



## *From the desk of the Congregational Leader*

**October 2018**

*"It is His Will to be my 'one thing necessary' and I cannot but rejoice."*  
(Sr. M. Baptiste Kelhetter FDNSC)

*"Happiness consists in finding out precisely what the 'one thing necessary' may be in our lives, and in gladly relinquishing all the rest. For then, by a divine paradox, we find that everything else is given us, together with the one thing we needed."*  
(Thomas Merton, Wisdom of the Desert)

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Weeks before the visitation of the Province of Kiribati I started reading *Love counts no cost: the lives of the pioneer sisters of the Gilbert Islands*. I became so absorbed in and moved by these stories that I continued to browse through the compilation of inspiring narratives and letters of the many early missionary FDNSCs who were sent from France, Belgium, Australia, Netherlands and Ireland to the then Gilbert Islands (later changed to Kiribati). I realized that every FDNSC story is our story. This is who we were. This is who we are. This is who we want to be. This is who we ought to be.

If we are to be faithful to our roots and retain our identity it is necessary that we know our story. It is vitally important that we immerse ourselves in the stories of our sisters. They are stories that shaped our identity and the congregation's missionary spirit. These moving stories must be transmitted and passed on to the next generations because they are our treasure.

Each story is unique and yet in all of these stories one common thread emerges: ***"the one thing necessary"***. Our beloved founder, Fr. Jules Chevalier MSC, discovered and lived his "one thing necessary" with conviction: "I believe I can declare that in everything I have sought nothing but the glory of the heart of Jesus and the good of our little Society and of its members." (Spiritual Testament to the MSC, 1904)

Let us commemorate the 111<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Fr. Jules by reflecting on our "one thing necessary." What is the centre of my life? What is my one great love? What keeps me steady and anchored during moments of confusion, worries, darkness, loneliness and isolation, and pain?

May we derive some strength from these snippets of information about Sr. M. Baptiste Kelhetter taken from *Love counts no cost: the lives of the pioneer sisters of the Gilbert Islands*.

Sr. M. Baptiste Kelhetter, although she grew up under the German government, claimed Alsace as her homeland and considered herself French. She was one of the nine pioneer sisters who arrived in Nonouti, Gilbert Islands on August 14, 1895.



The pioneer sisters' work on the islands would be very similar to what our sisters are doing today, allowing for the changes the years have brought. Visiting the aged and the sick, helping them as much as they could, instructing the people in the faith, teaching in the mission schools, even caring for boarders, made the days very busy...Even though they worked zealously, neither Sister Albertine nor Sister Baptiste had good health. In 1909, Sister Baptiste had to go to Sydney for a medical examination. Three months later, on 6<sup>th</sup> September, Sister Albertine died of TB. The

diagnosis for Sister Baptiste was devastating. Sister had leprosy...At that time there was no organized medical service in the Gilberts...so the sisters used to visit and do what they could to

help the sick. Without taking the necessary precautions, Sister Baptiste probably dressed leprosy sores, not knowing how contagious they were.

Sister returned to Tarawa and for years had to live apart from her community. Father Earnest Sabatier MSC, who was in the Gilberts for many years, mentions Sister Baptiste in his book, *Sous l'Equateur du Pacifique*, now translated into English by Ursula Nixon under the title, "Astride the Equator": "Among our missionary sisters who have crosses to bear, we must mention Sister Mary Baptiste, who, before she caught the disease of leprosy, was a person who loved conversation, cheerfulness and an active apostolate. Isolation is necessary. Eventually the government arranged for Sister to go to the leprosarium in Makogai, in the Fiji group."

In her letter to a Jesuit priest Sr Baptiste shared the sentiments of her heart:

*It is 32 years since I left my family and my country (Alsace); some months after my Profession I left with a convoy of missionaries for Oceania (Gilbert Islands). We were the first nuns to reach these islands in the middle of the ocean. There has been no lack of privations and sufferings here. It is a mystery to me how we have survived. It will be ten years next February since I was separated from all I love; I have nothing left or rather I have everything. I have Our Lord who willed that all this should happen to me in order that I should cling only to Him. The suffering of the first years was great, then gradually we settled down. Now my heart is full of gratitude and peace...My body does not look like that of a leper; it has no sores and it is not swollen. But I am humiliated, despised and exiled living far from my religious family. Nevertheless, I thank God again and again. It is His Will to be my 'one thing necessary' and I cannot but rejoice.*

Sister Baptiste died on August 25, 1941. She was 71 years old and 46 of these years had been dedicated to the people of Kiribati.



This is our story. This is who we are.

*"If, as you say, you are happy to have me as father, I for my part am equally happy to have you all as my daughters."* (Fr. Jules Chevalier, "Sent by the Spirit" p. 57)

Loving Greetings and prayers,  
*Sr Marie Mendoza, fdnsc*  
21 October 2018

**Congratulations and Thank You**  
**to our newly appointed leaders and councillors**

#### APPOINTMENTS

##### NETHERLANDS

**Provincial:** Sr Lies Alkemade – 2<sup>nd</sup> term  
(1<sup>st</sup> October 2018)

##### **Provincial Council:**

Sr Irmgard Bos	2 <sup>nd</sup> term
Sr Francesco Moens	2 <sup>nd</sup> term
Sr Ine Marie Bennis	1 <sup>st</sup> term (1 year)

##### FRANCE

**Provincial:** Sr Marie-Christine Kunzi – 1<sup>st</sup> term  
(1<sup>st</sup> January 2019)

##### **Provincial Council:**

Sr François Thetiot	1 <sup>st</sup> term
Sr Monique Cougnaud	1 <sup>st</sup> term
Sr Marthe Dorthé	1 <sup>st</sup> term

#### APPOINTMENTS

##### PNG

**Provincial:** Sr Relida Gumur – 3<sup>rd</sup> Term  
(1<sup>st</sup> January 2019)

##### **Provincial Council:**

Sr. Antoinette Ake	1 <sup>st</sup> term
Sr. Paula Bunene	3 <sup>rd</sup> term
Sr. Anna Matlaka	1 <sup>st</sup> term
Sr. Josepha Nebos	2 <sup>nd</sup> term
Sr. Rosaleen O'Brien	3 <sup>rd</sup> term

##### CONGO

**Regional:** Sr Gabrielle Moseka 1<sup>st</sup> term

##### **Regional Council:**

Sr Bibiane Ndilu	2 <sup>nd</sup> term
Sr Anne-Marie Okakomi	1 <sup>st</sup> term
Sr Lea Kpoyabumu	1 <sup>st</sup> term

*Their term of office is for one year and commenced on 15th August 2018*

# MISSION



# MISSION

“As Jesus was sent by the Father in the power of the Spirit to proclaim the Good News,  
so we are sent by the Church to make known  
the strong and merciful love of God revealed in His Heart.”  
(FDNSC Constitutions #58§1)

From the very beginning, our founder, Fr Jules Chevalier, intended our congregation to be a missionary congregation. As is stated in our Constitutions, “We are an international, apostolic religious institute of pontifical right, **with a specific missionary orientation**.” (FDNSC Cons 1§1). Today, 144 years after our foundation, this **specific missionary orientation** is alive and strong! This year, 2018, we celebrated a number of jubilees in our different missions. In April, we celebrated 50 years of our mission in the Philippines, in June, we celebrated 90 years of mission in the Island of Java, in October 90 years of mission in West Papua, and in September, we celebrated 70 years of mission in Cameroon. We continue sending missionaries for mission *ad gentes*. Last September 15, two Indonesian sisters left Java to begin their mission in South Sudan and last October 8, one Brazilian sister left Sao Paulo to start her mission in Angola. We, through our Brazilian province, are also currently exploring a new mission field in the Brazilian Amazon. In the following pages, we would like to share with everyone accounts of the celebrations of the mission jubilees as well as our new mission endeavours! As you read, let the Spirit of Jesus once again fan into a flame our common FDNSC call to mission in your hearts!



## To the AMAZON

Mirinzal, 06 August 2018

It was proposed to us to take a few days of mission in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, Amazon where we were able to witness a vast missionary field with the indigenous peoples. The Diocese of San Gabriel is the largest diocese in territorial extension bathed by the river called Rio Negro. It has an approximate population of 62,000 people, with 90.3% of

them being Catholics. The territory of the diocese is 286,866 km<sup>2</sup> and is divided into 10 parishes. This diocese is 90 years old and Dom Edson Taschetto Damian is the bishop. He is the 7<sup>th</sup> Bishop of this diocese. He is a diocesan priest; the six bishops who preceded him were Salesians. The diocesan clergy has four local priests (indigenous).

Ninety five percent of the population of São Gabriel da Cachoeira is composed of indigenous people coming from



Amazon State





*Names of the Ethnic Groups*

23 ethnic groups. Who are these indigenous people? They are people who are caregivers of nature, welcoming, with a very special, even exotic cuisine which uses a lot of pepper. They have in their stories the mark of what the "white man" left. In a community the hierarchy is formed as follows: the Captain (Cacique), shaman, catechist and the old people. Among many problems that they face is alcoholism that unfortunately is very pronounced and brings negative consequences to families. It is very common to find drunk people in the streets, fallen to the ground. This problem is one of public health. The diocese has been very concerned about this reality and they already have a farm called "*Fazenda da Esperança*" to help these people regain their dignity.

For 20 years, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart have been in this land of mission. Having been one of the pioneers, Fr. Ivo Trevisol is still there forming community with Fr. Girley and Deacon José Marcos.

For this mission, we counted on the generosity of Sr. Regina, Sr. Fabilene, Neusa, an associate, and Sr. Silvia. After a few hours of travel we met on 11 July around 6 am at the airport Eduardo Gomes in Manaus. At about 7:30 we went on a trip to São Gabriel in a journey of 2 hours. Unfortunately, we couldn't appreciate the Amazon rainforest, because of the weather. After this long journey we arrived in the "Promised Land" where we were welcomed at the airport by MSCs and we went to the Episcopal Residence where we stayed for 11 days. It is there where the bishop, Fr. Mauricio, an Italian priest and Deacon Walter, live.



*Sr Regina, Neusa, Sr Fabilene and Sr Silvia*



*The teachers who attended the workshops*

Our missionary work consisted in the training of teachers. These teachers work with disabled children. They were very attentive during the workshops, and they were good students because they really want to learn and help their students. Sr. Regina and Neusa were responsible for the workshops and Sr Fabilene and I were present too for these classes. There were approximately 55 teachers in attendance.

Why did we choose to train teachers? Ten years ago a service center called "*Mamãe Margarida*" was created with the goal of welcoming indigenous children with disabilities so as to take better care of these children. For the indigenous people, to be independent is important. It is a matter of survival. To be handicapped brings shame to the indigenous family. So, usually the handicapped children end up being isolated and hidden. The center "*Mamãe Margarida*" made a lot of progress and changes for the children. Nowadays, the big concern for the Center is that the teachers did not have specific training for this purpose.

We also worked with the formation of *Pastoral da Criança*, to help families learn how to feed children well. Sr. Fabilene and I visited families and communities, visited the hospital, helped in the celebrations of funeral rites and took communion to the sick people.



*Sr Fabilene and children*

It was a great opportunity to be able to help in the parish. One of the nights we sat down with Pe. Ivo and he told us about the beauty of indigenous culture, the customs, beliefs, legends, cooking and more. It was a great learning!



*An Indigenous community*

We left St. Gabriel bringing in our luggage a great learning!

I thank God for giving us life and the gift of vocation and for all we had lived in this month! I would like to thank our Sisters in the Netherlands who provided the financial resources for our trip and expenses and Sr Jenny who made all the arrangements to make this trip possible.

Sr Silvia Regina Farias

*Thank you Sr Renisa for sending us this report!*



**Sr Bernadette**

**Sr Francisca**



On 15 September 2018, two Indonesian sisters, Sr M. Francisca Romana Suwari and Sr Bernadette Ensiana Sidok, left Indonesia for South Sudan to begin their mission in Mapuordit. Accompanied by Sr Eufrasia Wea, Indonesian Provincial Councillor, they reached Nairobi (Kenya) the day after, where they were lovingly met by Sr Wendy Violet, the current leader of our Mapuordit community and the staff of Bethany House, the base of the Diocese of Rumbek in Kenya. After a few days in Nairobi, they then proceeded to Juba, the capital of South Sudan, and finally to Rumbek and Mapuordit where Sr Rita Grunke welcomed them with joy! As our mission in South Sudan begins this new phase with the arrival of the new missionaries from Indonesia, we pray God's blessings on the community, the sisters and the people they serve. With them we say: May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved! Now and Forever!



**In Mapuordit**



*“The love of the Heart of Jesus urges Mary on.  
The will of God is everything to her.*

*May we have the same zeal as Mary to do the good that is within our power.”  
(Jules Chevalier, MSC; Meditations II, 1893)*



To Angola



On 5 October, as the Province of Brazil opened its Provincial Assembly, the Province also celebrated the mission sending of Sr Maria Jose Cardoso Vasconcelos who left for Angola on 8 October. Sister will join the Cazombo community. We thank the Lord for Sr Maria Jose's courage and generosity. We pray that her "Yes" be blessed by the Lord who calls and sends. May she be a blessing to all she serves and to her sisters in community! Sister sent us the following message the day before she left for Angola:

*Dear Sisters;*

*I am Sister Maria José Cardoso Vasconcelos, Brazilian nationality, born in Laranjeiras, State of Sergipe, and I want to share a little about the experience of being invited for a new mission.*

*The new, the surprises, are always scary, causing fear, insomnia, questionings, tears, anxiety... With me, it was no different and I believe that it is part of the mission. "Baptized and evangelized! Passion for Jesus and his people"- That made me think: How can I not be a Missionary? How can I not go beyond? This is a free and conscious decision. I am very happy, to be going as a missionary to help our Sisters in Cazombo. It means going out of myself, breaking the crust of selfishness, to witness, and above all, to put myself at the service as Jesus Christ did.*

*It will be a very different experience compared to the ones that I have had in Brazil and this will help me to expand my horizons as a Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Perhaps I will meet many surprises from God: shocking and difficult situations, but if the Lord wants me to go through these situations I'll accept them as "a servant of God". He's the center of my life and of my mission and of everything that surrounds me.*

*I am already feeling "a cold in my belly" but I know that God is already there waiting for me. I'm conscious that there is already a story there. I will have to make myself part of it and let myself be an instrument in God's hands. That's all. I believe in the Holy Spirit who will help me to tread carefully, with respect and affection on the new Earth, serving, loving and learning to walk with them, perceiving the seeds of the Word that are already there.*



*In the beginning it will be difficult but I want to be a positive presence in peoples' lives, to smile and be joyful as they are. Even in the face of pain, they sing and dance happily; and in any difficulty I will know whom to turn to and what to do. In my human condition, I want to give my best to God, in the new mission in Angola/Cazombo: to open my heart to the process of giving and receiving, teaching and learning.*

*"By faith we overcome fears and limits and advance towards the conquest of our dreams".*

*Please, pray with me and for me. May God help me to be faithful to the end.*



*In the hearts of Jesus and Mary,  
Sister Maria José Cardoso Vasconcelos FDNSC  
Province of Brazil*

We also take this opportunity to thank Sr Goretti Dumatubun who left Cazombo on October 9 to return to Indonesia. Sister was a missionary to Angola for more than four years and has served the children of the *Internato* in Cazombo and helped in the necessary work of accounting and finance. Before coming to Angola in 2014, sister spent almost a year in Brazil to learn the Portuguese language. Thank you Sr Goretti and may God bless you as you start a new chapter in your life as FDNSC back in your beloved province.



# Mission Jubilee Celebrations

## GOLDEN JUBILEE: PHILIPPINES

*‘Celebrating God’s faithfulness and love’* was the theme chosen by our Filipina sisters for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the OLSH Foundation in the Philippines.

Jubilees are a time of grace when one remembers the past, celebrates the present and looks forward to the future with hope. And this indeed is how the sisters celebrated. In the spirit of Mary’s Magnificat they remembered the past with deep gratitude, joyfully celebrated the present with prayer, song and dance and in the certainty that God loves them they look to the future with deep peace and serene hope.



Although there had been consideration of an FDNSC presence in the Philippines as early as the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the foundation actually came to birth in April, 1968. Since then, the sisters have endeavoured to live ‘Ametur’ in their daily lives, ministering faithfully to the people of the Philippines and answering the Lord’s call to ‘put out into the deep,’ courageously going out to other countries as missionaries. Today, there are Filipina sisters in Rome, Angola, Japan and Vietnam.



**Sr Lydia, one of the founding members, with our lay associates**

From a letter of Sr. Ignatia (Sr. Joan Clarke) we learn that the first sisters, apart from our Filipina sisters, received their temporary visa to enter the Philippines on March 14, 1968. That same evening they received their mission crosses and the following morning four of the sisters sailed out of Sydney on the ship called the Chang Sha: Sr. Lydia Dionisio, Sr. Rosalia, Sr. Maria de los Angeles Gonzales-Perez, and Sr. Maria Lourdes Garriga-Bosch. Sr. Ignatia joined the ship in Brisbane. The ship sailed via Port Moresby where they spent forty hours with our sisters in PNG. The journey was not easy, with the sisters suffering sea-sickness on the way.

Fr. Vrijburg, msc and Fr. Boere, msc were in Manila to meet them when they docked on April 4, 1968 and Sr. Ignatia wrote ‘they have been like wonderful big brothers to us.’ They drove overland to Muñoz and were met there by the students of San Sebastian School with bouquets and banners; the students gave them a rapturous welcome.

No mission is without sacrifice and that of Sr. Ignatia came soon after her arrival in Muñoz. We read from archival documents ‘yesterday, Saturday April 6, 1968, Fr. Boere, msc said the first



mass in our little chapel. He also brought the news that my mother is very ill and not expected to recover. It was a shock but I feel resigned about it. Father said this was the sealing of the compact for the Philippines.’

In Sr. Marife’s words ‘from these simple and humble beginnings the Region has flowered. We pay tribute to the courageous founding members and, in particular, to Sr. Lydia Dionisio, for their courage to launch out into the deep, for their fidelity, perseverance and generosity. We also remember with much gratitude all the Australian sisters who have participated in the cultivation of this little Region and who continue to support us in many ways. On behalf of the congregation thank you most sincerely.’



Sr Sally was presented with a gift from the MSC – a photo of Fr Chevalier by Fr Bogey, MSC Provincial

Marife also spoke with gratitude of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart with whom ‘we maintain a close bond in prayer, friendship and where possible apostolic works’, and indeed, of the close bonds we have with all the members of the Chevalier family - that these bonds grow ever deeper.

*From Sr. Mary Stevens, olsh*

The Golden Jubilee in the Philippines was celebrated in the different places where the sisters are currently present. The first of the celebrations was held in Surigao (in Mindanao, southern Philippines) in the Virgen de le Paz y Buen Viaje Church, Bilang Bilang on Saturday, May 12, 2018. This was followed by the celebrations in Marigondon (in Mactan Island in Cebu, central Philippines) on May 16 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Parish. From there, the sisters proceeded to Luzon, the northern part of the Philippines and the next celebration was held in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija on May 22 at the Sacred Heart Shrine in Bantug. Muñoz is the place of foundation. Srs Marife and Elly joined the celebration there. From Muñoz, the sisters travelled to Manila for the final celebration on the feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart on May 26 at our convent in New Manila, Hartzer House. At the Eucharistic Celebration in Manila, the Philippine Region presented a plaque of appreciation to the Australian province.



Fifty years of God’s faithfulness and love! There was indeed reason to celebrate!



*Thank you Sr Mary Stevens for the article and thank you Sr Tess Ward for the photos.*





## 90 YEARS: JAVA

Four Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (FDNSC) left the Netherlands on May 2, 1928. They were Sr. Patricia Leemijer, Sr. Marianna Dieckmann, Sr. Valeria Schneiders and Sr. Crescentia van Hasselt. These sisters were the pioneers of the FDNSC mission in Java in Indonesia. They arrived in Purworejo on June 4, 1928. The arrival of the first group was then

followed by further groups, so that the FDNSC Sisters, within two years, had begun providing education of girls in Purworejo, for Chinese children in Tegal, and public education in Wonosobo. Besides education, they were also involved in public health and made home visits.

From the beginning of the presence of our pioneer sisters until today, 90 Years of FDNSC presence in JAVA, there has been an unbroken "*red thread*": this "red thread" is the loving providence of God who took the initiative in this foundation. The commemoration of 90 YEARS of FDNSC in JAVA invites us, FDNSCs, to increasingly believe in God's presence in every event of life. Therefore, all of the programs which marked this special occasion have had the theme: ***CREDIDIMUS CARITATI***, "We have known and believed in God's love for us. God is love." (1 Jn 4: 16a)



**The Special Occasion Programs to celebrate 90 years of FDNSC presence in Java were arranged as follows:**

1. **An expression of gratitude to our predecessors:** an expression of gratitude to our FDNSC sisters who have been called by God to Eternal Life: paying tribute to them by visiting their graves on December 9, 2017. This program was carried out by all the committee members who came to Purworejo to commence their initial meeting.





**2. An expression of gratitude to our senior sisters:** The Eucharistic celebration on June 4, 2018 was on the exact date of the arrival of the four FDNSC pioneers in Purworejo. The Eucharistic Celebration was held at the Wisma BHK Pemalang, so that the senior sisters who live in Pemalang could be involved in the FDNSC 90-year thanksgiving celebration in Java.



**3. An expression of gratitude to our Dutch missionaries:** to express our gratitude to all the Dutch missionaries who served in Java, we made a written prayer of thanksgiving for the 90th Anniversary of FDNSC in Java, to be prayed every day in all our communities in Java.

**4. An expression of gratitude to God, our Lord:**

**a. *Credidimus Caritati*'s Gala Dinner on August 10, 2018** at the Suncity Ballroom, West Jakarta,



was a happy event of 90 years Anniversary Celebration of FDNSC in Java and at the same time an opportunity to raise funds. The event was enlivened by artists, FDNSC sisters and OLSH/BHK elementary and senior high school students.

**b. The main Event was the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration** held in the parish church of Saint Virgin Mary in Purworejo. In the Eucharistic Celebration, we also celebrated the Silver Jubilee of eight Sisters and the 40th Jubilee of two Sisters. After the Eucharist, we went back to the convent to see the colossal drama about the first arrival of our Dutch FDNSC pioneers to Java, performed by the Pius Junior High School Students of Pius Cilacap. Then, there were also the performances of Kindergarten and Elementary Students of Saint Mary Schools of Purworejo and of the residents of our Panti Rini Orphanage.





We are really grateful to the Dutch Province, to our pioneer sisters, to our predecessors, to our senior Sisters, to all FDNSC Sisters and to our relatives and friends and benefactors who in their own ways played a role to strengthen all of us as one Chevalier Family, especially as Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.



*Thank you to Sr Ludovica for writing this article and Sr Luciani for translating it into English. Thank you too for sharing with us the photos from the celebrations.*



## 90 YEARS: MERAUKE

Not only in Java is Indonesia celebrating 90 years of FDNSC presence this year but also in Merauke, West Papua. Only four months after the first FDNSC Dutch Missionaries arrived in Java, another four arrived in Merauke from Langgur on 17 October 1928. They were Sr Angelina van Zeyl, Sr Adriana de Kort, Sr Christine Mommers, and Sr Xaveria Moorman. Today, 90 years later, West Papua is a Region of the province of Indonesia. The Region has more than thirty

members, spread out in seven communities continuing the mission work of the pioneer sisters. To celebrate their 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the year 2018 was declared as a Jubilee Year and many activities, spiritual as well as social, were organised between January and October. Early in the year, the scheduled activities for the 90 year celebration were announced over Indonesian Radio in Merauke.

From January to September, Novena Masses of Thanksgiving for the 90 years of FDNSC presence were celebrated all around Merauke, moving from one parish to the other within their area. They celebrated nine masses in nine different parishes.

At the same time, social activities were organised in two mission stations. For nine months, the sisters offered free health services, food distribution, school supplies, clothes and a feeding program for children.



Formation activities for the youth were also held, as well as vocation promotion activities in Okaba. During this Jubilee, our sisters in West Papua also went around and held meetings to dialogue with the communities and parishes they serve, asking people for their feedback about the presence and mission of FDNSC for 90 years in West Papua

In the month of October, the jubilee year reached its climax with the retreat for sisters led by Fr Agustinus Handoko, MSC from 4 to 10 October. The retreat was followed by the Regional Assembly from 11 to 12 of October attended by Sr Angelina Giasih, Provincial Leader of Indonesia. Then from October 17 to 19, they held a big Lay Associates Jamboree. More than 400 lay members of the Chevalier family (AKC) coming from different places in West Papua attended. Fr Hans Kwakman, MSC was the speaker at this 2-day jamboree. The closing celebration of the Jubilee was the Eucharistic Celebration held on 21 October at the Cathedral of Merauke led by Bishop Niko, Bishop of the Archdiocese of Merauke. Congratulations dear Sisters! We join you in thanking God for the 90 Years of FDNSC Presence in Merauke!



Sisters' Retreat

## 70 YEARS: CAMEROUN

"I tremble, I tremble with joy for the Lord; my soul exults in God". Yes with Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, the Lord did wonders for us, here we are in joy. Seventy years of mission, seventy times Magnificat!



From 1948 to 2018, the history of the FDNSC of Cameroon has been written. This is the story of four sisters who came to South Cameroon in response to the call of Bishop Bonneau, Bishop of Douala. Under the direction of Sr. Clotilde Tessier, and with a great missionary impulse, our sisters agreed to leave France to answer the *ad gentes* mission to young people, women and the sick in Cameroon through teaching, catechesis, listening, accompaniment and human formation.

The sisters first settled in Ngovayang near Lolodorf in the far south and little by little, their mission met with great success and spread to the whole of the south, the center, the far north and the north-west of Cameroon. The communities were opened one after the other - Nyamfende, Ebolowa, Melan, Sangmelima, Nden, Djoum, Yaoundé, Guili, and Kumbo. Today we have more than 40 Cameroonian sisters.



The Grand Eucharistic Celebration on 8 September 2018 at the Parish Saint Vincent Pallotti de Nlongkak

At the heart of this mission, EBOLOWA station stands out with the opening of the technical section of Bonneau College. Sangmélina saw a great success through the *Notre-Dame du Sacré-Cœur* College whose fame went beyond national borders and which was given to the Diocese in 2011. The community of GUILI stood out for the education of women, the



supervision of girl-mothers and the awakening of vocations through the girls' homes. Today, a primary and nursery school has been established for the education and protection of children in this Muslim area of the country where we already have three sisters. KUMBO's mission is proving to be an important and fruitful opportunity for us, thanks to the center for children and adults vulnerable to HIV/AIDS opened at MBIAME, where the sisters work in collaboration with the NGO CHALIS. We do not forget the Messamendongo community with its reception facilities that allowed the sisters to open up to a new form of apostolate: to offer hospitality and rest to the most needy.



**The 4 sisters who made first profession**



With our two pioneers in Cameroon, with the jubilarians of 25, 40 and 70 years and with our young sisters consecrated to God in this jubilee year, we give thanks to the Lord for the path travelled, the graces received, the obstacles that we overcame and the resolutions taken to improve the quality of our presence in the world. Through the formation and sessions received on inner healing, we were able to accomplish our missionary tasks. We praise the courage, selflessness and determination of the sisters to continue to discover and reveal to the world the merciful and compassionate love of the heart of Jesus despite the trials.

The cross has stood before us in different ways. First of all, the closing of many communities and the abandonment of our important works for lack of personnel were painful for all. Then, the departure of the sisters for different horizons and their separation from the Congregation was often like a sword piercing our heart; not to forget the brutal return to the father of our two sisters murdered in Djoum after 30 years of mission.

In everything and everywhere, it is always at the foot of the cross that the Lord taught us and it is in union with Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and Saint Joseph that we say: seventy times Magnificat! Let us give thanks to the Lord and may the Heart of Jesus be loved, known, adored and served everywhere, and may Our Lady of the Sacred Heart continue to lead us to His Heart. May this jubilee open our heart to the mission of the Church and the Congregation!



Yaoundé 08 September 2018.  
Sr. Sylvie MENGUE, fdnsc

## PROFESSIONS

Perpetual Profession on 15 August 2018 in Kota Wisata in Indonesia – Sr Reinalda Lili, FDNsc

First Profession on 08 September 2018 in Yaoundé in Cameroon:

Sr Christelle Zenabou ROUAMBA from Burkina Faso  
Sr Elisabeth Toussinga ABILTIKAI from Cameroon  
Sr Chimène Isifia MBOYO from RD Congo  
Sr Esther Nkoy BAKONGA from RD Congo



# Congratulations dear Sisters!

# Vocation



In the recent months, we had two big celebrations of “vocation” here in Rome. On 13 May, we joined our Italian sisters in celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Ordination to the Priesthood of Don Albino, the former parish priest in Massimina who now resides in our *Casa di Cura* in Rome and celebrates Mass almost every day with us in our clinic chapel. His Mass of Thanksgiving in the morning was followed by a nice Italian lunch in the dining hall of our Italian sisters’ convent. Then on 15 September, we celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession of Sr Elly van Dijk.



Don Giuliano, Sr Sylvia, Don Albino, Dr Lucia and Sr Giovana

Sr Elly made her first profession as a Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart on 11 September 1993. She is the youngest member of our Dutch Province. She was in the Netherlands in August and celebrated her jubilee with the Dutch sisters on August 25.

## Celebration of Jubilees in the Netherlands



Twice a year, the sisters in the Netherlands celebrate their jubilees of religious profession. This year, in August, I, Sr. Elly, went home to join the jubilarians: Sr. Jeanne Bullinga celebrated her 70 years of profession, Sr. Marina van Rooyen 65 years, Sr. Margreet Hofstede 60 years and I, 25 years!

In a prayer service at the vigil of the feast we meditated on Jesus’ words: “What are you looking for?” and we said: *“Being called has a dimension of contemplation in community, of action in solidarity, and of being focused on God and on people. In trying to live out this vocation, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart is a true Mother to us.”* During the service the choir of sisters sang two new songs about Our Lady composed by our own MSC.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> we had a beautiful Eucharist in which Father Theo te Wierik, the Provincial of the Dutch MSC, presided. We sang: *“On the way of the heart people share their lives, their love and their bread. The way of the heart is receiving and giving. Going this way gives hope to all of us.”* Both celebrations gave us hope and courage to continue our journey full of trust, under the protection of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. I am very grateful to celebrate this jubilee with my sisters in the Netherlands, who have supported me in the past 25 years.



## Celebration in Rome



Then, she returned to Rome in the first week of September and we celebrated her jubilee on September 15. Monsignor Anton Hurkmans, the Rector of the Dutch Church in Rome was the main celebrant and Fr André Claessens, who is a member of the MSC General Council, was the homilist. As Sr Elly herself said, who would have thought that she would be celebrating her silver jubilee in Rome! And a special feature of her jubilee year is Pope Francis himself!

Sr Elly listens to the homilies of Pope Francis at Santa Marta daily. So, if you ever visit the Generalate and hear a man's voice in Sr Elly's room in the morning, do not worry, it is the Pope! Early in the year, Sr Elly, through the help of Sr Madeleine and Don Luigi (former chaplain of our

clinic in Rome) wrote a letter to the Office of the Papal Household requesting to attend one of the Pope's private morning masses at Casa Santa Marta on the occasion of her silver jubilee. Months passed and no response was received from the Pope's office. In the meantime, Sr Elly had to leave for the Visitation to PNG and the Philippines. When she returned and had given up all hope of a special audience with the Pope, an opportunity came. Sr Elly attended a conference on *Laudato Sii* and the group had a special audience with the Pope. Contrary to the plan that the Pope greet only a few representatives of the participants, the Pope decided to greet all of them, they were more than 400! Her desire of greeting the Pope personally had been fulfilled. But God is really generous! After this audience, Sr Elly received a letter from the Pope's office inviting her to attend the morning mass of the Pope on September 6. After the Mass, she and the others attending the Mass, had some personal moments with Pope Francis. So there you go...it was indeed a Roman jubilee!



On September 15, we were joined by the MSC Sisters, MSC Fathers, the Hijas di Santa Maria di Sagrado Corazon, some members of the Dutch Church in Rome, and our lay friends who work in our Generalate for Sr Elly's Mass of Thanksgiving. The Mass was held in our clinic chapel and the refreshments that followed were enjoyed in the clinic park, sponsored by our Italian sisters and the Casa di Cura headed by Dr Lucia Cristoforo.

We thank God for the gift of Sr Elly's vocation, for God's faithful love to her and for her faithful response to God's love. We thank Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, through whom Sr Elly's vocation came. Elly is clear, she is one who is ***Called to Live in His Love***. We, the members of the Generalate community are witnesses to her faithful living of this call!

# ACTIVITIES



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## April to May 2018: Visitation to Papua New Guinea



By the time you receive this General News Update, you have most likely already read the report of the visitation of Sr. Marife and Sr. Elly to Papua New Guinea, which took place from the 9<sup>th</sup> of April until the 20<sup>th</sup> of May. This journey really took us back to our missionary roots. Full of admiration for our early missionaries and of gratitude for all that our sisters in PNG accomplish nowadays, we realized once more that we really want to be “missionaries of hope” who make God’s love known everywhere, especially among the poor and the deprived.

## Conference about Interculturality

During the visitation in PNG the Sisters of the communities around Port Moresby and the Sisters of the communities around Vunapope came together for a one day conference about Interculturality. Also in the Philippines, where Sr. Marife and Sr. Elly went after the visitation, this conference was given, but there we had two whole days to think about this important subject. In both countries the sisters are very much confronted with diversity. Papua New Guinea is one of the most diverse countries in the world. Also the Philippines is characterized by diversity, but there, also one of our communities has become really intercultural because sisters of other Provinces come to study there. Reasons enough to discuss this subject!!



We realized that culture provides order, meaning and identity to insiders, but it also excludes and creates outsiders. This makes interculturality necessary. We asked ourselves: do we, in our ministries or maybe even in our own convents, exclude people? An example of how a different culture can be misunderstood, that was mentioned in PNG, as well as in the Philippines, and that I also recognized from my stay in Italy, was: the loudness with which people normally speak. Many examples were given from people of other cultures speaking in a softer voice or,

on the contrary, in a louder voice than one is used to, and the ways we tend to interpret that. Are they too shy to speak up? Are they quarreling? We only can get rid of our prejudices when we learn to know the people from other cultures better. Therefore, it is important to talk together!! It is as with a language. As adults we don’t learn it automatically, we really must make an effort to learn it. If we really want to love our brothers and sisters, we must learn to know them and their cultures and be open to learn from them. In the bible stories of the Canaanite woman (Mat. 15, 21-28), the Samaritan woman (Joh. 4, 4-26) and the Good Samaritan (Luc. 10, 25-37) we saw how Jesus broke the cultural barriers of race, gender and religion. In the end he even places the Good Samaritan, an outsider, as an example before us, as he says: “Go, and do likewise!”



## Meeting with the Laity in Nitra

From May 5 to 7, Sr Merle was in Nitra in Slovakia with the Chevalier Family European Lay Leaders, Rita Cleuren from Belgium and Hannie Jansen from the Netherlands. They were there to meet with the Laity of the Chevalier Family in Slovakia along with their MSC Accompanier, Fr Joseph Heglin, MSC. It was a very fruitful weekend. The Laity of Slovakia introduced their different groups and presented their programs and activities. Rita and Hannie, in their turn, talked about the European Laity and the International Lay Committee. Sr Merle spoke about our shared charism and spirituality and the meeting ended with a discussion about what it means and what it takes to be a member of the Laity of the Chevalier Family. Just before leaving on the 7<sup>th</sup>, the Slovakian Lay generously took the group to the Arboretum in Nitra and to a little tour around Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. During their stay in Nitra, they enjoyed the hospitality of the



Barbecue at the end of the meetings!



Kiribati FDNSCs in Lukov Dvor. As sons and daughters of Jules Chevalier, we are truly one family in the Heart of Jesus! The love that unites us is so strong that we are able to surpass our differences, as for example in language and culture! How good it is to be part of the Chevalier Family!

## Outing in Tuscania

This year's joint outing of Multimedia International, the General Secretaries and Archivists in Rome was to Tuscania, a town in the Region of Lazio of Italy, in the province of Viterbo. Srs Margaret, Laurentia and Merle were with more than 50 religious men and women as they spent the day enjoying the beauty and history of this old Etruscan town visiting its basilicas, churches, parks and museums. Some of the sisters brought home little clay pots made by a local in Etruscan style as souvenirs. This is another item for the bucket list of the other members of the Generalate! Truly worth seeing!



Church of San Pietro in Tuscania

## June 2018: Novena to the Sacred Heart in Cork

This year, Sr Merle had the joy and honour of preaching at the Novena Masses leading up to the Feast of the Sacred Heart at the Sacred Heart Church, home of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Cork, Ireland. The Novena opened on May 30 and ended on June 8, the Feast of the Sacred Heart. The daily reflections were on the theme: *Jesus Loved with a Human Heart*. You can find the reflections on our website, [www.olshgen.com](http://www.olshgen.com) (under News). During the time of the Novena, Sr Merle enjoyed the hospitality of the MSC Community in Western Road and the loving welcome of the men and women who attended the Novena Masses. Many people attended the novena masses which were held twice a day, one at 9:00 am and one at 8:00 pm. Aside from the people in the Church, many also participated in the Masses online since the services of Sacred Heart Church are livestreamed. Check it out at <http://www.mscmissions.ie>.



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## Tri-Generalate meeting hosted by the FDNSC

On June 13, the Tri-Generalate meeting was held at the FDNSC Generalate. The MSC Superior General and his Council, who were elected at the MSC General Chapter last September 2017, were welcomed to the Tri-Generalate by the MSC Sisters and the FDNSCs who have been part of the Tri-Gen since 2014. The one day meeting began with introductions. We thank the FDNSC Italian community for lending us their hall to use for the meeting. Like other tri-gen meetings, this was another time to get to know each other, discuss matters concerning the Chevalier Family, and grow together as brothers and sisters sharing one common charism, spirituality and mission. It was also a



**The current members of the Tri-Generalate (L to R):**

First Row,: Sr Bona, Fr Polce, Sr Merle, Sr Juana, Sr Marife, Fr Andre, Sr Madeleine

Second and Third Row: Sr Elly, Fr Humberto, Sr Dorothy, Sr Barbara, Sr Nicola, Fr Chris, Fr Absalon, Sr Laurentia

special day because it was the birthday of Sr Juana, one of the general councillors of the MSC Sisters.



## July to September 2018: Visitation of the Kiribati Province

On July 18, Sr Marife and Sr Laurentia embarked on their two-month, four-country Visitation of the Province of Kiribati. They started in Samoa, then moved on to Kiribati, then to the Marshall Islands and finally to Fiji. We also have a community in Nauru but since the sisters were not able to visit Nauru, the members of the Nauru community came to Tarawa. Having enjoyed Pacific hospitality, the sisters came back to Rome on September 3 still full of Pacific joy and still hearing the songs and seeing the dances with which they were welcomed, loved, and farewelled! More photos and stories in the Visitation report!

## August to September: Seminars and Celebrations in Indonesia

From the 6<sup>th</sup> of August until the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, Sr Merle went around Java facilitating seminar/workshops on Our Lady of the Sacred Heart participated in by our Indonesian sisters, lay associates and lay partners in mission, particularly employees of our schools and hospitals there. These were three day seminars given to six different groups of sisters and lay - in Grogol, Kota Wisata, Pemalang, Tegal, Cilacap and Purworejo. In total, there were more than 600 participants. The



series of seminars was part of the year-long program to celebrate 90 years of FDNSC presence in Java. While going around giving the seminars, Sr Merle was also able to attend the Gala dinner on August 10, the Perpetual Profession of Sr Reinalda Lili in Kota Wisata on August 15, the flag ceremony to commemorate Indonesian Independence day on August 17, and the Foundation Day



and Jubilee Celebrations in Purworejo on August 30. The hospitality of our Indonesian sisters is a very beautiful expression of our charism of love!

Sr Merle wishes to thank in a special way Sr Angelina Giasih, Provincial of Indonesia, who invited her and accompanied her to all the seminars, and Sr Luciani who was her translator from her arrival to her departure. *Terima kasih serebu para suster!*



### August: Summer in Rome



During the summer, most of the members of the Generalate Community were out of Rome. Srs Marife and Laurentia were in Kiribati, Sr Elly was in the Netherlands, Sr Merle was in Indonesia, and Sr Jenny was in Ireland. This meant that Srs Madeleine and Margaret were the only ones home for some weeks. August 15 is a special day in Rome, it is *ferragosto*. The two sisters planned a nice outing and meal out on that day but Mother Nature had other plans! On August 15, a big storm came and a lightning hit our electrical, telephone and internet system. They lost electricity, internet, the whole phone system including the gate bell as well as Sky, our external TV station system! And of course, because it was ferragosto, no one in Rome was working! What a disaster! Fortunately, we have friends who always take care of us – Vittorio and Marjeta! Yes, at the end, thanks to the help of our friends and their friends, the sisters made it through this year's truly exciting *ferragosto*! Special thanks to Vittorio and Marjeta!

### Last three Visitations before the 2020 General Chapter!



Let us remember Sr Marife and Sr Madeleine as they do the last three Canonical Visitations before the next General Chapter. As you read this issue of the GNU, the two sisters are in Slovakia visiting our sisters in Nitra. Since we only have one community and four sisters there, this is only a one week visit from 18 to 25 October 2018. Then in November, the two will go to Burkina Faso. Finally, in February 2019, they will visit the Democratic Republic of Congo. Your interest and prayers are very much felt and appreciated!

We continue to remember in our prayers the victims of the earthquake and tsunami that hit central Sulawesi on 28 September. We know that more than 2,000 people have lost their lives and about 5,000 are still missing. We pray for the dead, that they may have eternal rest. We pray for those left behind and mourning the deaths and loss of their loved ones. As you know, we have sisters in Palu. They have had an horrific experience during the earthquake. We thank God that they are all safe and that our convent was not badly damaged. Our sisters are now busy helping the people and communities badly hit by the disaster. They, and others, are now helping people as they begin to rebuild their homes and their lives. Thank you to the Provinces of Australia and the Netherlands who have sent financial help to the victims through our Indonesian sisters. We continue our support and prayers.

