. And what a contrast between Île-Rousse and the HLM housing estates of La Savine, in the northern districts of Marseille! There, you became a public writer and helped this diverse population with their paperwork. They loved coming to see you, not only to take care of important documents, but above all to have a chat with you. You loved this experience, which placed you at the heart of vulnerable and marginalized people living on the outskirts of the city of Marseille.

Then, a few years later, your fidelity to your vow of obedience sent you far away from there, almost to the north of France, to Tergnier in the Aisne. It was another environment, but once again you knew how to adapt, among a population that, one might say, was “not particularly inclined towards religion.” It was a working-class population in this important railway junction, where people had to work hard to provide for their families.

You liked to say that your mission was simply to be a presence: to observe, to listen, and to enable children, young people, and parents to take their lives into their own hands, because they felt welcomed and valued as persons. You trained mothers to become catechists, and you maintained warm relationships with them for many years.

And then, in 2008, eighteen years ago, you were sent here, to our Community, which at that time was the Provincial House of France. You began learning secretarial work, something you knew nothing about. You learned how to use a computer and, above all, how to maintain the connection between the different Communities. They loved receiving your little affectionate messages, handwritten, sometimes accompanied by drawings you found on the Internet, along with letters, news, and other information...

Dear Christiane, if you were able to live fully and adapt yourself to all these very different missions, it was because an inner fire was burning within you, because a Love deep within you was calling you to become more and more like Him.
And so, I will now give the floor to Sr. Yvonne.

August 6, 2026
Community Sisters of Vanves
Sr Thérèse, Sr Marie Pierre, Sr Yvonne

TESTIMONY
Funeral Mass for Sr. Christiane Fenouil
at St Benoît Parish



Sr. Christiane was a blessing to our Communities, and we can also say that she was a blessing to all those who met her along the way, in the various places of mission to which she had been sent. In the way she lived and related to others, she was a true Sister. She had a wonderful presence with others, shown through her attentive listening and thoughtful care, always seeking to understand different situations. She never hesitated to offer her help whenever it was needed, whether in the Community or elsewhere. Indeed, her heart was widely open to everyone, especially to the most vulnerable. Despite being 91 years old, she loved doing little services for the parish and took a great interest in the *Maraude* ministry, keeping both the team and the people experiencing homelessness in her prayers.

In all of this, she drew her deep attitude of life from the SOURCE, from the love of the Lord. In every relationship, she sought to share, with enthusiasm and deep conviction, the love of God that lived within her. She was convinced of God's presence and faithfulness, both on her own journey and on the journey of others. During these last few months, she spent a great deal of time in our oratory, listening to the Lord and deepening her relationship with Him through Scripture. Just the day before her great departure, on August 2, 2026, in preparation for our community sharing on the Word of God that Sunday, she wanted to share with us, with faith, trust, and conviction, that she felt deeply united with the words of St. Paul in his Letter to the Romans (8:39):

"Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Thank you, dear Christiane, for all that you were, and for all that you shared and gave of yourself out of love for God and for others.

Pray for us, that we may know how to remain attentive and faithful to the love of the Lord at the heart of our lives.

August 6, 2026
Community Sisters of Vanves
Sr Yvonne, Sr Marie-Pierre, Sr Thérèse

