



CHRISTMAS 2019



May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved!

FROM THE DESK OF THE CONGREGATIONAL LEADER

By the end of September this year, all the ten provinces in our Congregation had completed their respective provincial Chapters. We at the Generalate, have received the Acts of the Chapter as well as the Statutes from the Provinces. Reading these documents was a new experience for me and the general council; these documents allowed us to navigate across cultures, and hear the voices of our members. The reality of our diversity once more became evident to us. So, when one evening we were watching the news and saw Nancy Pelosi, an American politician declaring- "Diversity is our strength; unity is our power!" – we exclaimed in unison, "that is our mantra too!" But we have something more than power; we have "solidarity in mission" (FDNSC Constitutions, 61§3)

It is a great privilege to belong to an international Congregation. We are forever grateful to Fr Jules Chevalier who from the beginning of our Congregation wanted us to be "an international, apostolic religious institute of pontifical right, with a specific missionary orientation" (Const. 1).

To see our Congregation from the viewing deck (global) as well as to be on the ground and touch and feel its various parts (local) is truly an incredible experience. More amazing is to gaze in wonder and awe at how these various parts are interconnected and held together as one system or one body. As I pray for the Congregation (which I do daily), I hold this image in my mind: the different parts of the body held together by LOVE. What else could hold it together? And this LOVE has a face and a heart: JESUS.

Whenever we come together for a Chapter, either provincial or general, we often raise this question: "What is at the heart of our vocation? What is most central to being a Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart?" Generations of FDNSCs have asked this same question and our generation is once more asking it; however, the context within which this question is raised is different at every stage of our historical and ongoing development. The question is the same but the context is different.

Nevertheless, we do need to hold on to our anchor, to our foundation upon which our identity is built. We are convinced of the relevance of our charism; we understand the power of our story as a Congregation. We have been called to participate in God's mission through the dream and faith vision of Fr Jules Chevalier: *Ametur!*

Our world is not only undergoing dramatic changes but it is changing so rapidly in many ways. Faced with this reality, we ask ourselves: "Are we what we are meant to be in this world that is becoming more complex? What does the world need from us?"

Let us be "attentive to emerging needs..." (Const. 59) What is God asking from us today?

As we approach our 20th General Chapter let us ask for the gift of discernment. Let us pray that we "may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that we may lead lives worthy of the Lord." (Colossians 1:9-10)

“We realize that God’s will is made known to us in the depths of our hearts, and is also mediated through Sacred Scripture, the teaching of the Church, our Constitutions and Directory, and in sincere dialogue with our leaders and our sisters in community.

It is also revealed in the gifts of nature and grace with which God has blessed us, the needs of people and of the Congregation, the events of

our world, and in the changing circumstances of our daily lives.” (Const. 13)

Wishing you all a blessed Advent and Christmas! May these beautiful liturgical seasons be times of awakening to what God is doing in us. Let us allow God to transform us into love... so that love may have a face... love may have a heart.

Sr Marife Mendoza fdnsc

PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS AND ASSEMBLIES

IRELAND (AUG 12 TO 15)

From the 12th to the 15th of August, eight Irish FDNCS gathered at the MSC “Woodview” property in Blackrock, Dublin, for their provincial assembly led by Sr Mairead Kelleher, provincial leader. Two sisters from the USA (Sr Evelyn Mc Carthy and Sr Catherine Mulcahy), two from London (Sr Marion O’Mahony and Sr Catherine Mulcahy), and four from Ballybay (Sr Mairead, Sr Kathleen Mc Quillan, Sr Vianney Murray, Sr Gretta Murphy) participated in the Assembly representing the 24 members of the Irish province. Two sisters from the Generalate assisted as secretary (Sr Jenny Christie) and as facilitator (Sr Merle Salazar). The Assembly was a time for the sisters to share and celebrate what has been accomplished in the province especially since their last assembly in 2016 as well as to pray, listen, share and discern together the future of the province. The MSC Woodview Community who hosted the meeting was very welcoming. Their hospitality and their availability for the liturgical celebrations contributed to the Assembly’s good outcome. At the end of the Assembly, the group also had a chance to relax as they spent the last afternoon at the Powerscourt House and Gardens and Glendalough. It was the feast of Mary’s Assumption and the MSC Community prepared a celebratory meal in the evening. Congratulations sisters and thanks you to our brother MSCs!

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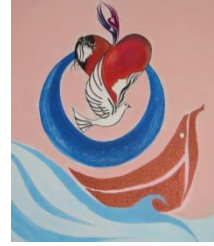


The participants of the Assembly with Fr Michael Screene.



FRANCE (SEPT 1 TO 7)

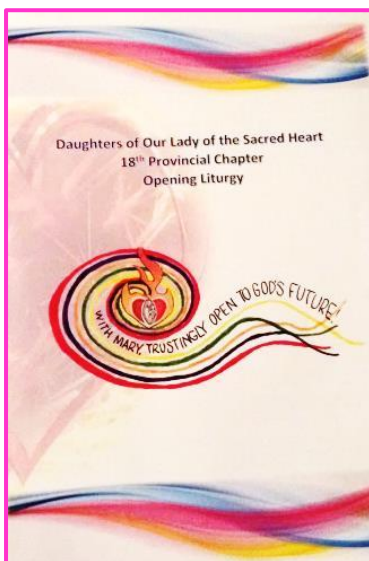
Soon after they celebrated the 145th anniversary of our foundation, our sisters of the French Province opened their 16th Provincial Chapter. On the 31st of August, the Chapter delegates had a recollection led by Fr Daniel Auguié to prepare them for the Chapter which opened on 1st September with all fourteen delegates present, led by Sr Marie Christine Kunzi, Provincial Leader. On the



Delegates of the French Provincial Chapter

opening day, two icons made by Sr Denise were also blessed, an icon of St Joseph and of Fr Chevalier. The Chapter was facilitated by Sr Marie-Claude Roques. The end of the Chapter coincided with the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the pilgrimages in Issoudun which began on 8

September 1869. Being in Issoudun, our sisters were privileged to pray at the crypt of the basilica during the chapter, at the tomb of Fr Chevalier and Mother Marie Louise.



AUSTRALIA (SEPT 22 TO 28)

The last province to hold their provincial chapter was Australia and it was held at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Sydney. Forty eight sisters participated as capitulants headed by Sr Tess Ward, provincial leader. The facilitator was Sr Jan Barnett, rsj and the chaplain was Fr John Mulrooney, MSC. On the second full day of the Chapter, 24 September, 13 lay associates and partners joined the delegates for the morning session. Their presence and testimonies gave energy to the group. After five full days of work,

Australia's 18th provincial chapter officially closed on 27 September. The concluding Eucharist was celebrated on the 28th in the chapel of the convent in Kensington with the sisters from the surrounding communities participating. The mass was followed by morning tea. We read in the final Chapter highlights that they sent out: "During our morning tea in the Kensington dining room following the Eucharist, old friendships were renewed, and the joy was tangible. The following hours were abuzz as sisters were saying their goodbyes and returning to their communities and mission."



DELEGATES TO THE 20TH GENERAL CHAPTER

With all of the Provincial Chapters and Assemblies having concluded, we now have the full list of the delegates to our 20th General Chapter in March 2020 (those marked in bold attend by right). Let us keep our sister delegates in our prayers in this time of immediate preparation for the General Chapter.

Generalate

- 1 **Sr Marife Mendoza**
- 2 **Sr Merle Salazar**
- 3 **Sr Elly van Dijk**
- 4 **Sr Madeleine Ngoy Nyefonga**
- 5 **Sr Laurentia Piranti**
- 6 **Sr Margaret Bob**

Africa

- 7 **Sr Madeleine Dione**
- 8 Sr Marie Solange Oko
- 9 Sr Philomene Iketa
- 10 Sr Clotilde Ngom

Australia

- 11 **Sr Philippa Murphy**
- 12 Sr Gerardine Doherty
- 13 Sr Lorraine McCleary
- 14 Sr Ruth Yburan

Belgium

- 15 **Sr Anne-Marie Hermans**
- 16 Sr Marthe Marie Moenssens

Brazil

- 17 **Sr Renisa da Fonseca**
- 18 Sr. Luci Jane Pontes Pereira
- 19 Sr. Maria Freire da Silva
- 20 Sr. Regina Célia da Silva

France

- 21 **Sr Marie-Christine Kunzi**

- 22 Sr Raymonde Gasser

Indonesia

- 23 **Sr Angelina Giasih**
- 24 Sr M Immaculae Saminem
- 25 Sr M Monica Kaha
- 26 Sr M Emilie Rumangan
- 27 Sr M Ancilla Sukarti
- 28 Sr M Albertine Endang Purwatiningsih

Ireland

- 29 **Sr Mairead Kelleher**
- 30 Sr Kathleen McQuillan

Italy

- 31 Sr Silvia Soldà

Kiribati

- 32 **Sr Kateia Teanako**
- 33 Sr Mariateretia Babatera
- 34 Sr Maata Berenato

Netherlands

- 35 **Sr Lies Alkemade**
- 36 Sr. Francesco Moens

Papua New Guinea

- 37 **Sr Relida Gumur**
- 38 Sr Mary Kanatabu
- 39 Sr Antoinette Ake



***“MINDFUL THAT SHE HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION AND TO THE CHURCH, EACH CHAPTER MEMBER CONTRIBUTES TO THE BEST OF HER ABILITY TO THE PREPARATION AND WORK OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER.”
(FDNSC CONSTITUTIONS 205 D§2)***



THE CHAPTER COMMISSION



As the CL and Council began the preparations for the General Chapter, an important question that they discerned early on was whether or not to establish a Chapter Commission. This is something, as far as we can recall, we have not had in the past. The members of the General Administration themselves comprise the Chapter Planning Group but there was a felt need for a different group of sisters, whose members are from the provinces, and whose task would be to listen to the province responses to the reflection papers sent out by the Generalate on the five vital issues identified by the 2017 general conference. This commission would then draft a “working document” based on what the provinces had sent in for the General Chapter to consider and explore. After much prayer and discussion and after exploring the idea with our facilitator, Sr



Piluca, we made the decision to set up this commission. The next step of the discernment was identifying the members of the commission. By mid-2019, we had identified three sisters and had dialogued with them and their respective provincials – Sr Immaculae Saminem from Indonesia, Sr Marie Solange Oko from Cameroun and Sr Philippa Murphy from Australia. We thank these sisters for accepting this exciting task and their provincial leaders for making them available. After all the Chapters had concluded, we were also happy to note that all

three are coming to the General Chapter as delegates. This came as a confirmation. With all the responses from the provinces already received, the three were then invited to come to Rome for a whole month (November 4 to December 4) to do their work as Chapter Commission.

CHAPTER COMMISSION REPORT

For still the vision awaits its appointed time....wait for it; it will surely come. (Habakkuk 2:3)

We arrived in Rome after many hours of flying. Sr Marie -Solange flew from Yaounde, Cameroon, Sr Immaculae flew from Jakarta, Indonesia and Sr Philippa flew from Sydney, Australia. We were warmly welcomed by the Generalate community and at once felt at home.

As we came together as members of our FDNSC General Chapter Commission, we felt both excited and anxious. After meeting with the General Administration and Sr Piluca (the General Chapter Facilitator) we were immediately put at ease and we felt trusted and supported. Each day we (Chapter commission) spent many hours together in prayer, listening to the voice of God, the voice of our Congregation, the voice of our Church, and the voice of our world. We experienced honesty and openness in our sharing as we listened deeply to each other and as we tried to see the Congregation through the eyes of others. Listening, sharing and discerning together, as an intercultural group, has been an enriching and challenging experience.

We were grateful for the opportunities we had to be personally enriched by our visits to St Peter's Basilica, Villa Doria Pamphilj, the Trevi fountain, Chiesa Nuova and the rooms of St Ignatius. We were fortunate to attend an audience with Pope Francis, where he imparted an apostolic blessing that he extended to all our families at home. During the audience we held up all the sisters of our Congregation for Pope Francis' apostolic blessing.





Here are just a few of our comments about being a member of the Chapter commission:

'I appreciated the atmosphere of work that we created, through our prayer, listening and reading.'

'Intercultural living and working is very enriching made possible by really listening and praying deeply together'

'My time on the Chapter Commission has been a faith experience based on our charism and mission'

We were deeply grateful to Sr Marife and her Council for inviting us to be members of this Chapter Commission. They showed great trust in us, they created a warm and open environment and we were made to feel a part of their community. At all times they were available to assist us in any way.

The experience of being a member of the Chapter commission has been one of faith, mutual respect and trust in our God who calls us into life. It has also been an experience of faith, mutual respect and trust in one another, as Sisters. We leave here, feeling renewed and full of courage, *'as together we are called to be missionaries of hope in this new world emerging.'*

Srs Immaculae, Marie Solange and Philippa

AND THE CHAPTER PREPARATIONS CONTINUE...

November 2019 saw us going on full steam ahead in relation to the General Chapter preparations. Shalom is occupied by members of the Chapter Commission who arrived on the first week. The General Administration is also complete, with everyone having returned from the final travels of this mandate.

On November 6, we had our first combined faith sharing – the Chapter Commission and the General Administration. This sharing made us feel at home with each other and formally opened our collaboration for the Chapter preparations. On November 7 and 8, Sr Piluca, joined us for two days of meetings. She met us separately (Council and Commission) and together, and as in previous meetings, guided us through the next steps and helped orient us to the road ahead. The parlour on the first floor of the Generalate was turned into the Commission's working area. Sr Merle was named "link person" between the two groups. The days that followed were very interesting where we saw the two groups working separately and meeting together from time to time.

As you know, all work and no play is not healthy. We also made sure we had recreation together. On November 17, we had an outing just around Rome and visited the Galleria Doria Pamphilij in the heart of ancient Rome. The tour gave us a good sense of Church-Italian history and our eyes feasted on the collection of paintings in the galleria! Truly amazing! As a spiritual tour, some of us from the council also visited the rooms of St Ignatius with the members of the Commission. Mindful that it is in these rooms that Ignatius wrote the Jesuit Constitutions, we prayed for his intercession as the Commission drafted the working document for the General Chapter.

In early December, the Chapter Commission members returned to their respective countries. We thank them for their openness to the Spirit! As we say, by their fruits shall we know them...and the General Chapter will soon have a taste of the fruit of their work.

Check out our
WEBSITE

www.olshgen.com

Click the menu on the
top left hand side,
Go to NEWS or the
category "General
Chapter" and
you will find the blog
on the
20th General Chapter

Sr Elly has launched
this blog on December 8
to accompany us as we
prepare
for the Chapter.



VISITS



The last visits that this General Administration made during this mandate were visits to the mission communities under the Generalate. As you have read in the previous GNU, Marife and Merle visited Japan in April 2019. Elly and Madeleine visited Angola in August 2019 and Laurentia visited South Sudan in October. These were “discernment” visits as the Generalate and the members of the communities prayed and discerned the future of the communities. The insights from the discernment days will be presented at the 2020 General Chapter.

ANGOLA VISIT (1 TO 15 AUGUST)

Aim of our visit: to evaluate our mission in Angola in view of the General Chapter in 2020. As this community is a community under the Generalate, our Congregational Leader Sr. Marife acts as both CL and Provincial for this community. At the General Chapter she will give a report about the communities under the Generalate.

The reflection process:

We used a process consisting of 4 steps in 4 days. In step 1 we reflected on the Mission that we began in July 2005, how it has evolved and whether there is still a need to which we as a



Congregation would like to respond to; in step 2 we reflected on the personal experiences of the community members in that mission and on what they feel called to in this phase of the mission; in step 3 we reflected on the experiences within the intercultural community in which the community members are living as well as on the strengths and the weaknesses of this community; and finally in step 4 we reflected on what the community members would advise about the future of this mission.

On each of these days we met for a short time of reflection in the morning in which we reflected on some texts in relation to the subject of that day. This was followed by time for personal reflection and finally a community meeting in the evening during which we shared our reflections.

During the visit, Srs Elly and Madeleine also met with Bishop Jesus Tirso Blanco, the Bishop of Luena, who was very positive about the developments in Cazombo, and with the Episcopal Vicar, Father P. Serafim Ndjango Mungimbi, who shared with the sisters the plans for the future of the area.

The Bishop was very happy about the developments in our Internato. Now there is an educational program of “high quality,” something the Bishop had been longing for in a long time. He had sent the program to the government and he had asked for four staff members who will be paid by the government. According to the Bishop, Sr. Maria José is very strict, but she had adopted the program very well to the Angolan situation. The mentality of the Brazilians goes very well with the Angolan mentality. The Bishop had asked Sr. Maria José to stay.

We thank and congratulate Sr Maria Jose for her valuable contribution to the mission in Angola in the one year that she had been part of the community. It is with sadness that the children of the Internato and the sisters in the community bid her goodbye in October when she returned to Brazil. Their sadness was also mixed with hope that one day Sr Maria Jose will be back in Angolan soil! Thank you very much sister!



SOUTH SUDAN VISIT (12 TO 23 OCTOBER)

The plan was for Sr Laurentia and Sr Merle to make this visit together. Both left Rome on the 12th of October and arrived in Nairobi on the same day. The first part of the visit was to spend a three days in Nairobi to meet the staff of the Diocese of Rumbek in Bethany House as well as to visit a slum area and a university. Sr Rita Grunke met the sisters at the airport and was their “tour guide” during these three days. The day before they were scheduled to fly to Juba, the capital of South Sudan, Sr Merle received news of her mother’s condition and she flew to Manila. Sr Laurentia then continued on to Juba with Sr Rita, then to Rumbek where the other members of the community met them, Srs Wendy, Francisca and Bernadette. Sr Laurentia writes -



The purpose of the visit was to follow up the visitation in February 2018 in order to discern the future of our mission in South Sudan. We endeavoured to answer three questions: Do we or do we not continue this mission? If we continue this mission, what are our options with regards to its structure and governance? What do you, as a community, want to send as a proposal to the 20th General Chapter in 2020?



We brought those three questions to our three days of discernment in Mapuordit community. Something we needed to take note of is that the community currently consists of four members of whom two of them are new. This situation is different from its situation in

February 2018. The two new members are still learning and adjusting with the community and its ministries at the same time they give a little bit of new energy while the other two sisters who have been in the mission for many years provide the wisdom of experience and stability in the mission.

The visit also gave Sr Laurentia a chance to meet with the Comboni missionaries with whom our sisters work, particularly with the Parish Priest and head of the mission who assured sister of the Comboni’s long-term commitment to the mission in Mapuordit.

SEMINARS

WEST PAPUA CONFERENCE – OCTOBER 2



On Wednesday October 2, the Network for West Papua in Rome had a conference at the *Augustinianun* to talk about human rights violations in West Papua (Indonesia). Our Congregation is a member of the Network. Sr Elly, our Congregational JPIC Coordinator who represents us at the Network, was part of the discussion panel during the Conference. You can read more about this Conference in the January 2020 issue of our FDNSC JPIC Bulletin.

Sr Elly with the other members of the

SEMINAR ON THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE AT THE UISG – OCT 3 AND 4

On October 3 and 4, Sr Marife attended seminars organised by the Union of Superiors General in Rome (UISG). In the two-day seminar, the results of studies on the future of religious life in certain places were presented. The studies were funded by the Hilton Fund and the results were presented by Dr. Gemma Simmonds, CJ, Dr Maria Calderon Muñoz and Sr Marren Rose Awiti, IBVM. The first day had the theme “Religious Life for Women in East and Central Africa: A Sustainable Future.” The study started in 2016 and involved 630 sisters from five different African countries. These 630 sisters were interviewed and were asked three questions: 1) What is the essence of religious life in your country today and into the future? 2) What are the key challenges that hinder this essence? and 3) What are the best ways of ensuring the understanding and living of this essence?

The second day looked at Religious Life for Women in Ireland and England. This study aimed at answering two questions: 1) Why do women enter? and 2) Why do they leave? The purpose of this research was to “support religious life and to help it move forward as well as to enable what needs to die, die.” One of the speakers remarked: “We are living in a ‘Rachel moment’, weeping because they are no more. What do we still have to offer? We offer a ‘Mary Magdalene moment – not dying because we failed, but dying because we succeeded.”



The studies done demonstrated that religious life for women is evolving, not only in the places that were the focus of the study but everywhere in the world, both in the aging and the young churches. Our call to be missionaries of hope in a new world emerging is once again confirmed.

AXIS SEMINAR – NOV 27 TO 29



On 27th – 29th November 2019, Sr Laurentia attended a Seminar on “**The Challenges of Managing Ecclesiastical Institutes in the international context and a reading of the Church in Brazil in its relationship with the State**” which was organised by Axis Instituto. Axis Instituto is a Consultant Organization for ecclesiastical and religious entities in

Brazil. The seminar was held at the auditorium of the *Unione Internazionale dei Superiori Generali* (UISG) in Rome, Italy. The participants were religious (sisters and priests) who work in the Generalates of their respective Congregations which have communities or a province in Brazil. It was a very interesting seminar.

In the beginning the speaker explained about the agreement between the Holy See and the Federal Republic of Brazil which affects the ministries of the ecclesiastical and religious institutes in Brazil and also provides the possibility of Catholic Teaching in public schools. Reading the current situation of the Church in Brazil, especially with the diminishment of religious vocations and the fact that more lay people are involved in the ministries of religious institutes, it is very important to have good governance for the sake of charism and mission.



Axis Instituto is also the consultant of our sisters in the Province of Brazil, therefore I am sure that our sisters have learnt a lot from them in order to do the best for the Province and its ministries.

EXCEL FOR ARCHIVISTS – DEC 3&4



Early in December, sisters Margaret and Jenny left the relative warmth of Rome to go to Oxford via London and attend a two-day seminar for archivists. This two day workshop gave them valuable information and training on EXCEL and its use not only for archivists but also for other functions. They noted that the participants had different kinds of roles and had very

particular needs which the excellent teacher was able to meet. The two sisters also took the opportunity to visit our Irish sisters based in London, Srs Marion and Catherine and stayed with them for a few days. They also went around visiting some tourist spots in the city, warmly clothed to protect themselves from the very low temperatures. They returned to Rome on the 7th.



CELEBRATIONS

CHEVALIER DAY – OCT 21

The Italian Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart invited the members of the Chevalier Family to celebrate Chevalier Day on October 21. The Eucharistic Celebration was held at the shrine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Piazza Navona followed by refreshments at the MSC Italian Provincialate. There was a cake to celebrate Fr Chevalier's entrance into the Father's house 112 years ago and Sr Marife and Fr Abzalón were asked to cut the cake as everyone was singing "Tanti Auguri a Te."



Aside from the religious, there were also members of the Fraternity of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, the organization of the laity of the Chevalier family in Italy. We thank the MSC Italian province for hosting the celebration and once again gathering us in joy as one Chevalier Family! Grazie mille!



BLESSING IN RUMST – OCT 27



On October 26, Sr Marife and Sr Madeleine left for the Netherlands. There, they were met by Sr Elly and our Dutch sisters. The next day, they drove to Rumst in Belgium for the blessing of the Chapel in the newly renovated St Joseph's Nursing Home. The main building which in the past was our Novitiate is now part of the large complex of WZC Sint-Jozef Rumst managed by the very good team of lay professionals. Our Congregation (through the Belgian Province) is a stockholder of this organization and our sisters are members of the Board. None of them are directly involved in the management of the Home. Our sisters now



live in individual apartments but they still come together for prayer and for meals. The blessing was an occasion of thanksgiving. With the current arrangement, our property will continue to be used as a place where care is given to the vulnerable. Our sisters in Belgium receive very good care and are assured to receive the same high quality of care until they leave us for the Father's kingdom.

MSC FOUNDATION DAY – DEC 8

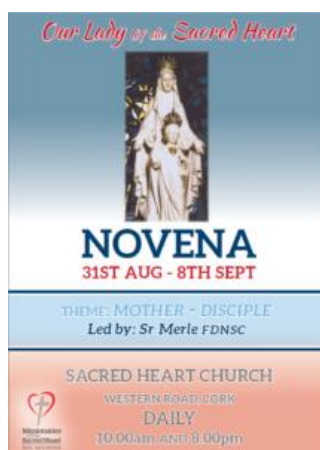
On Sunday, 8 December, we celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary and the 165th Foundation Day of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at the shrine of Nostra Signora del Sacro Cuore in Piazza Navona in Rome. The celebration, hosted by the MSC Italian Province, was a celebration of our international Chevalier Family, with all branches of the family represented – we had priests, brothers, sisters, lay partners and lay associates! The celebration was attended by MSCs from all over the world since at the time of the feast, the MSC International Bursars' Meeting was ongoing (Dec 1 to Dec 10) and the meeting participants (all 30 of them) came in full force. MSC Lay business managers from Australia, the Netherlands, Ireland and France also participated in the meeting and celebrated with us. We also had Doris Machado and her husband Ranulfo representing the lay international council. The Liturgy was enlivened by the members of the Fraternity of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart from different places in Italy. And of course the MSCs, MSC Sisters and FDNSCs from the Generalates in Rome were there too. Fr Jules Chevalier must have had a big smile on his face as he saw his dream so alive! With him, we give thanks to our Lord for having called us to share His mission of Love. We give thanks to our mother, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, for being our constant companion and model in this mission.



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OTHER ACTIVITIES

NOVENA TO OLSH IN CORK (AUG 31 TO SEPT 8)



For the second time now, Sr Merle was invited to lead a novena at the MSC Sacred Heart Parish in Cork (Ireland). The first time was in June 2018 when she led the Novena to the Sacred Heart and the second one was last September. This time she led the Novena to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Preparing for and leading the Novena was a blessed time for Sr Merle. It gave her a chance to pray with Scripture in a deeper way, do research, share with others the boundless love of God and meet so many new friends. For nine days, in two Eucharistic celebrations for each day, she shared her reflections on the scripture readings of the day and on Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. It was for her and for the people who participated in the novena, a pilgrimage to the Heart of Jesus in the company of Mary. The participants of the Novena were not only the people who came to the church but also many others, from different cities and countries, who were following the novena online. The Sacred Heart Parish is livestreamed 24/7. This year too, the Novena Masses were recorded and so people who missed the livestream were still able to follow.



Evangelization in the modern world! Sr Merle thanks the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Ireland, particularly Fr Tom Mulcahy, the parish priest in Cork, for having given her the opportunity to share God's love and God's word with so many people. She thanks the people who participated in the Novena, the staff and ministers of the Sacred Heart Parish, all the people who shared tea with her after every Eucharistic celebration, all those who have trusted her with their prayer intentions – with you she has experienced the love of Jesus truly alive! May God bless you all. If you are interested in having the texts of Sr Merle's reflections, you can find them on our website (www.olshgen.com) under News.

MASS AT THE CRYPT OF ST PETER'S WITH DON LUIGI – OCT 10



Marfe, Margaret, Merle, Don Luigi, Laurentia, Madeleine, Josephine (MSC Sister), Ely

The members of our Generalate Community had the rare opportunity to celebrate the Eucharist in one of the chapels at the crypt of St Peter's basilica, in a place physically very near the tomb of St Peter. This opportunity came in the early morning of October 10 upon the invitation of Don Luigi, one of the former chaplains of our clinic in Rome. With groups from two other Religious Congregations, we had an intimate Mass in Italian led by Don Luigi at the chapel of the *Partorente* (Mary breastfeeding Jesus).



While we were having our Mass, Masses in other languages were also going on in the other chapels. It was an amazing experience! Heaven must be something similar! We thank Don Luigi for this once-in-a-lifetime experience. After the Mass, we invited Don Luigi to a traditional Italian breakfast (coffee and cornetto) and of course we asked him to choose the restaurant, he being the only Italian among us. He chose the place where he said the coffee is *buono*, the *cornetti* are *buonissimi*, and the price is ok – guess where - McDonald's!

TRI-GEN MEETING – DEC 16-18

This year's Tri-Gen Meeting is not like the Christmas meetings of the other years for two reasons. First, on the second day of our meeting, Dec 17, we were joined by the members of the international lay council, Alison Mc Kenzie from Australia (Secretary General), Doris Machado Dos Santos from Brazil (deputy Sec Gen), Rita Cleuren from Belgium (member) and Hans



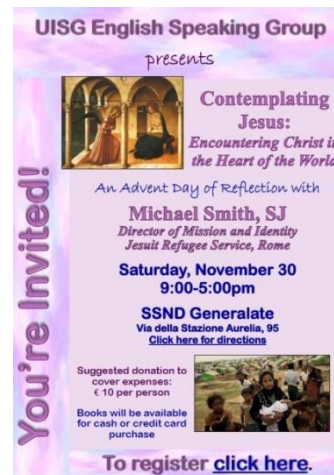
Alison, Fr Hans, Rita, Doris and Maria Olimpia

Kwakman, MSC (spiritual accompanier). They were also accompanied by Ranulfo from Brazil (husband of Doris) and Maria Olimpia (from Germany), translator. The group also joined our Christmas party in the evening. The second reason why this Tri-Gen meeting is unique is that it is the last to be attended by the current general administrations of both the MSC

Sisters and the FDNSCs. The regular Tri-Gen meeting for the spring of 2020 has been cancelled to give way to the sisters' general chapters – in March for the FDNSCs and in July for the MSC Sisters. The Tri-Gen meetings which normally happen twice a year (one day in spring and three days before Christmas) are venues where collaboration happens and where friendships develop. We thank God for the gift of our Chevalier Family. May this collaboration and friendship continue in the coming years!

ADVENT DAY OF PRAYER IN ROME – NOV 30

Here in Rome, we are fortunate to have advent days of prayer organised by different language groups. The English day of prayer was last November 30 (the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent) and the one for the French group was last December 8. The English day of prayer which was held at the Generalate of the School Sisters of Notre Dame was attended by six of us (3 from the Generalate and the 3 members of the Chapter Commission). It was led by Fr Michael Smith, SJ, the director of Mission and Identity of the Jesuit Refugee Service. The theme of the day was “*Contemplating Jesus...encountering Christ in the heart of the world.*” He led us into a process of prayer and meditation for each one to have a sense of what he calls our “name of grace.” This entailed looking at our identity, our vocation and our mission. He said finding our name of grace is finding “*the place where our deep gladness meets the world’s deep need.*” In this time of advent, may each one of us have a sense of our “name of grace.” May we find the place where our deep gladness meets the world’s deep need – may we truly learn to contemplate Jesus and encounter Christ in the heart of the world.



★ ★ ★ APPOINTMENTS ★ ★ ★

We congratulate our sisters who have been recently appointed and thank them for their availability to serve the Congregation as members of their Province Leadership Teams:



BRAZIL PROVINCIAL COUNCILLORS

Sr Luci Jane P. Pereira, 2nd term

Sr Maria Feria da Silva, 1st term

Sr Glacialva dos Santos, 2nd term

Sr Marta Maria Pinto, 3rd term

These sisters will begin their 3-year mandate on 8th December 2019.

AUSTRALIA PROVINCIAL COUNCILLORS

Sr Lorraine Mc Cleary, 3rd term

Sr Moya Hanlen, 2nd term

Sr Pauline Richards, 1st term

Sr Mary Stevens, 2nd term

These sisters will begin their 3-year mandate on 1st January 2020.



IRELAND PROVINCIAL AND COUNCIL

Sr Mairead Kelleher – Provincial Leader

Sr Kathleen Mc Quillan

Sr Evelyn Mc Carthy

The mandate of the current Provincial and Council have been extended for one year up to 8 September 2020.

★ ★ ★ **PROFESSIONS** ★ ★ ★

We congratulate our sisters who made their first profession in Indonesia and we wish them many blessings as they begin their lives as temporarily professed members of our Congregation!

Profisiat zusters!

Sr M. Gracia Namung, FDNSC
Sr M. Hilaria, Rama, FDNSC
Sr M. Priscilla Telaumbanua, FDNSC



During the time this issue of our Generalate News Update was being written, three of our Sisters passed away. We remember them, and all our sisters who have gone before us particularly those who died this year, and thank God for the gift of their lives and vocation. In the face of their deaths, we are consoled by the thought that they are now in peace with our mother, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, contemplating Jesus face to face!



Sr Anita Hermans of the Belgian Province who died in Rumst on November 28. She was 86 years old. She was the aunt of Sr Anne-Marie Hermans, Provincial Leader in Belgium.

Sr Leonila dela Peña of the Philippine Region who died on 30 November. She is the first Filipino FDNSC to die. She was a missionary, first to Kiribati and later to Japan. She died in Nagoya, one month short of her 70th birthday.

Sr Catherine Mulcahy of the Irish Province who died on December 8 in London, just outside the church she has been serving for many years. Sister went to England as a young sister and was serving there, literally, until her last breathe. She was 82 years old.

“None of us lives as his own; and none of us dies as his own; or when we live we are responsible to God and when we die, we die as His servants.”

COR VITAE 2019



Cor Vitae Team and Formators Batch 2 Beginning of 2019

The second 9-month program for formators run by Cor Vitae finished last November 15 in Tagaytay City, Philippines. Members of the Chevalier family in the Philippines joined the celebrations. We congratulate and thank the team –Sam, Cathie and Sophy – for another well run and successful course. We congratulate the participants (10 of them) for actively participating in the course and for finishing it well. Three of the participants were our sisters – Ameline from Burkina Faso, Noella from PNG and Matiri from Kiribati. Both Noella and Matiri are now back in their respective countries, preparing to take up their roles as formators in their respective provinces. Ameline is staying in

the Philippines to continue her preparation for formation work by doing theology studies in Manila for the next two years. In the following pages, they share with us their personal reflections about their Cor Vitae experience.

MY EXPERIENCE OF BATCH 2 FORMATION PROGRAM FOR FORMATORS 2019 *(by Cathie Mwagioidi, FDNSC)*

The journey with the 10 participants of the Cor Vitae nine months formation program for formators of the Chevalier Family batch 2 came to completion on the 15th November 2019 with its own uniqueness. The hectic schedules kept the team on the move from day to day with the participants without realizing that our nine-month journey had come to an end. Everyone felt that the nine months was too short. It went pretty fast towards the end.

Every participant tried his/her best to contribute to the dynamic in the community living. Participants were put into three small groups: two groups of three and one group of four. It was intended to help every participant to journey into his/her heart in the group by letting him/her tell his/her story with the group and listen to the stories of others. In this way he/she came to discover the beauty and the goodness of himself/herself and others.

Journeying with the participants for these nine months allowed me to grow and know myself again and again—through joys and challenges. It has been a time of renewal, a time for learning and re-learning. All is a process for me. Seeing the transformation taking place in the participants gave me joy and meaning in my own life.

Every participant came to the program with his/her own needs and expectations, as the driving force in their journey through these nine months. Each participant moved into the process of formation towards self-transformation according to his/her own time and space. Yet the key point for a successful self-



transformation within one's self rests entirely on the ability of a person to let go of his/her ego by removing all the masks that he/she uses to protect his/her public-self, and letting God to do his part on healing the pains and hurts within the self. The journey is a process and this has to continue throughout one's life.

We are grateful to all the presenters who were part of the program. All have contributed



immensely both the Chevalier Family Members and other Religious men, women and lay. At the end of the nine months program the participants expressed their confidence to embrace the ministry of formation. It is a call and a gift to bring to others the gift of God's love and love is the answer.

Our deep gratitude to the three Generals and the Administration, to Chris Chaplin MSC our liaison person, the Execom team of the three leaders in Manila for your continued support. We are grateful too, to the APA leaders and leaders from Africa for your support to the team and interest in the program by sending your members to these programs. Continue to do so.

Thank you too dear sisters for your prayers and support for the success of Cor Vitae programs. Let us be united in the Heart of Jesus.

MY EXPERIENCE IN COR VITAE *Sr KABORE W. Améline (FDNSC)*

For me it was a blessing from God that I attended the Formation Program for Formators of Cor Vitae and I am very grateful to my leaders for the opportunity they have given me. To take a course for formators was not what I could expect when I was asked to go for Cor Vitae and I was really scared at the beginning. So I opened myself to the formation not in order to work later in formation ministry, but for a deeper self-transformation and inner healing. And during the course of the process I realized that it's exactly what formation of formators is: not only the knowledge of skills but most of all the formation of the heart in order to be able to empower those who will be entrusted to me by the example of a consistent life.

Living in an intercultural Chevalier Family has been for me, the best and ideal place to work on my self-awareness and transformation and build up a lovely community. We came by different roads and we were able to walk together in spite of our divergence of background, characters and cultures. I believe that our common culture is the Gospel, and as apostles



of the Sacred Heart, we tried to witness to the love of God for us and for others. The relevance of the topics, most of them given from the perspectives of the Spirituality of the Heart, has been very helpful for me to be present in the community instead of saying I'm just here for nine months. I felt I had the best facilitators I needed to journey into my own heart. It was not an easy task to be able to accept what is happening in me and tell the truth to myself, to remove the masks, but it was the most peaceful and healing way I have ever undergone.

I can say without reserve that the Program of Cor Vitae is what we need for all formators in our Chevalier Family and it could be also proposed to those in sabbatical year.

Reflections on my Cor Vitae Experience
(Matiri Kanono fdnsc)



Spending my nine months in Cor Vitae was an enriching and fruitful experience. Living together as a Chevalier family was a joy and a special grace but also challenging; a joy with others that brings togetherness in Fr. Jules Chevalier's charism and spirituality. We shared our laughter, our stories, different talents, differences and our love among ourselves. It is also a grace of God in living out unity in diversity from eight different cultures, personalities, languages, backgrounds and so forth. In fact it was a great opportunity for me to learn and study, to grow in patience, acceptance, awareness and gratitude of how unique each one is.

Along my journey, each module offered by facilitators touched my inner self in a sense that disturbed me. Who am I? Where am I? How am I? Those three questions helped me to really understand myself, others and the world. Not only that, but I also felt refreshed as I saw myself being formed in a more transparent and appreciative way. The modules also helped me to transform my personal view in positive ways: judging, thinking and acting positively. It is really true that these modules prepared me for my formation role. Everything, everybody will lead me to be on earth the Heart of Christ. How important it is in formation work to be available, to be present, to be a good listener and to act justly, humbly and tenderly. Above all, to be compassionate, this embraces all the modules which I received. I found out that I am for God among his people in times of joy, sadness, doubt, trouble etc. It is challenging, but I trust God to be with me, beside me, in front of me. I will do the best of my part and God will do the rest. After this course I became more aware of who I am.



Congratulations – Batch 2 Cor Vitae Formators