



FDNSC GENERALATE – NEWS UPDATE

May 2016

From the desk of the Congregational Leader

“The local community is the living expression of the Congregation.”

(FDNSC Constitutions 40)

Continue building life-giving communities - This is a recommendation of our 19th General Chapter. Here is the full text:

In our desire to continue to build life-giving communities, we are called to say yes to Jesus, to positive thinking, joy and hope and no to negativity, pessimism and despondency.

We appreciate the potential of technology and the communications media and seek opportunities to use these for evangelisation. We are grateful that they open the world to us and enable us to be in solidarity with all peoples, especially with our sisters and the members of the wider Chevalier Family. We reject the misuse of technology and recognise the detrimental impact that it can have on our persons and on our communities. “Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of community!” (EG 92)

Notice that it is within the context of community life and mission that we are invited to appreciate what technology offers us. In addition, we are strongly warned against the abuse and misuse of technology and how it can disconnect us from one another.

We are living in a quickly changing society. Technology is changing faster than we can handle it, faster than we can explore opportunities for its use, and faster than we can calculate its risk and its detrimental influence on our lives, personally and as a community.

It has been said that the world is becoming time-poor (as if there is not enough time for everything) and therefore we are becoming more impatient. There is an increasing demand for speed. The faster, the better! There is a growing obsession with instant information, answers (just “google it”), new products and new friends. According to recent studies digital addiction will become one of the most common causes of anxiety, depression and mental breakdown, particularly among young people. It is safe to say that there are now so many people (including religious) who are psychologically addicted to their devices. There is an increasing number of people who cannot separate themselves from their devices or the internet even for just a brief moment. A leading researcher on addiction, Dr. Gabor Mate, explains in his book “In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts” that addiction (in whatever form it takes) is a “pain killer.” Hence, the question we should ask is not “why the addiction” but “why the pain?”

Sisters, let us honestly ask ourselves, “Am I becoming psychologically addicted to my gadgets, to facebook, chats, instagram, twitter, etc.?” Are we able to say “no” because of a deeper “yes?” Are we being called, more than ever, to a sensitive alertness and greater self-awareness?

The core issue here is not about the use of technology but for us, as religious, it is about living a discerning life in a fast and complex world and making choices that are life-giving.

As we approach the feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, let us take time to gaze upon her life. She gave a space where Jesus could be born - her womb. She created a space where Jesus could grow, in age and





wisdom - her home. She opened a space in her heart where she could “bear and survive many difficulties and hardships: childbirth in an emergency shelter; the flight to Egypt; the search for her child; her being disconcerted over the public life of her son, whom she wanted to keep at home with his family; and finally her brave endurance under her son’s cross. She was spared nothing...She held the battered body of her dead son on her lap - the most grievous experience of anguish that can befall a mother.” (Walter Kasper, *Mercy*)

Like Mary, and with her, let us create a space where we can listen to the word of God, so that like her, we may give Jesus a human face. How could we ever thank God for the gift of Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart?

May we cultivate a sacred space, every day, so that we will never lose sight of the very purpose of our existence - *May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved!*

On behalf of the Generalate community, I wish you all a joyful celebration of the feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart!

Sr Marife, fdnsc



Congress at the closure of the Year of Consecrated Life



In Rome the Year of Consecrated Life was closed with a Congress of five days, from January 28 until February 2. About 4,000 religious from all over the world, including Sr. Laurentia, Sr. Madeleine, Sr. Elly and Sr. Gerda - the Provincial of the Franciscans Sisters of Veghel in the Netherlands, who was for this occasion a guest in the Generalate – attended this meeting.

The Theme of the Congress, was “*The Consecrated Life in community; the common element in the variety of forms.*” It was the first time that all the different forms were represented at an international meeting. There were more than 2,000 active religious, 400 members of Secular Institutes, 600 consecrated virgins, 345 contemplatives and 145 representatives of new forms of religious life. Translation of the lectures in different languages could be heard on the radio on an MP3 player or cell phone.

The Congress began with a prayer service on Thursday January 28 in St. Peter’s Basilica. Mgr. Carballo OFM, Archbishop and Secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL), said that joy for a religious is not just a possibility but a responsibility. When we truly believe that God can completely fill our hearts and make us happy, when we believe that God has placed our brothers and sisters beside us as a gift, then we can’t withhold from the world the joy of Christ.



Sr Madeleine with Card João Braz de Aviz, Cardinal Prefect of the CICLSAL



Religious are called in the Church to live a community life of brother- and sisterhood, accepting a multitude of many forms and charisms. That is the testimony today's world really needs. Sr. Carmen, the President of the UISG gave examples of projects in which inter-congregational collaboration has already been realized. Recently a group of 10 sisters from different congregations went to Sicily to start two communities which will have their apostolate among the refugees. Other examples of collaboration are the project "Talitha Kum" in which religious fight together against Human Trafficking and the project "Solidarity with

South Sudan". "All Charisms come from the Holy Spirit and they are all good and necessary," said Mgr. Carballo.

On Monday morning we had an audience with Pope Francis. As he usually does, he gave us three words: **prophecy** because we have to preach the Kingdom of God, not merely with words but also with our lives; **proximity** because in Jesus God has come near us and therefore, followers of Christ should be near to people and share their pains and joys; and **hope** because by witnessing to the merciful love of God, anxiety and fear can disappear. "By living in this way, you will experience joy in your heart, and your life will be attractive for many people." said the Pope.

On Monday evening we were treated to a magnificent oratorio, composed by Marco Frisina, in which all the elements that we had been reflecting on during the Year of Consecrated Life – the Biblical Story of Creation, the Canticle of the Sun written by Saint Francis, the Encyclical *Laudato Si* and the Pope's letters to the religious, were incorporated in a wonderful performance of singing, dancing, declamation, music and light effects.

On Tuesday evening we had a Mass in Saint Peter's in which Pope Francis presided. However, there were so many religious, that there was no space for us in the Basilica. With many others we followed the celebration via a screen in Saint Peter's square. It shows us that there are still many religious and when we join our forces we surely can make a difference in the world.

With much gratitude we look back on the Year of Consecrated Life and on the Final Congress.



COR VITAE



This is the name of the Formation Team of the Chevalier Family in the Asia-Pacific-Australia area. The members of the team, Fr Sam Maranresy, MSC, Sr Sophy Francis, MSC and Sr Cathie Mwagioidi, FDNCS, explain to us as follows the meaning of their name and their logo which was designed by Br. Bien, MSC Scholastic in Manila.

Cor Vitae is the name we have chosen for our team. It means HEART OF LIFE and is founded on two biblical texts that caught our attention as we thought about our name: "From His heart

will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37) and "I have come that you may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

The Heart (COR)

The heart (cor) is the focus, both of our name and our logo. It is the Heart of Jesus, the heart of the human person and the heart of the world. The Heart of the One who was pierced on Calvary is the model, the source of inspiration and the source of life. It is to be the model for the formation of the heart of the human person and of the world. The heart of the human person and of the world learn to live in accordance with the Heart of the One who was pierced, and become the channels through which living water flows.

Symbols within the Heart

The upper part of the Heart is red with rays shining on the lower part – this reflects the qualities of the Heart of Jesus shining on human beings and on the world.

The wound in the heart is between the red and the light blue such that both blood and water, mingled together, flow out of it. It is blood and water that flow from the pierced heart of Jesus, symbols of love and life.

The lower part is blue. It signifies the geographical setting of the APA region, which is surrounded by sea.



Cor Vitae, whose members were named in August 2015, started full-time work as a formation team in January 2016, when they arrived in the Philippines where they are now based. Fr Sam resides at the MSC Provincialate, Sr Cathie at the FDNSC Novitiate, and Sr Sophy at the MSC Linckens House, all in Quezon City. The team has an office at the MSC Provincialate where the three work together most days of the week. After setting up their office and coming up with their name and mission statement, the team wasted no time and proceeded to the hard task of designing the nine-month formation program for formators of the Chevalier Family. This program will run from February to November 2017, with a maximum of fifteen participants from the three congregations. They have found a simple formation house in the beautiful and cool city of Tagaytay, south of Manila, as the venue for the programme. At the moment the three are busy contacting resource persons and giving the programme its final touches.

We congratulate Cor Vitae for the great work that they are doing and assure them of our prayers and support as they prepare for the first program for formators in 2017. All the best!!!

Community Activities in Rome



The first months of the year 2016 have been busy months here at the Eternal City for the Church in general and for our Generalate and the Italian Community in particular.



Sr Dain and the Italian Community

First of all, both of our communities continue our study of the new Constitutions. For the Generalate, we take a chapter every month and on the day of our community recollection (usually on the first Sunday of the month), we share our reflections about the chapter being studied. For the community of Italy, Sr Dain, prepares powerpoint

presentations on certain themes in the Constitutions. She presents these to the sisters and then some time for reflection, sharing and discussion follow.

On February 6, Saturday, we celebrated the silver jubilee of profession of Sr Armida NALIN. We had a simple and beautiful Eucharistic Celebration at 10:30 am, attended not only by the sisters but also by the family of Sr Armida. The mass was followed by refreshments which everyone enjoyed. Sr Armida's older sister, Sr Leonarda, is also an FDNCS, and the two of them, together with their sisters and brother, nephews and nieces, filled the hall with much joy. Our jubilarian, whose heart was full of gratitude for the great things the Lord has done for her, was a living witness of the "joy of the Gospel."



The week after, on February 13, six of us (Srs Elly, Linda, Madeleine, Merle, Sylvie (from Cameroun) and Scholastica (from Italy)) trooped to St Peter's Square to lead the rosary in the Piazza. Part of the celebration of the Jubilee Year of Mercy is the praying of the rosary at St Peter's square at six in the evening every day. Each day a different group leads and our congregation had the honour of being invited to lead on one of the days. For our turn, we prayed the rosary in three languages, Italian, English and French. In spite of the cold and rain, we were there, happy to give our little contribution

to the ministry of the church in Rome.

On February 26 we had another big activity. It was the date of the doctoral dissertation defence of Sr Sylvie Mengue, our sister from Cameroun, who finished her doctorate in the Philosophy of Education at the Salesianum. We went to the university in full force, to witness Sylvie's defence



Sr Sylvie with her panel: Sister's dissertation is entitled "*L'Anthropologie au Feminin à la Lumière D'Edith Stein: Pour un èveil de conscience de la femme au Cameroun.*" (*The Anthropology of the Feminine in the Light of Edith Stein: For an awakening of consciousness of the Cameroonian woman.*)

and to give her moral support. Not only us, the FDNCSs, were there, the MSC Sisters and the MSCs also came. Sr Sylvie had the support of the whole Chevalier Family and she did so well, we all were proud of her. The next day, February 27, we had our thanksgiving Mass for Sr Sylvie at the chapel of our Italian Sisters and a Camerounian Party at the place of the Sacred Heart Fathers (Dehonian). The eating and the dancing went into the night! Congratulations Sylvie!

Then March came and with the new month

came the newest member of the Generalate community, Sr Jenny Christie, our new International Development Officer. We are really happy to welcome Jenny and we assure her of our trust and support in this very important ministry of hers. Sr Jenny arrived just in time for the holiest season of the year. As one Generalate Community, we entered the Holy Week and joined the celebrations of the Lord's suffering, death and resurrection.



Visitation to South Africa



From **February 4 until 25, Sr. Marife and Sr. Laurentia** went to South Africa for a canonical visitation. For the Region of South Africa this was a busy period because at the same time the Provincial of Africa, Sr. Madeleine Dione and her Councillor Sr. Juliette Ekemale also came to visit. So in fact it was a double visitation. Because there are only small communities in South Africa, the sisters, as in the Gospel, went out two

by two, to visit our sisters. Everywhere they were welcomed very heartily and the sisters enjoyed their stay. The Regional Leader, Sr. Sally Duigan had made sure that there was also time for relaxation: One day the sisters went to Krügerpark and saw four of the big five (lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard, and rhinoceros).



Visitation to Italy



From **March 11 until 20, Sr. Marife and Sr. Madeleine** visited the Italian Community, which consists of the Clinic in Rome and the houses in Massimina and Pozzo. This visitation deepened the relationship that already existed between the Generalate and the Italian Community. The Visitation started with a community meeting in which it was announced that Sr. Dain will return to Australia when her term finishes in June. Therefore a consultation was done during the visitation. The visitation was concluded with an outing also joined by the other members of the Generalate Community. Together they went on Pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Santa Maria del Divino Amore, to thank God for all the good things that had happened and to ask for blessings for the future.

Following the Visitation Sr. Silvia was appointed as the new community leader and on the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart the official handing over will take place during the Eucharist.



Update on Issoudun and the Jules Chevalier Centre

(given by Sr Marife during the European Provincials' Meeting in Rome)

Before I begin this brief update, I would like to read a paragraph from a letter (August 25, 2014) written by the three congregational leaders (Mark, Mechthild, Marife) and sent to our members.

“We take this opportunity to acknowledge the great contribution of the Cor Novum team to the spiritual formation of our members over the past twenty years. Hundreds of Sisters, Fathers, Brothers and lay members of the Chevalier Family have benefited from their expertise and commitment to spiritual formation...the present team members (Fr. Joannes Rozier msc, Sr. Gerardine Doherty fdnsc, Sr. Linda Strayer fdnsc, Fr. Hans Kwakman msc) have dedicated many years of professional service to the family and we are deeply indebted to them.”



The formal closing of *Cor Novum* took place at the end of the July 2015 course through a simple and meaningful Eucharistic celebration and program. What has happened since the closure of *Cor Novum*?

- Sr Linda left Issoudun for Rome in September 2015 and since then has been working as our General Archivist.
- Sr Gerardine left Issoudun at the end of December 2015, visiting Rome on her way to Australia. Since then she has been living with her mother in Corinda (Brisbane) and she belongs to the Corinda community. Sr Gerardine will continue to help some Provinces in the area of ongoing formation and retreats. Requests will be made directly to her through the Australian Provincial since the IFT has been temporarily dissolved for lack of members.
- Fr Joannes left Issoudun for Marseilles (MSC retirement home) in April.
- Fr Hans remains in Issoudun, helping the Basilica team.



According to Fr Mark “everyone is happy with the way things are developing in Issoudun - both as to the new pastoral team and as to the continuation of programs of the Chevalier Family.” The target date for the official start of the new Pastoral Team in Issoudun is September 1, 2017. The MSC General Council is hoping that there will be an FDNsc presence on this new team in the future.

This new team will continue to do the work that is now done by the Basilica team and the Parish team as well as part of the work done by the former *Cor Novum* team. They will run short programs such as “In the Footsteps of Fr. Jules Chevalier”, welcoming and accompanying people who come to Issoudun, promoting Chevalier’s charism and Spirituality of the Heart, and supporting the activities of the lay branch of the Chevalier Family.

The TRI-GENERALATE

This year, we hosted the spring meeting of the Tri-Generalate. It was held on 22 March, Tuesday of the Holy Week, in our Generalate. Thirteen came to the meeting, 5 MSC women, 5 FDNSCs and 3 MSC men plus Fr John Mitakda, MSC from Indonesia, who is here in Rome studying and who served as our temporary secretary for the meeting. As in previous years, we had lunch together and exchanged Easter gifts.

In February, a sub-group of the Tri-Generalate, the formation commission, composed of Srs Nicola and Bona, MSC Sisters, Fr Chris McPhee, MSC and Srs Madeleine and Merle, FDNSCs, had a meeting and sharing at the MSC Sisters' Generalate in Sutri. One of the fruits of this meeting is the suggestion to start calling ourselves the *Chevalier Family of the Sacred Heart*. For indeed, we are a worldwide family who share the charism, spirituality and mission of Fr Jules Chevalier, which is that of making the Sacred Heart known and loved everywhere, not only by our preaching but more so by our lives. We imagine Our Lady smiling as she hears this name.

It is truly a blessing that we, Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, are part of the worldwide Chevalier Family of the Sacred Heart. As women of heart on mission, it is always good to know that in this mission, we are never alone!



The European Provincial's meeting

The last meeting of the European Provincials was held in France. In the Netherlands a new Provincial team had just started. Therefore, this year, the Provincials and one of their councillors were invited to come to Rome for their yearly meeting. The facilitator, Sr. Linda and a preparatory committee, consisting of Sr. Merle and Sr. Madeleine, prepared a program based on the suggested topics of the European Provincials.

From April 4 until 10, the meeting was held in Enrico de Osso retreat Centre in Rome. Participants were Sr. Marife Mendoza, as representative of the Generalate, Sr. Lies Alkemade and Sr. Francesco Moens from the Netherlands, Sr. Anne-Marie Hermans from Belgium, Sr. Raymonde Gasser and Sr. Nelly Moras from France, Sr. Mairead Kelleher and Sr. Kathleen Mc Quilan from Ireland and Sr. Dain Inglis and Sr. Silvia Solda from the Italian Community.

During the meeting, time was given to prayer and reflection; each province prepared a Eucharistic celebration and the preparatory committee prepared morning and evening prayers based on the themes of a Faith Journey as proposed by Pope Francis to religious men and women at the meeting for formators and the meeting for young religious in Rome during the Year of Consecrated Life.

A lot of time was spent on sharing: the participants shared their vocation stories, their experiences, their sorrows and joys in their role as leaders as well as what had been done and what still has to be done with the 2014 Chapter recommendations concerning Europe. Also a lot of information was given: about the statistics of the Congregation, about activities that had taken place in different provinces, about the finances of the Generalate, the Generalate Fund and the Solidarity Fund, about the archives, about the task of Sr. Jenny as the newly appointed International Development Officer and about the situation in Issoudun after the closure of *Cor Novum*.

There was time for pilgrimage: on Wednesday most of the participants went to the audience of the Pope, who said that Jesus put himself "in the line of sinners," alongside them, in order to show his compassion for the human condition. On Friday the whole group went through the Holy Door and prayed in Saint Peter's Basilica to ask for the strength to be compassionate leaders in our Congregation.



There was also time for relaxation during coffee breaks and meals and



after we had visited Saint Peter's, some time was needed to buy souvenirs and to enjoy real Italian ice cream!

After these days everybody was a bit tired but very satisfied and we said to one another: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 134,1). Encouraged, everybody went home.

A relaxing day out!



On the last day of April we, as Generalate community, made a trip to Bracciano (about 1 hour from Rome, by train). The city is built on a hill above Lake Bracciano, a volcanic lake and on top of the hill is the Medieval Orsini-Odescalchi Castle. When we arrived there, we saw another group of religious. Sr. Merle guessed that it would also be a Generalate Community.

The castle was built in the 14-15C and has six imposing towers and two castle walls. Among the many rooms inside are beautiful frescoed bedrooms and an impressive weapons hall, that brings you back to the era of Knights and Heroes. On the passage-ways that lead from one room to the other you have beautiful views over the town and lake. Before a beautiful icon of Mary, we met the group we saw before and there we discovered that they were from the American Seminary in Rome. We took a picture of them and they took a picture of us which is why we are complete in this photo. From the castle we



wanted to walk to the lake. But it was quite far and just when we wanted to give up, a taxi miraculously arrived. We stopped the taxi and the driver told us that she was not on duty, but she put her shopping, that was on the back seats, in the boot and let four of us into her car. We arrived safely at the lake and..... the driver didn't charge us at all! We went to have our meal in an American restaurant and to enjoy sitting and walking along the waterside and observing the

wind surfers. It was a very enjoyable and relaxing day, that filled us with gratitude but also with energy to start the next month with enthusiasm.

Activities for the Month of May

This month of May, the month of Our Lady, is a full month for us. From May 2 to 6, four of us, Srs Elly, Laurentia, Madeleine, and Merle attended the SEDOS residential seminar entitled “INTERCULTURALITY: LIVING AND MISSION.” It was held at the Casa Divin Maestro in Ariccia (near Rome). You will read about our learnings and experiences from this seminar in the next JPIC Bulletin so watch out for it.



Sr Marife attended the UISG General Assembly from May 9 to 13. The theme of the Assembly is “WEAVING GLOBAL SOLIDARITY FOR LIFE” and hundreds of Women General Superiors participated. It was held at the Centro Internazionale Ergife Palace Hotel in Rome. We felt the Spirit blowing as leaders of different congregations all over the world gathered together to weave global solidarity. May this assembly bear fruit and truly give life to the congregations that the leaders represent, to the individual members, sisters on mission in all corners of the world, and to all individuals and communities to whom the sisters minister! May it offer a witness of solidarity to our fragmented world today!

Be grateful God doesn't have Voice Mail!

Imagine praying and hearing the following:

Thank you for calling Heaven.

Please select one of the following options:

Press 1 for Requests

Press 2 for Thanksgiving

Press 3 for Complaints

Press 4 for Confessions

Press 5 for all other enquiries.



I am sorry, all our Angels and Saints are busy helping other sinners right now.

However, your prayer is important to us and we will answer it in the order it was received.

Please stay on the line.

If you would like to speak to

God the Father, press 1.

God the Son, press 2

the Holy Spirit, press 3.



If you would like to hear King David sing a psalm while you are holding, press 4.

To find a loved one that has been assigned to Heaven, press 5,

then enter his/her social security number followed by the hash key..... {if you get a negative response, please hang up and try area code { 666 }.

For reservations to Heaven, press enter John 3:16.

For answers to nagging questions about dinosaurs, the age of the earth, life on other planets and where Noah's Ark is, please wait until you arrive.

The Office is closed for the weekend to observe a religious holiday.

Have a nice day.

Anonymous

(Taken from the St Joseph's Newsletter from Australia, April 2016)

APPOINTMENTS

Community of Italy:

**Sr Silvia Maria Soldá,
Community Leader**

Her first term commences on 28 May 2016, Feast of OLSH

Region of Cameroun:

**Sr Marie Solange OKO,
Regional Leader**

Her second term commences on 19 May 2016

Province of Ireland

**Sr Mairead Kelleher,
Provincial Leader**

Her second term commences on 8 Sept. 2016

**Happy Feast of
Our Lady of the
Sacred Heart**