



FDNSC GENERALATE – NEWS UPDATE

June 2017
Feast of the
Sacred Heart

From the desk of the Congregational Leader

In early May, we had our second meeting with Sr. Piluca Benavente Serrano (Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa), in preparation for our General Conference which will be held in Rome from September 27 to October 10, 2017. Sr. Piluca began the meeting with a question addressed to each of us: "What has given you joy?" It was a simple question and yet it evoked deep feelings and profound experiences from us.



We realized that leadership, even in the midst of so many struggles, uncertainties and pain, is a source of joy. So, what gives us joy? We experience joy when we feel connected to a power greater than ourselves especially at times when we feel most helpless and powerless.

We feel joy when we experience God's loving presence. We experience joy when we feel connected with others, when we feel the comfort of real relationships, and friendship. We feel joy when we see forgiveness, reconciliation, compassion, and love taking on a human face, within our communities, and in our broken world.

As leaders, we have the privilege and opportunity to move back and forth from the "ground" to the "balcony" and this movement gives us a unique perspective of the Congregation. Jesus' words to his disciples ring true for us: "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see..." (Lk. 10:23-24). This blessing, however, brings with it immense responsibility: "We need to pay attention to the global so as to avoid narrowness and banality. Yet we also need to look to the local, which keeps our feet on the ground." (EG #234)

The deepest joy we feel springs from the gift of discipleship, particularly the gift of our vocation and mission as Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. How could we ever thank God enough for the gift of Jesus? How could we ever thank God for the gift of Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart? In celebrating the two great feasts of our Congregation, we remember "...the grace of the origins, the humility and the smallness of beginnings that made God's work transparent in the lives and messages of those who were full of wonder and who set out on their journeys along unpaved roads and unbeaten paths..." (Proclaim #40)

Let us remember with gratitude the "man with a mission", Fr. Jules Chevalier who, with a great faith and deep trust in God, did not allow himself to be discouraged by troubles and oppositions and who never gave up until he had accomplished his mission - May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved!

Sr Marife, fdnsc



Articles in this issue...

On page 2

- Preparations for the General Conference
- Canon Law Seminar

On page 3

- Canonical visitation of Sr Marife & Sr Madeleine to Senegal & visit to Japan

On page 4

- Canonical visitation to France
- Introducing Sr Margaret Bob

On page 5

- Cor Vitae Program for Formators

On page 6

- Multimedia International in Rome
- The 2017 SEDOS Residential Seminar

On page 7

- May Tri-Gen Meeting
- "Treasures" in the Generalate
- Provincial Assemblies

On page 8/9

- OLSH Feast Day celebrations
- Upcoming travels & visitations

Preparation for the General Conference

As all our Provincial and Regional Leaders have already seen, preparations for the General Conference, which will be held in Monte Cucco in Rome, have started. After a brainstorming session by the Council, we sent our proposal for a theme to the Provincial and Regional Leaders and, after their feedback, we decided that the theme would be

“Ametur... sowing seeds of life and hope in our broken world.”



Meeting with Sr Piluca

Our next step was to make a schedule for the General Conference, in preparation for our first meeting with the sister who will be our facilitator during the Conference: Sr. Piluca Benavente Serrano, MSOLA. Until August 2011 she was the Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa and the President of SEDOS (Service of Documentation and Study on Global Mission). Nowadays, she is working full time for the international association *Faith and Praxis*, an association for international leadership development.

From the very first contact with Sr. Piluca we felt at ease with her and it is amazing how she, as an outsider, can make us look at our work from a new perspective. After the first meeting we felt that we had made a big step forward, but we also felt that a lot of work still had to be done. We are very happy that the FDNCS Formation Handbook is already finished and at the moment we are working on a draft of the FDNCS Administration Handbook and the FDNCS Stewardship of Temporal Goods Handbook. The first letter was sent to the Provincial and Regional Leaders and they are also preparing now for the Conference!

PLANT HOPE

In our second meeting with Sr. Piluca we looked one step further than the General Conference, namely to the General Chapter of 2020. Leadership is about looking ahead and, knowing that many are working with us and many are praying for us, we are convinced that together we will be able to sow seeds of life and hope in our broken world, today and tomorrow.

Inspiring Canon Law Seminar in Vienna

From April 30 until May 3 Sr. Elly attended a Canon Law Seminar supported by the UISG (International Union of Superiors General) and sponsored by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The Seminar took place in the Karl Köning Haus, a large Conference Centre of the Jesuits in Vienna. It aimed to convey foundational knowledge with regard to canonical issues that concern religious institutes. Topics included:

- The Code of Canon Law, Constitutions and Directories: drafting and interpreting
- Juridic persons: their governors and representatives
- Canonical offices: conferral and loss of office, elections
- Decision making procedures: consultation, juridic actions
- Membership: rights and duties, entrance and dismissal
- Ageing communities: challenges for leadership



The **Presenter** was Prof. Dr. Myriam Wijlens, professor of Canon Law at the University of Erfurt (Germany). She has been a member of the Canonical Affairs Commission of the Conference of

Major Superiors in the Netherlands since 1992. She also spoke at the UISG Canon Law Workshop in Rome in 2016.



There were 25 participants, who came from all over the world, and who had very different experiences within religious life. This made it very interesting to hear one another's realities and to see how Canon Law was applicable to their specific situations.

We spoke a lot about ageing provinces and how to deal with the fact that fewer and fewer sisters in those provinces are available for leadership roles.

Another concern, which is related to the first one, is that of international Congregations which, like our Congregation, consist of an ageing part in Europe and a growing part in other parts of the world. What does the ageing of the European Provinces mean for the rest of the Congregation? What will happen in seven years' time, for example?

The presenter made it very clear that, as General Councils, we have to be concerned for both, the ageing and the growing provinces. At the end of the course the participants received a certificate, but more important is that the knowledge will help us to support our Provinces, each in their specific situations, and serve the Congregation as a whole. In the end the question is always whether in applying the law you have shown the face of God!

Visits of Sr Marife and Sr Madeleine



Early this year, Srs Marife and Madeleine were busy with visitations. From February 13 to 27, they were in Senegal for the canonical visitation of the Senegal Region and the Administration of the Province of Africa. If you have not yet read the Visitation Report, make sure you get hold of it as it is very informative and interesting.



After just a few weeks in Rome to rest, attend meetings and write reports, the two were off again, this time to the Far East, to pay a friendly visit to our sisters in Japan. They were there from April 1 to 9 during which time Sr Marife gave the sisters sessions on intercultural living and mission. Since Japan is a community under the Generalate, we schedule a visit to the community once a year. This year, Sr Madeleine had the chance to visit the Japan communities for the first time (both Nagoya and Fukui) and enjoy a picnic on the grounds of the Johokobashi Parish in



Nagoya under the very beautiful *sakura* (cherry blossoms). From Japan, Sr Madeleine returned to Rome while Sr Marife continued to the Philippines for her sessions with the Chevalier Family formators attending the 9-month formation program of Cor Vitae in Tagaytay.



The two sisters' full schedule continued in May as they prepared for another canonical visitation, this time to our sisters and communities of the French Province. The last visitation to France was in 2008 so our sisters were looking forward to this one which was from May 15 to June 5. Our "visitors" were blessed to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Issoudun, the very cradle of our

congregation. The pictures and the stories are in the Visitation Report of the French Province. Thank you to Sr Raymonde and our sisters in France for the meaningful time Srs Marife and Madeleine have spent with you!



OLSH Feast, Issoudun

INTRODUCING SR MARGARET BOB FDNCS



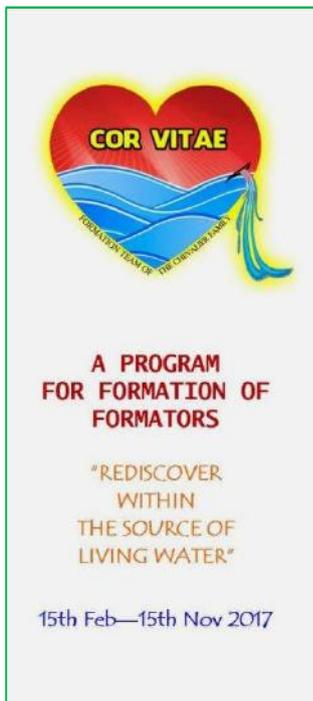
Hello Everyone. My name is Sr Margaret Bob and I come from Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. I am the eldest of seven children – 5 girls and 2 boys. Both my parents and a brother are deceased. I attended primary school in Mokoreng village and then went on to the secondary school run by our sisters. It was at the secondary school that I was first attracted to religious life.

I entered our congregation in 1981 and made my first profession in 1984. After completing my nurse training, I worked in various Catholic health facilities for some years. Subsequently, I completed my diploma in health administration and left the clinical nursing area, which I loved very much, and focused more on health administration. Following the years in health administration, I completed nine years as a Provincial Councillor. I am grateful for the opportunities which have been given to me as a member of the congregation. I now look forward to learning the Italian language to help me in my new ministry.

Sr Margaret is Assistant to our General Secretary. She arrived in Rome in February. We welcome Margaret to our community and assure her of our love and prayers!



With the arrival of Sr Margaret Bob last February, our Generalate community has grown to a community of 9. Sisters, we sincerely and deeply appreciate your prayerful support for our community. **HAPPY FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART!**



Rediscover within the Source of Living Water...

The 9-month program of formation for formators of the Chevalier Family, designed and administered by the Cor Vitae Team, was finally formally opened on 19 February and is currently ongoing. Entitled “*Rediscover within the Source of Living Water*”, the program is running from February 15 to November 15 and is being held at the Novitiate Formation House of the Augustinian Sisters of Our Lady of Consolation (OSA) in Tagaytay, Philippines. Fifteen are participating in the program: 9 MSC men, 5 FDNCS and 1 MSC Sister. To date, we have only heard good feedback about the program and the participants. We congratulate the team and continue to support them with our interest and prayers. Upon the request of the Cor Vitae Team, our Philippine Region has assigned Sr Ruth Yburan to help the team as all-round office assistant. Thank you, Sr Ruth, for your beautiful presence and generosity!



Cor Vitae Opening Eucharist with Fr Gene, Fr Nords and Fr Sam concelebrating



Srs Cathie & Sophy getting ready for the Opening Eucharist

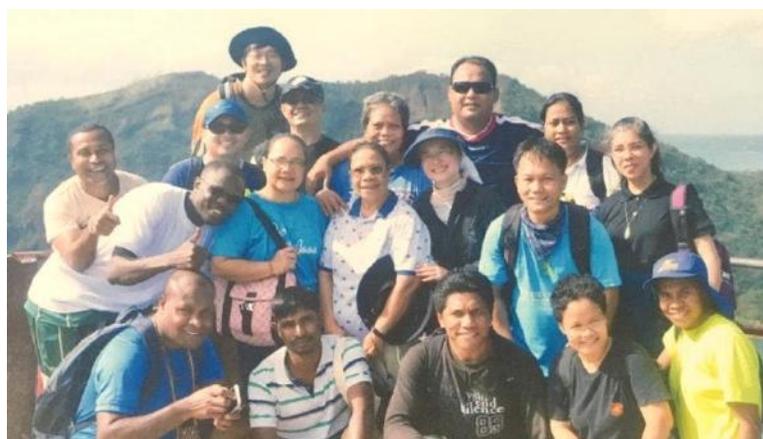
Sr Merle and Sr Bonaventura Kim of the MSC Sisters’ Generalate, represented the Tri-Generalate at the opening Eucharist on February 19. The truly inspiring celebration was attended by the team, the participants, the members of the APA Execom, members of the three congregations in the Philippines and the Augustinian sisters and their novices. A festive meal followed the Eucharist. A spirit



Sr Ruth sharing her gifts in music and liturgy

of joy and hope prevailed as the very first 9-month formation program for formators of the Chevalier Family was opened.

The participants arrived at the OSA Novitiate on February 15 and, immediately after the opening Eucharist, the formal formation sessions began. In February, they had several days of Orientation. In March, sessions on the person of the formator were given, including Family of Origin, Human



The 15 program participants with Sr Cathie, Sr Ruth & Fr Sam in front of Taal Volcano in Tagaytay, Philippines

and Sexual Development, Community Building and Conflict Management and Enneagram for Formators. In April and May, they looked at the role of a formator, with modules on Leadership, Assessment, Accompaniment and Spiritual Direction. In June, they arrived at the heart of the program and spent weeks on the Charism, Spirituality and Mission of the Chevalier Family. Several members of the Chevalier Family facilitated many of the sessions, including Sr Marife who gave sessions on Assessment in May.

INTER-CONGREGATIONAL INVOLVEMENTS

Here in Rome, our congregation is a member of several inter-congregational organizations. One is Multimedia International (MMI) which is a volunteer organization that offers religious



communities the opportunity of working together to use the media more effectively in the mission of evangelization. MMI offers media workshops in English and in French and lends translation equipment to member congregations. This year, MMI offered a two-day seminar workshop on “Interculturality and Communication.” The resource person was Ms Diana de Vallescar, PhD, a Spanish professor of interculturality, who has dedicated more than 15 years of her life to intercultural training and counselling. The seminar was held at the UISG Building on

April 7 and 8. Four members of our community were able to attend this very timely and interesting seminar. Our congregation also had the honour of welcoming Ms Vallescar to our community during the time of her stay here in Rome. She stayed in Shalom and was very grateful for the community’s hospitality.

With the General Secretaries and General Archivists, MMI also organizes an annual outing for members of their member congregations. This year, the outing was on May 13 to Castel Gandolfo.



Since Pope Francis is not using the summer pontifical palace

in Castel Gandolfo, the castle and the 55-hectare garden is now open to the public. It was a tiring but beautiful day for us. We spent the morning in Frascati (one of the towns in the area called Castelli Romani) and the afternoon in Castel Gandolfo with a two hour walking tour of the Barberini Gardens and a two hour tour of the palace. Simply marvellous!



Barberini Gardens in Castel Gandolfo



In front of the Apostolic Palace

Another inter-congregational organization we are active in is SEDOS. Yearly, during the first week of May, SEDOS organizes a 5-day residential seminar, as well as short workshops and conferences during the year. This year, the Residential Seminar was held at Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi, on May 2 to 6, and the theme was “Economy at the Service of Mission.” There were 141 participants coming from 52 different congregations. Many of the participants were bursars of provinces and/or generalates. Many topics were discussed including the cultural influence on how we deal with finances, the risks of corruption in religious congregations and projects, the



implications of having lay financial managers in religious congregations, and ethics in financial management and investments. Four of us were able to participate in this very challenging conference. We hope to implement some of our learnings from the conference in our congregation as we continue to establish policies in relation to finance and mission development projects.

Thank You, dear MSCs

And of course, we will not forget our inter-congregational involvements within the Chevalier Family. Our spring Tri-Generalate meeting this year was held in Sutri, at the Generalate of the MSC Sisters, on May 10. This was a one-day meeting and, as always, we had a full schedule. It was also the last Tri-Generalate meeting attended by the current General Administration of the MSC men. This September 3 to 23, the MSCs are having their General Chapter where they will elect a new General Administration. We thanked Fr Mark McDonald, the MSC Superior General for the past 12 years (2005 to 2017), and his councillors, Frs Wahyudi and Carl Tranter (and Fr Chris McPhee who was not at the meeting), for the 6 years that we have worked with them. The Tri-Generalate is indeed a “family” and in this family we are united in the Heart of Christ with Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, as our companion and guide - one family with one mission, enlivened by one charism, living one spirituality. Thank you to our MSC brothers! It has been a pleasure working with you!



Believe it or not, our little chapel in the Generalate holds some priceless “treasures.” Yes, this is in addition to the Lord of course, our one and only real TREASURE. We mean material treasures which we use regularly.

One is our monstrance. If you turn it upside down, you will see that it was owned by a certain DOM MASSI and is dated 1762! Yes, this monstrance is actually older than our congregation. It



is even older than Fr Chevalier himself.

We also have for the chapel a pair of silver vases. Guess what is written on them! They were given by the children of St Joseph’s School in Darwin, Australia, to Mother Florence Freneau. No date is written on them but we know that Rev. Mother M. Florence was our fifth Superior General from 1952 to 1963. She was French, born in 1892 and died in 1967 in Issoudun. When were those vases given to her by the children of St Joseph’s School? Most probably when Mother Florence visited Australia in June 1954.



Presented to Reverend Mother M. Florence by the Children of St Joseph’s School Darwin, Australia

Let us remember in our prayers the Provinces which will be having their Provincial Assemblies in the coming months:

- Australia (23-26 July)
- Brazil (23-29 July)
- Ireland (1-2 Aug)
- Kiribati (28 Aug-1 Sept)
- France (15-21 Oct)

The Netherlands, Belgium and Indonesia already had their assemblies earlier this year.

Celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Rome

This year there were four of us here at the Generalate for the feast day: Srs Bernadette, Margaret, Laurentia and Jenny. Our other community members celebrated in France (Srs Marife and Madeleine), the Netherlands (Srs Elly and Merle) and USA (Sr Linda).

On Friday afternoon we opened the Feast with our Italian sisters in their chapel. Sr Silvia, the community leader, presented a beautiful floral arrangement to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart on behalf of us all. Following this, we joined the sisters for some refreshments.

On Saturday we were together again for the feast day Mass in the morning, celebrated in the chapel of our Italian sisters. We were very much united with each of you throughout the world as we honoured our Mother, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, expressed our gratitude to her and asked for her continued intercession on our behalf.



Lunch time saw us sharing a festive meal with our Italian sisters in their dining room. We enjoyed the hospitality of our sisters and appreciated their kindness to us.

Please accept our gratitude for all the many greetings which we received for this special feast day. May Our Lady of the Sacred Heart continue to guide us in our mission to share the love of the Heart of Jesus throughout the world!

Preparation for the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in the Netherlands & Belgium

Sr Merle was invited by the Dutch Province to give a Conference about Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in preparation for Our Lady's Feast. Therefore on May 24, Sr Merle and Sr Elly went to the Netherlands. In the afternoon of May 25 in Tilburg, 66 members of the Chevalier Family gathered to listen to Sr Merle's presentation translated into Dutch by Sr Elly.

On May 26, Sr Lies, Sr Irmgard and Sr Hermien went with Sr Merle and Sr Elly to Deurne in Belgium, where the same Conference was given to the Sisters. Together we meditated on the triptych of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart that is composed of three scenes from Scripture - Cana, Calvary and Cenacle.



What struck the Sisters most was the point about what Dorothy Lee called "the Motherhood of Jesus". Jesus gave his life, as a mother does, so that we may have life abundantly. Also the many quotations from Pope Francis, which are so much in line with our Spirituality of the Heart, impressed the Sisters.

In the afternoon we went to see the construction site in Rumst, where the Belgian Sisters are going to live from 2018 onwards. Sr Anne-Marie told us about the practical arrangements they have made to ensure that they will be able to look after one another.

On May 27, we celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in the Netherlands. During the festive Eucharist, Sr Lies said in her homily: *The Calvary scene in today's gospel brings us to the reality of our own lives and that of the world in which we live. Regularly we are confronted with death. Our Sisters, MSC's and other residents die in our midst and the decrease of our numbers can be oppressive. We ask ourselves: "How much longer?" These are important*

questions and we have to adapt to this fact. But the Crucified on Golgotha, who in his last hour entrusted Mary and John to each other, tells us: Hold on to each other until the end. Give each other the chance to live abundantly! The story of the Crucified does not end on Calvary. It is not the end, but a passage, because love is stronger than death.

Sr Merle and Sr Elly are both very grateful for the week they spent with the Sisters in the Netherlands and Belgium. In both Provinces they felt the sisters' motherly care for one another and for everybody they meet, in or outside the Convent. In this way our Sisters are able to live the Spirituality of the Heart courageously, because the motherhoods of Jesus and of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart are their models!



Celebrating the Feast of OLSH in the USA

Sr Linda was on her home visit to the USA this year for the month of May and she, along with her mother and sister, Maryellen, spent the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart celebrating with our Sisters and Associates in Bellmawr, New Jersey. A priest resident of Saint Mary's Nursing Centre celebrated the Mass at 11am in the convent chapel. This was followed by lunch consisting of an assortment of salads and sandwiches, including the famous and delicious "Philadelphia hoagie." A large decorated cake completed the meal.



Please also remember in your prayers the coming travels and visitations of the members of the Generalate community:

June 18 to July 1 – Canonical visitation to Angola (Srs Marife & Elly)

June 19 to 21 – Sessions with Cor Vitae, Philippines (Sr Merle)

June 22 to July 8 – Workshops on OLSH, Indonesia (Sr Merle)

June 30 – Miseen Cara Annual General Meeting in Dublin (Sr Jenny)

July 16 to 26 – Intl. Lay Meeting in Brazil (Sr Merle with Sr Bona MSC & Fr Wahyudi MSC)

July 23 to 26 – Australian Provincial Assembly (Sr Jenny)

July 28 – Brazilian Provincial Assembly (Sr Merle)

August 1 to 2 – Irish Provincial Assembly (Sr Linda & Sr Merle)

