



FDNSC GENERALATE – NEWS UPDATE

Easter 2015

Dear Sisters and Friends,

In this blessed time of Easter, we send you our greetings of great joy! The Lord is Risen! Alleluia! We echo the angel's proclamation - "**... He has been raised ... COME and SEE!**" (Mt 28:6). Yes! Let us come and see the Risen Lord - in others, in the world, in our own

The message which Christians bring to the world is this:

Jesus, Love incarnate,
died on the cross for our sins,
but God the Father raised him
and made him the Lord of life and death.

In Jesus,
love has triumphed over hatred,
mercy over sinfulness,
goodness over evil,
truth over falsehood,
life over death.

That is why we tell everyone:
"Come and see!"

In every human situation,
marked by frailty, sin and death,
the Good News is no mere matter of words,
but a *testimony to
unconditional and faithful love:*
it is about leaving ourselves behind
and encountering others,
being close to those crushed by life's troubles,
sharing with the needy,
standing at the side of the sick,
the elderly and the outcast...

"Come and see!"

Love is more powerful,
love gives life,
love makes hope blossom in the wilderness

(Pope Francis, Easter 2014)



selves. Let us open our hearts and let others see the Risen Lord in us. He, the prince of Peace is Risen! Let us celebrate his rising by being joyful bearers of this PEACE!

In this issue of the FDNSC Generalate News Update, we are sharing with you the happenings here at the FDNSC Generalate in the first three months of this year 2015 as well as some news from the Provinces. Thank you for your prayers for us and for all our undertakings. We do feel your support and love. Let us continue to keep each other in prayer as each of us, individually and in community, fulfill our mission of making the Sacred Heart of Jesus loved everywhere and forever. As Pope Francis asks us, let us proclaim the Good News that Jesus is alive not only with mere words but with our witness. Let our lives be testimonies of His unconditional and faithful love!

United with you in JOY,
Marife, Bernadette, Elly,
Laurentia, Madeleine and Merle

This Easter season, let us remember Pope Francis' expectations of us, consecrated men and women, in this year dedicated to Consecrated Life. Let us strive to fulfill them day by day....

- ✚ Where there are religious, there is JOY
- ✚ Wake up the world!
- ✚ Be experts of communion
- ✚ Go to the existential peripheries
- ✚ Ask what it is that God and people today are asking of you!



January: a time of being together

When Sr. Bernadette came back from Australia, where she celebrated her mother's ninetieth birthday, our international community was complete again after a long time. We really use scarce times like this for community and team building: a time of praying and eating with the whole community and of sharing our experiences. On our monthly recollection day, we used Pope Francis' exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel" to review our lives and share our reflections with one another. It is always very touching to hear how everybody is growing into her role within the community and within the council. For sure, this helps us to respect one another more deeply.

Of course, this is also the time to have our community meetings and council meetings. There are always lots of matters we have to deal with. We had a meeting with Mr. Mengucci, our accountant, who spoke to us about Italian laws and regulations that are important for us. We also went to a meeting for new superiors general and councillors organised by the UISG, in which they explained the structure of the UISG and how they operate. At the same time, it was a nice opportunity to meet other councils. "These are the sisters you are going to deal with in the six years to come!" said Sr. Pat Murray ibvm, the Executive Secretary of the UISG. The MSC Sisters were also present. For most of us, it was the first time to meet Sr. Dorothy Patiu, Sr. Bonaventura Kim and Sr. Juana Valera, the new general councillors who had not arrived at the time of the Tri-Generalate meeting in December 2014.



1. When we are all at home, we also take some time for recreation, because that too is very helpful to build up community. On January 24 we went to Viterbo, one of the best preserved medieval towns in central Italy. Many of the older buildings (particularly churches) are built on top of ancient ruins. We visited the main attraction of Viterbo, the Papal Palace. It hosted the papacy for about two decades in the 13th-century, and served as a country residence or refuge in time of trouble in Rome. We also saw the Cathedral of San Lorenzo and its gothic belfry. We ended our visit with a nice meal

in a little restaurant to anticipate the celebration of Sr. Bernadette's birthday which was in February, by which time half of the community would be traveling again. In this way, we are growing into a community that experiences the Joy of living together as sisters and we are really grateful for that.

Appointments / Professions

APPOINTMENTS:

Belgium	Provincial Leader	Sr Anne-Marie Hermans
France	Provincial Leader	Sr Raymonde Gasser
Japan	Leader	Sr Cecilia Takara
Kiribati	Provincial Council	Sr Eileen Kennedy
		Sr Maata Berenato
		Sr Teretia Kairo
		Sr Matiri Kanono



FIRST PROFESSIONS:

Brazil – 1 Feb. 2015

Sr Silvia Santos Miranda
Sr Joana Cristina Santos Cruz
Sr Bruna Braga Freitas

JPIC Involvement of the Generalate

What can you do for Justice and Peace on the level of the Generalate? That question was often heard while we, as a General Council, were considering how the task of our JPIC Coordinator could be fulfilled. Working for JPIC simply has to be done and therefore it is done at the base! So, are the possibilities of the Generalate restricted to the very humble task of trying to support the good work that is done by our sisters all over the world? For sure, this is our most important role and we try to do it through our JPIC News Bulletin and by passing on information via our Provincial JPIC Coordinators.

But the question remained: What can we do here in the Generalate? First of all, we ourselves want to do what we advise others to do. So we started to pray for the events mentioned on the World JPIC Event Calendar. This gave us the feeling that, together with our sisters in the Provinces, we are striving for more justice and peace in the world. Sr. Elly puts the prayers on her Facebook page to share it with as many people as possible.



We also try to deepen our knowledge of JPIC issues by attending workshops and conferences. One of the meetings (21 January) that impressed us very much was about human trafficking. As usual we started the meeting with a prayer and one of the sisters, very irritatingly, fumbled around with some coins, even during the silent reflection! It was only after the prayer that we learned what it was about: The sister had been dropping a coin into a bottle every 15 seconds, indicating that within that time one person was trafficked. When counting the coins, it appeared that during our prayer 74 people had been trafficked. Later we used this prayer for the opening of one of our Council meetings. The UISG invited all religious to participate in the International Day of Prayer against Human Trafficking on 8th February and we were happy that we could pass this invitation on to the coordinators in all our Provinces. That day we held a prayer service in our chapel with a very effective symbol arranged by Sr. Merle.

Another meeting was about the challenging topic: “Global Sisters: Emerging Models of Church” (2 February). We were informed about the “Global Sisters report”, an independent, non-profit source of news and information about Catholic sisters and the critical issues they encounter among the people they serve. This organisation has a very interesting website: <http://globalsistersreport.org/content/about-global-sisters-report> .

The UISG organised a meeting with the title: “Global Network Weaving”. Sr. Pat Murray ibvm showed us how the UISG tries to connect and work together with the Vatican, with Congregations and with groups of other religions. Sr. Carmen SSpS spoke about a concrete project that she, as JPIC Coordinator, together with a Coordinator of another congregation and in collaboration with the UISG, wants to start: an inter-congregational group of religious based in Lampedusa, Italy, (an island southwest of Sicily) to be present among the many refugees that enter Europe.



On 8th March, International Women’s Day, there was a meeting from the heart of the Vatican in which a group of remarkable women shared their personal stories, demonstrating how their unwavering faith has positively impacted their life, greater society and the world. This meeting was livestreamed on the website <http://www.voicesoffaith.org>. We informed our Coordinators about it. For anybody who missed this, it can still be seen on the website.

Sr. Pat Murray said: What the Generalates are doing on the level of their Congregations, the UISG does on an inter-congregational and inter-religious level. We may say: what you are doing on the level of your Provinces, we try to do on the level of our Congregation and together we are weaving a global network that can make a difference in our world.

The TRI-GENERALATE

The Tri-Generalate is composed of the General Councils of the three Congregations in our Chevalier Family – the MSCs, the FDNSCs and the MSC Sisters. As a full team, we meet twice a year – three days in December and one day during Holy Week. Last December 2014, “the new tri-gen”, which included the new councillors from the MSC Sisters and the FDNSCs, met for the first time. Last April 1, we were again “a new team” since we had with us three other councillors from the MSC Sisters who only arrived in Italy after December. Also we no longer had with us Fr. Rafael who Pope Francis named Bishop of La Vega in the Dominican Republic in February.

Today, the TRI-GEN is a leadership team of 14 men and women of Heart who strive to contribute to making our ONE CHEVALIER FAMILY more and more a reality:

MSCs: Fathers Mark, Wahyudi, Carl and Chris

MSC Sisters: Sisters Barbara, Bonaventura, Nicola, Juana and Dorothy

FDNSCs: Sisters Marife, Merle, Elly, Laurentia and Madeleine



Please remember our team in your prayers!



the best way they can to the African Province and its journey towards sustainability.

We thank our sisters in Cameroon for welcoming Srs Marife and Madeleine so lovingly and we assure the Region of our love and prayers. Here are a couple of photos. (Srs Marife and Madeleine share the details of this visit in the Cameroon Visitation Report which you will soon receive.)

CAMEROON VISITATION

Undeterred by the threat of Boko Haram or by the Ebola virus, Srs Marife and Madeleine headed to Africa and courageously and with excitement began their one month visit of our Cameroon Region. They left Rome on 3 February and came back on the 4 March. There, they were joined by Sr Juliette Ekemela from the African Provincial Council. Their visit took them not only to the centre in Yaoundé, but as far as Kumbo further north. Back in Rome, they had never-ending stories - about the very festive welcome they received in all the communities they visited, loving welcome accompanied by songs, dances and drums; about the hard physical work that our Cameroonian sisters joyfully endure all for the mission; about the vibrant life in the churches and liturgical celebrations everywhere they went; and about our Cameroon Region’s efforts to contribute



WITH OUR IRISH SISTERS

From February 14 to 28, Sr Merle, as a member of the IFT and the General Council's Formation Committee, was with our sisters in Ireland to spend some days with Clare Brady, our Irish pre-novice. Although it was quite cold in Ireland (it even snowed one day), the very loving and warm welcome given by the sisters in Templeogue, Tallaght and Ballybay more than made up for the low temperatures. Let us keep our Irish Province and Clare in our prayers.

"We believe that we cannot refuse a God-given vocation to our ageing Provinces. It is our responsibility to journey with any interested woman so that she and we may discern where God is leading her, and the shape and form of the religious life to which she is being called. A new candidate seeking to enter at this time must be willing to enter the Congregation and not a Province as such... The location and program for formation will be determined in consultation with the General Administration and the International Formation Team."
(19th FDNSC Chapter Statements)



Study of the Constitutions

After we received our new Constitutions and Directory, most of us already started our study and reflection on these, as individuals and as communities. Here are stories from two of our Provinces as they share with us what they have done so far.



FROM SR ROBYN REYNOLDS IN AUSTRALIA

One day last year, during a meeting of our Formation Committee, of which I am a member, I shared with the sisters my interest and excitement in discovering some of the connections between Pope Francis' 'Joy of the Gospel' and our revised OLSH Constitutions. Not too long after, this I was invited by Sr Elizabeth Little and the Provincial team to share the Reflections with our sisters in Australia.

Beginning with a shorter presentation for our sisters in St Joseph's Aged Care, I then moved to our Kensington community for two days with our other sisters from New South Wales. These special days, between 1st and 3rd February 2015, were with about 60 sisters in all. From the very beginning as I began the journey, I experienced an energy, a spirit of joy and a solidarity as OLSH 'companions on the journey'.

After Sydney, communities I then visited were Corinda in Queensland (4th-6th February), Darwin in the Northern Territory (7th-8th February), Kilburn in South Australia (9th-10th February) and back here

at Bentleigh (22nd February) with the group (about 20 sisters) from the Victorian communities.

All in all about 103 sisters attended the Reflection days. In Queensland, the Northern Territory and South Australia, the groups were small in number (just 4 to 7 sisters), with some sisters travelling more than 600 km to be together for this special time. The day took various shapes in the different places; sometimes there was more time for prayer – or for meals together! Sometimes the small group sharing was of real importance and value; at other times, contributions from sisters in the larger group context was of special significance.

Someone once said: 'What we do thunders! So that what we say cannot be heard.' For myself personally, I know the real response to these Reflections comes in the grace of every day - in the struggles along with the adventure and challenge of living the Joy of the Gospel as Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in our world, today.

Programs and Plans in the Dutch Province in relation to the study of the new Constitutions and the Year of Consecrated Life from Sr Mary Ringnalda

In this Year of Consecrated Life, we made the decision to combine the program of study of the new Constitutions with the study and reflection on the Letters of Pope Francis. The Provincial Council planned three “Province Reflection Days” in the Motherhouse for all the sisters of the Province: 15 January, 12 February and 12 October. In these days we combine the reflections in relation to the study of the new Constitutions and the Letters of Pope Francis and share on how we can put into practice the contents of the Constitutions and the recommendations of Pope Francis.

First reflection day on 15 January

We had an introduction about the LOGO of the Year of Consecrated Life. After lighting a special candle with the LOGO and the prayer for the Year of Consecrated Life, we reflected on the symbols and the basic values of Consecrated Life: evangelical, prophetic and hopeful values in which we recognize the “continuing work of the Holy Spirit”.

Pope Francis invites us to wake up the enthusiasm of the beginning of our Congregation. We have to ask ourselves regularly: Is Jesus really our first and unique love as we promised when we made our profession? We then reflected on the Letter of Pope Francis to all consecrated men and women and on Constitutions chapters 1 and 2.

Second reflection day on 12 February

Introduction: The Church is a missionary Church. We reflected on Matthew 28: 19-20 and Luke 4: 18-19, 21.

Pope Francis no longer uses the traditional concept of “mission countries” but speaks about “Missionary situations in 6 Continents”. He is actually saying: every community of faith is living in a surrounding in which the Gospel has to be proclaimed. This proclamation is a personal and a common responsibility - *Ad Gentes* - *Inter Gentes* (cf *EG* 22–23).



A renewed pastoral commitment! (cf *EG* 25-26; 29-30; 32-33) The Church has to be an open Church; our communities have to be open communities. We are missionary disciples; among all beauty, the Cross is always a reality; not all traditions are holy, some traditions are temporary (*EG* 43). A missionary heart is aware of limits and becomes weak with the weak ones (*EG* 45). We reflected on Constitutions chapters 3 and 4.

Besides the Province days, every community is asked to have an hour's reflection on the Constitutions and a special part of the letters of Pope Francis every week. At the beginning of the Year of Consecrated Life, we started with a special hour of adoration on Friday evening for peace in the world and for vocations to Religious Life.

We are also participating in a “prayer-chain” with many in the Netherlands. As FDNCS, we have a turn in the week 20-26 September. Every day in this special week one of the communities will have the responsibility to prepare a special reflection and a para-liturgy in the community.



Seminars and Retreats in Kiribati (3rd January-7th February 2015)

The seminars and retreats that were held in Teaoraereke with the sisters and MSC brothers were at the invitation of the Kiribati Provincial Administration Team. Srs Gerardine and Cathie of the IFT were helped by Sr Rosaleen O'Brien from Papua New Guinea and Sr Rotee Uriam from Kiribati in facilitating the said seminars and retreats.

The participants were divided into three groups according to age - young, middle-aged and older members. This helped to encourage openness and freedom. There were 66 participants including two MSC brothers and a Marist sister.

We had a four-day seminar, a transition day and a six-day directed retreat. Each sister and brother was given the opportunity to choose her /his director for the retreat. The theme of the program was 'Prayer' and the topics given were 'Finding Solitude in Silence'; levels of the human person 'Private, Public, Real self'; 'Journaling'; and 'Imagination and Senses' (Ignatian method). Each morning we began with a centering prayer which enabled all to become more aware of their feelings and to relax.



After each presentation, the participants had space for individual reflection, followed by sharing with another person and then in the big group which was a deepening experience. From the presentations, the participants felt they were longing to enter into a retreat.

The participants expressed their deep appreciation of the whole process of the seminar and the retreat. They wished the retreat could be more than six days.

After the seminars and retreats, Sr Gerardine spent another two weeks with the Formators and Administration Leadership Team while Sr Rosaleen and I travelled to PNG. (Sr Cathie Mwagioidi)

From our Funding Officer for Projects, Sr Jenny Christie

Hello, Sisters, from Sydney, Australia!



Sr Marife has kindly asked me to introduce myself to you. My name is Sr Jenny Christie and I would firstly like to introduce you to my family. My parents were Joyce and Bob and I had two older brothers, Roger and Laurence. My father died many years ago, but my mother lived to age 93 and passed away last October. Both of my brothers are also deceased, Roger some years ago and Laurence last year. Their memories live on in my heart.

I was born in Sydney and attended primary and secondary schools run by our Sisters. Subsequently I trained as a secondary school maths teacher. In total, I have spent twenty-six years as a teacher and school administrator, an apostolate which I really loved. Following these years in schools, I completed nine years as a Provincial Councillor, which was a blessed and rich time for me.

I am most appreciative of the opportunities which the Congregation has given me throughout my thirty years as a member. I have been enriched by community life and ongoing education and formation. I am looking forward now to my new ministry and appreciate the support of your interest and prayers.