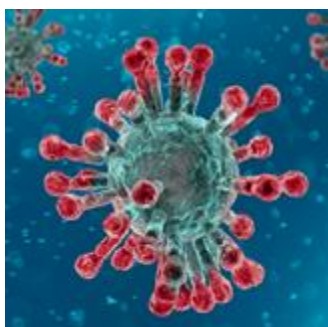




JANUARY 2021



At the beginning of this new year 2021, we find ourselves looking back at the past year in awe...what a journey 2020 has been! Some people describe it as “a year like no other” while others say it is “the year when everything changed.” Wherever we may be in the world, we cannot but agree with such descriptions. New words entered our everyday conversations: covid, pandemic, lockdown, unprecedented, social bubbles, zoom, online learning, social distancing, quarantine, livestreamed masses etc., etc... New items have become part of our daily needs: face masks in all shapes, colors, sizes, materials and designs, sanitizers for the hands, for smartphones, for tables, desks, bags, books, etc., etc. Even food is sanitized

now! Sad images are etched in our minds and hearts: people dying alone, lines of coffins, lonely isolated residents of nursing homes, hospital patients fighting for their lives. Images of solidarity and selfless service fill us with hope and challenge us to do our part: doctors, nurses and healthcare workers in full PPE (personal protective equipment) tired and scarred but still serving; supermarket staff, cleaners, guards, people who cannot stay at home even when they want to, bravely and quietly doing their work every day. Now we know who really are the “essential workers” in our societies and communities! How can we ever forget this year?



2020 A Year Like No Other



experience shared by our sister is our own – one sister’s pain is the Congregation’s pain and one sister’s joy is the joy of the whole body. At the end, may our hearts overflow with gratitude to our God who journeyed through this year with each of us, day after day after day...

At the end of the year, there are almost 900 of us FDNCS spread in 27 countries in the world. How did we experience 2020 in the different countries, communities and ministries where we are? This Year-end 2020 issue of the Generalate News Update is exploring this question. In the next pages, sisters from our different provinces and regions share with us what the year has been like for them and what it means to them. As we read, let us remember that each



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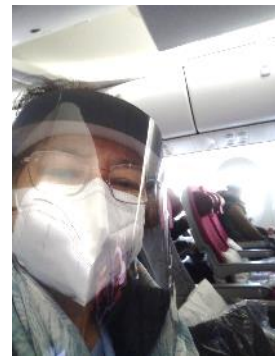
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FROM THE DESK OF THE CONGREGATIONAL LEADER:

As I reflect on the unexpected and emotion-charged events in my life these past months and realize that millions of people across the globe have similar experiences, I feel so deeply the common humanity we share, with its joys and hopes, anxieties and sorrows.

Soon after I learned that my 86-year-old mother started to have chills and fever, I decided to travel to the Philippines. Somehow, I intuitively sensed that hers was no ordinary fever; I suspected pneumonia or covid19. I was fortunate to get a flight (Qatar) to Manila on November 25 and I felt glad when I found out that a Filipina Benedictine friend of mine was travelling on the same day on the same flight. The plane from Rome to Doha was half full, so, physical distancing was observed, but the flight from Doha to Manila was full of returning Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). Although we were wearing face masks and face shields throughout the trip (except when meals were served), I can't avoid wondering if the virus was lingering in the air!



At the Manila airport, we found ourselves in a very long queue for a complicated protocol: forms to be filled up, fees to be paid for the swab test, then the swab test, and hotel accommodation. I stayed in an accredited hotel until my swab test result was released the next day. I felt a sigh of relief when I received by email the negative result of my swab test. After two nights in our convent my brother came and fetched me. Meanwhile, my mother was undergoing laboratory tests and one of these was for covid19 to which she tested positive. I began to fear the worst.

On November 26 she was rushed from the small university hospital to a bigger hospital (approximately 20 kilometers from our home town), straight to the intensive care unit (ICU) where she stayed for 21 days. The first time I saw my mother since I arrived was inside the ICU. Her doctor allowed me to visit her because she was desperately looking for her children. Her Alzheimer's made her already serious condition even more complicated because she could not understand why she was isolated and no family member was with her. I had to wear the full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); it felt like going to war except that the enemy was invisible. I was shocked when I saw my mother; she had lost so much weight from the last time I saw her. I was allowed to be with her for 15 minutes at the most.

My mother went through all the "compassionate" treatment for covid19 (they said it is called "compassionate treatment" because there is really no cure for covid19). As I look back, I could say that those days in the hospital were like going on a roller-coaster ride; one day it seemed she was getting better, then suddenly, the drop, and at times it was a deep plunge. At some point, I told my siblings we had to prepare ourselves for the worst and accept whatever happens to our mother. Everyday, from morning till evening, I stayed in the waiting area beside the ICU. There was only a wall separating myself from my mother. I sat there, praying, watching and waiting...

As I sat there, sometimes with two or more other persons who, like me, were anxious to hear from the nurses or doctors about the condition of our loved ones, I started to notice the hospital workers: the cleaners, the nurses, the doctors, the guards, the ambulance drivers, the office clerks in the billing section, the pharmacists, etc., and I felt a very deep admiration for them. Gazing at them became my daily contemplation. Sharing the sorrows of others in the waiting area became my daily prayer too.

While my mother was in the ICU, my sister and her husband were both diagnosed with covid19 and immediately confined in another hospital. The anxiety we were feeling as a family was doubled or even tripled. Thank God, their condition did not worsen, and they didn't have to go through all the "compassionate treatment" procedures. After a week in the hospital they were both discharged.

The second week of my mother in the ICU was the most critical period; this was the time when she was entering the so called "cytokine storm". She was on the verge of being intubated when suddenly she started to respond to the last "treatment" – the third dose of hemoperfusion.

For myself and the rest of the family, this was a kind of a miracle. We are deeply grateful for the prayers offered by so many – in the Congregation as well as the MSC and MSC Sisters, by relatives and by friends. We remain forever grateful to her dedicated doctors, especially to her main doctor who told us "I will do everything for your mother; I will not give up!" From this experience, I have gained a deep admiration and care for the doctors and nurses and every day, I say a prayer for their safety and protection. I think of all those who work in our nursing homes; this pandemic has highlighted the nobility of their work and the great service they render to our sisters and other residents in the home. I think of all those confined and isolated in nursing homes, separated from their families and loved ones...one cannot imagine the depth of their loneliness.



The 21 days that my mother was in the ICU and the week in a private room were marked with uncertainties, the unknown and the uncontrollable. I realized how much we suffer from the things and events that we cannot control. I prayed hard for the grace to be open to what each day might bring, to be fully present to the NOW. I learned the value of being...of just being there, existing, alive, present...and that everything is a gift. I became so aware of our BREATH; every breath we take is precious.

We made voice recordings for our mother and video messages. The ICU nurses told us that my mother listened to these messages almost every time she was awake. Everyday, my mother called out the names of her children; hence, without seeing all of us, the nurses already knew our names. The pain resulting from being isolated from your loved ones is, I think, harder than the physical pain that covid patients feel. When asked what she wanted, my mother cried out, "freedom!" The confinement in a small space with no family members around, the isolation, the confusion, the faces of strangers all looking "weird" because of the personal protective equipment...all this is surely deeply traumatic for covid patients.

It has not been easy for me to find a quiet place, space and time to reflect, make sense and find the meaning of all these events. It felt like my world suddenly shrank from global to local. Every day,



life was revolving around taking care of my mother's needs. Every little gesture – feeding her, giving her medications, checking her oxygen, changing her diaper, cleaning her (morning care, as it is called in the hospital), praying with her and for her, etc., - gained an added value and meaning. It felt like there was a force within me stretching me beyond myself and reminding me of life's greater purpose – to love and to serve.

Yes, it seemed my circle of compassion shrank but as I look back, I realize that paradoxically, my circle of concern and compassion has actually widened. My direct and personal encounter with covid19 through my mother and other family members (10 members of our family contracted covid19) has created a large space in my heart for the thousands of people across the globe suffering from this dreaded contagious virus, including some members of our Congregation, particularly in Europe.

Sometimes, I ask myself, "What valuable lessons have I learned from this experience?" I believe the answers will gradually unfold as time goes by but for now, here are a few lessons learned:

- We are not in control of everything that happens to us. Nevertheless, we have a choice with regard to our attitude toward something we can't control or change. Jesus couldn't change the course of events leading to his crucifixion and death; yet, he chose to give his life freely, in love and for love he chose to forgive.
- Sometimes, in the face of suffering, all we can do is to be there, to be a PRESENCE, like Mary who stood at the foot of the cross, whose heart was pierced with a sword, who remained steadfast in her faith and hope in the midst of senseless violence and cruelty.
- It is okay to lament, to express one's feelings of grief, disillusion, powerlessness, despair like the psalmist who cries out "I am sinking in the deepest swamp and there is no firm ground. I have stepped into deep water and the waves are washing over me..." (Psalm 69:2) In embracing our vulnerability and fragility we open ourselves to a deeper experience of God's faithful love.
- This pandemic has clearly shown how connected we are to each other; we are truly one body...when one part suffers the whole body suffers.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to you, my sisters, for your concern, support and prayers for my mother and my family. I want to say a special thank you to all those who sent messages and emails, made phone calls...In addition to prayer, your words became a source of comfort and strength for me and my family.

How can I ever thank God for the hidden blessings emerging from these trials, for the precious moments with my mother and my family, for the Congregation's kindness and understanding of my absence in the Generalate?

I am deeply grateful to my community – Srs Merle, Laurentia, Madeleine, Elly, Margaret and Jenny - for their concern, support and prayers. I am also sincerely grateful to Sr Ruth

and the sisters in the Philippine Region for their regular phone calls and messages. Sadly and unexpectedly, the mother of Sr Ruth passed away on January 18, after a week's confinement in a hospital in Mactan, Lapu-Lapu. Our sincere condolences to Ruth and her family and assurance of prayers for the repose of the soul of her beloved mother.

As we approach the death anniversary of Mother Marie Louise, let us spend time reflecting on our life, as a person, as a religious, as a Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. The reality is that each passing day we are a step closer to our death. However, we tend not to think much about this stark reality because we are busy with "important matters."

My close encounter with covid19 has once again called my attention to what is most essential in life: relationship...with God, with others, with creation.

Let us once more ponder these wise words of Mother Marie Louise:

"Do you know what will reassure you most in your last moments? It will be to have sought in all things, great and small, only God's approval, to have closed your eyes to the faults of all your sisters, and of each in particular, and to have regard only for your own. God will be indulgent towards you in exactly the same measure as you are indulgent towards others. If you have excused the faults of your sisters, if you have been full of charity, kindness and gentleness towards them, Our Lord will excuse you, and will receive you with his own tender charity when your time comes to die."



(Mother Marie Louise, 1898 – Her Letters, #46)

May God bless and protect you always,
Marife Mendoza fdnsc



"2020 A year like no other "

Truly God was, is and will be with us
In the happy, difficult and hard moments of our lives

He was present in the....
acts of love we gave to those
who are in need of our love, prayers and
the kindness we showed to others and to one another.



We made face masks. From the money we received, we made bread and drinks for the poor on the feast of Our Lady.



God sustained us to proclaim with great faith and gratitude that " 2020 is a year like no other indeed "



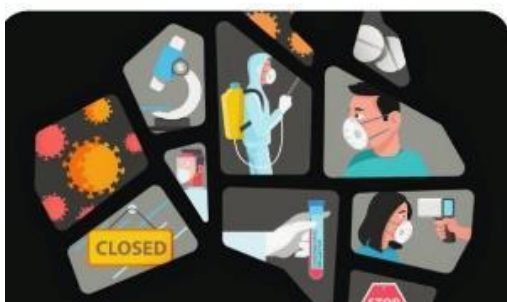
The Episcopal conference of Angola and Sao Tome was held in Cazombo. There were 20 bishops who came, six of them stayed in our house.

We have a vegetable garden and a peanut plantation. We harvested six bags, 50 kilos each bag.



Australia

Among all the difficulties and the positives and negatives of 2020 we are, above all, grateful for God's continued blessings to us here in Australia.



We are grateful for all those who taught us important lessons through their heroism and self-sacrificing love: doctors, nurses and health workers on the frontline; teachers who conducted remote learning; parents who home-schooled their children; supermarket staff who attended work each day; and all those



groups who reached out to help others, shining like bright stars as our expectations shifted and many people experienced fear, anxiety and a darkness they had never encountered before.



We are grateful for the cherished quiet, relaxed time at home in community, that provided strength, support and perspective and allowed us to read, reflect, pray, exercise, nurture our communities and adapt to the challenges of finding new ways to care for and minister to others and to be more conscious of the suffering of our worldwide human family.



We are grateful for the gift of technology that enabled us to participate in zoom meetings, *Mass on Demand*, virtually attend the funerals of loved ones and reach out to those in need of human connection.

Love and blessings from the Sisters of the Australian Province





Because we live connected to the nursing home, which gives us many advantages such as care, meals, maintenance,

Belgium

we are also at risk. The staff that works in the nursing home also helps our sisters. We try to be very careful, no one goes outside and there are no visits from family or friends. We got through the first wave well and also at the start of the second

wave, but at the beginning of November, there were several infections in the nursing home and then it was also our turn. On November 12th, Sr Jozefa was sick with a fever and tested positive. From the 14th of November, the daily Eucharist was cancelled. From that day on, the Fathers had to stay in their rooms for their meals. On the 15th of November, Sr Laurentia had fever and also tested positive.



On November 16th, the nursing home's management decided that we all had to go into quarantine and undergo a test. The test result was that 7 of the 24 sisters were positive. The MSC Fathers, who live with us all tested negative. It was quite an organisation to keep all the sisters in their rooms, take care of them and serve them their meals. The staff succeeded. We are very grateful to them. Thank God, most of the sisters were not too sick but for some, it was very

difficult. Sr Bernadette, who had been staying in the nursing home for ten years and had often been seriously ill, had also tested positive and could not survive. She died on November 15th. Her funeral took place in the parish church without the presence of any sister. We were all in quarantine. That was very difficult but there was no other solution.

Now we are all well again, but we still keep a safe distance from each other. We are already getting used to that. We come together again in the chapel for our prayers and in the dining room for our meals. For the rest of the time, we stay as much as possible in our group. We are very happy that we got through it without losses because in the nursing home several people died.



On Christmas Eve, the director and an employee performed some Christmas carols from a safe distance.

Our garden

and church were beautifully lit and attracted a lot of attention. In a safe way, we celebrated Christmas in the community. But now we are looking forward to the vaccine that we will receive in the week of the 18th of January. Hopefully, we will be able to live a more normal life and celebrate Eucharist again, which is so dear to all of us. The new life is in sight. We will welcome it with open arms.





2020 was a year with some experiences that we have never before imagined:

1. Vocation Promotion Meetings on Zoom

The FDNSC Vocation Promotion Team in Brazil has been organising Zoom meetings since June 2020. The meetings were very much appreciated by the young people. The main theme discussed was about the Chevalier Spirituality.



2. Zoom Provincial Assembly

This happened in November 2020. It was the first time that all the Sisters were able to participate in the meetings for two days. We had time for Ongoing Formation, discussed new developments in the Province and we were able to pray together.



3. Zoom Christmas Day

We got together again for a Zoom Christmas Day. Sisters sang Christmas carols, delivered Christmas messages and we prayed the Vespers. It was a nice time that we spent together, and we were able to see each other.



Cameroun

Worldwide and Global Crisis from the Coronavirus pandemic with the design of imposing the mask, an appropriate vocabulary, and confinement. **A tough year** for humankind accustomed to sociability, suddenly forced to live at a physical distance, in favor of the virtual relationship of media communication. At

least **communications technology has distinguished itself** as a possibility for still having connection with everyone.

2020 **What a nightmare for families**, tears flowed freely, the lifeless bodies buried without dignity, sometimes it looks like war time.

2020 **Great time of trial for the Church**, her pastors, and the people of God. Oh yes, the market and the bank have had an easier time getting ahead. As for the Church, the first word for her was closure! Fortunately, even the benches can praise the Lord, master of creation, to inspire souls in favor of a spiritual worship which can be celebrated everywhere and by all, as long as our faith in God remains fervent.

2020 **Particular grace** to strengthen our Hope in Christ our Savior and to strengthen our relationship with the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven and earth whom we like to call Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. 2020 has formed witnesses of Hope for a "New world" because the presence of this nasty virus **forces us to review**, each at the level and according to one's vocation.



Sr Marie Solange OKO,fdnsc (Cameroun)

For the Year 2020



I can say that it was a year of violence, solidarity and prayer. Believers and non-believers all had their hands extended to Heaven.

A year of awareness of sin and its implications in life.

Sr Suzanne Zang, FDNSC

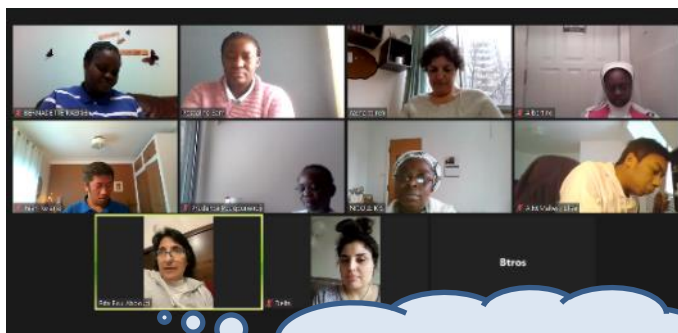


The call to make new things happen: the year 2020

Canada

The year 2020 has been for us in Montreal, a year of life and engagement online. Despite the confinement caused by Covid, our hearts remained active and engaged. Thanks to new technology (Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp), we have created something new to continue our formation and putting it into practice by reaching out to people in various locations to renew their vital life force. Also, because of this situation, to save our lives and those of others, money no longer circulates in our hands by decision of the IFHIM's managers: everything is done online (groceries, personal needs, etc.).

The Year 2020: an unforgettable and creative year in which to navigate life.



A collective project with migrants.

Reviewing experiences as a team, with a view towards renewing their vital life force.

Sr Pascaline Sam is one of our sisters from Burkina Faso. She is in Montreal, Canada, doing a formation program for formators there.



D.R. Congo

2020, a year to remember forever! We have lived situations that we had never experienced before, and we hope not to live again. It has brought us many changes and new things such as: confinement, de-confinement, protective measures, social distancing, curfew, death without mourning... But above all, it has also helped us in

a positive way in our relationship with God and with our sisters in community.



In 2020, we lived in **confinement**, the rhythm of our lives changed, **churches were closed**: we had to organize **celebrations of the Word** or follow Eucharistic celebrations through the media; and to top it all off, we



celebrated Holy Week at home.

In 2020, **certain customs of our culture have changed**: for funerals we no longer mourn our dead as we used to do where the bodies were exposed until the following day; to respect protective measures, the bodies are taken directly from the morgue to the cemetery.



In 2020, in order to respect **social distancing**, schools and universities changed their schedules: **students are obliged to follow online**

courses instead of being in the auditorium.

In 2020, **we prayed a lot!** A year of faith, of hope, of meditation, of supplicationThe year **has brought us closer to God.**





2020, year of **economic recession**: year of little revenue; we have lost our salaries, our bonuses... because of the closure of schools and the noticeable reduction of sick people in our health centers. The sick have fled the hospitals for fear of being counted among the victims of Covid-19.

In 2020 our faces are distorted because of the wearing of masks; and handwashing becomes regular and mandatory.

In 2020, we have cultivated the **spirit of creativity** to occupy our time. Manual work and especially gardening was valued. We have eaten vegetables from our garden since the confinement.

In 2020, community life was consolidated by the initiation of recreation activities and relaxation in community...



These are, briefly, the words and phrases that have characterized our year 2020.

Your sisters: Sandra NDIOBO et Trinité EBENYA, fdnsc of the Région of Congo.



Oh 2020! The year 2020!

At your start, you were a year like others
 In number of days, a year like others
 In natural phenomenon, a year like others.
 Oh, 2020. A year of grace!
 A year of peace! A year of joy!
 A year of blessings! God always gives grace!



But alas! The year 2020! All was turned upside down in the blink of an eye. World, wake up. Africa, wake up!
 There is a dangerous and invisible enemy, wake up!
 There is a danger, a murderer, wake up! That one is a little virus named Covid-19, wake up! It has brought about a murderous pandemic, wake up!

Oh 2020! A surprising year, a year not like others!
 Oh 2020! An exceptional year, a year not like others!
 You were a year that knew a natural disaster!
 The pandemic Covid-19 has imposed its natural power in the spiritual domain. It necessitated another social order.

- ✚ The Churches were closed. Masses with the faithful were suspended. For the first time in the history of the Church, the faithful of the world could not receive communion either on Holy Thursday or on Easter Sunday. For the first time, there were no baptisms at the Easter Vigil!
 - ✚ The schools were closed, nearly 2 million students no longer went to class. A challenging educational path.
 - ✚ 2020! Year of televised lessons, media modalities!
- Year 2020! Nevertheless many diplomas, Year 2020!

✚ The borders were closed! Year of forbidden travels!
Year 2020, a year not like others!

Oh 2020! You have disrupted the social order! The year that separated us from our extended families which constitutes a true basic social unit of the kinship system of society. Oh 2020! Year of ruptured families, a year of deaths nearly without mourning.

Oh 2020! Too many sanitary constraints: inconvenient hand washing, wearing a facemask, social distancing. Oh 2020, an exceptional year, a year of protective gears. A trying year! Yes, the year requiring absolute respect for protective measures.



Tens of millions of people have fallen into extreme poverty because of their health care expenses. A year of confidence! A year of mistrust! A year of uncertainty! A year in which the other has become a potential threat. A year of fear of being contaminated and contaminating others. Oh 2020! A year like no other.

Elsewhere in Congo, especially in the province of Equateur, in Mbandaka! 2020! Coronavirus! Ebola! Both impose themselves, both ravage! What insecurity! Painful history!

Oh 2020! The year when the world was surprised by the pandemic of Covid-19 with all its social and economic consequences! Year of low income and economic recession, budgets were reduced, some companies closed down! Many people lost their jobs.

We fought, we won! The Holy See prayed, God saved. The people of God prayed too.

Oh 2020, Year of Crisis which also revealed the best of humanity. There has been much solidarity and creativity in different parts of the world and even within our Congregation. Our Generalate of the FNDSC came to the aid of our provinces and regions.

Oh 2020! We prayed, we prayed a lot!
Year of faith, year of hope! Year of repentance!
Year of reconciliation!
Year of meditation, year of supplications! Year of relationships and connectivity with God and with each other. We have surrendered ourselves entirely to God!
2020, year of divine mercy.

2020, a year to focus and get back to basics. Going back to basics to reflect on the meaning of our actions and their consequences on our environment. Going back to basics to take time, to appreciate the small pleasures of life and to know how to be content with what we have.

Let this call to order be the time for us to learn to become more humble and human. Because ultimately, this virus reminds us that we are vulnerable, dust in this world and that we will always need each other. So let's get back to the essential. In this moment of health emergency, in which it is necessary to act without putting off until tomorrow, may the Lord sustain us on our paths of integral conversion for an integral humanity. May he help us to come out of Covid-19 transformed from within, capable of serving him in this wounded world. In this way, we will be able to rediscover and cultivate the human values and qualities that allow us to live the compassion of his Sacred Heart among ourselves and towards all those wounded by life.

Sr Sandra NDIOBO MUSINGA, FNDSC/ RDC



France

2020... a year unlike others.
3 words come to mind:
Anxiety, support, letting go

Anxiety in the face of the magnitude of the pandemic, all the unknowns linked to the virus, all the suffering experienced around the world.

Support

A challenge, a call to support the sisters in their daily life and spiritual journey... not so simple when we cannot meet... fortunately there is still the telephone, mail and digital!

Governing in times of pandemic requires creativity!

Another call...attention to the isolated people in my environment.

Letting go

Do everything in my power to avoid contamination (preventive measures), remain prudent, but choose to live and move forward in trust in God, in trust in researchers, caregivers, leaders. Believe that life will be the strongest.

A ray of sunshine in the pandemic: the two-day session with our Sisters of Bethany, led by a psychologist. It allowed me to take the measure of each one's suffering, of their courage and of all the resources that are in each one. It also touched me very much to realize all the gestures of solidarity and benevolence that we have benefited from.



The fresco below, built during this time of exchange, illustrates the road travelled.

Sr Marie-Christine Kunzi



The year 2020 was marked by confinement.

We suffered from isolation and loneliness because we could neither meet nor talk to each other.

However, there were some positive points: the inside telephone worked: we called each other.

We did not have the Eucharist, but we had Mass every day on the radio on RCF.

When we came out of the confinement, we were fortunate to have Father Mayor who celebrated Mass every day in our chapel.

Some of the Sisters made this unexpected time, a time of rest, of reading the Saints, of the Bible, a beautiful spiritual experience.



Béthanie (our Sisters in the Nursing Home)

A few morsels from the Royallieu Compiègne Community (Sister Marie-Luce, Sr Marie-Thérèse Brethomé, Sr Suzanne Piquet, Sr Marthe)

First of all, and this is very important, we are fortunate to have a chapel close to our house, which is open all day long, so that many people come and only have to push the door to come and pray there. It is not uncommon to see Iraqi women or other foreigners crying, coming to pray in their own language!



Every Thursday, Mass is followed by prayer for mothers and every first Friday of the month, Mass is followed by adoration for vocations.

On the other hand, we have several people who come to ring the bell to ask for something to eat, those who have little money. And since we are lucky enough to receive a lot of food, we can give a lot! It is especially Sister Suzanne who is responsible for this and who can give wisely!



A little example pleased us: some time ago, a young person, Nathalie, asked us for 20 Euros to go to a hotel in a nearby town where she hoped to find work. Then, this week, she came to thank us for helping her because she was hired!

2020 seen from Saint Jean de Braye (Sr Denise, Sr Marie-Thérèse David, Sr Raymonde)



February: panic

Viruses know no borders! The coronavirus went from China to Italy and will certainly arrive in France. We have replenished basic supplies of the community (pasta, rice, flour, sugar, sardines...) and medicines. The postponement of the General Chapter confirms the seriousness of the situation...

March - April 2020 suffering

Overcrowded hospitals, sick people waiting, many deaths, confinement... Fear that the coronavirus might reach our Sisters in Issoudun.

Sr Denise sees her back pain getting worse: no possibility of doing the necessary tests to diagnose it... we have to wait... in pain... To eat together, we take our meals upstairs to the rooms and we pray together in Sr Denise's room.



May: a glimmer of hope

Finally masks for everyone...

Sr Marie-Thérèse can go to the dentist to repair a tooth that was broken three months ago! Sr Raymonde is digging up the garden to plant tomatoes and dahlias in the hope that the parish church, which has remained closed, will be able to open again... At the end of May, Sr Denise has an appointment for the long-awaited exam... phew!



The administrative work is taking on hitherto unknown forms for us: videoconferences, multiplication of access codes on the Internet for administrative procedures, etc...

June - July - August: relaxation

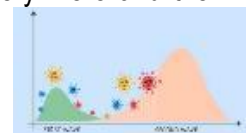
The appointments for Sr. Denise follow one another: she was operated on July 7 by a Muslim surgeon who saw that Denise was a religious. A small discussion ensued and Sr Denise's affirmation: "we have the same God" touched his heart. The return home was done with joy and with the active participation of the other two sisters who made sure that everything went well.



The epidemic in France is slowly calming down and life is slowly returning to normal. Healthy walks, family vacations, visits from two nieces, spiritual retreats, the joy of knowing that our Sisters living in EHPAD in Issoudun have been able to meet together to share and follow some conferences..

September - October - November: the virus returns

The numbers are going crazy everywhere and the TV news channels broadcast terrible images taken on every continent... In addition to the virus, there is news of disasters: typhoons in Asia, floods in France, wars that continue, famines that threaten... We are re-confined then under curfew.



December: hope, trust: a certain serenity

The time of Advent and Christmas allow us to immerse ourselves anew into what is essential in life: the presence of God. The news continues to be alarming in many countries, but we have understood that we must live with this virus... The encyclical of Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, resounds as a call to live another way!



COMMUNITY OF NIMES (Sr Nelly, Sr Noëlle)

Phones, e-mails, and mail allowed us to get news from the communities. We know that for some the times were more difficult...

In Nîmes, our life during this confinement was quite calm. Given our ages and our illnesses, we are people at risk. Thus, we stopped our activities outside. Prayer and the telephone made up for this lack.

Thanks to KTO (Catholic television), we had everything for our spiritual life... We traveled easily from "La Bonne Mère in Marseille" to the "Grotto of Massabielle in Lourdes" and a few short trips to the capital.



The daily news on TV made us aware of the happenings of the world and allowed us to share the sorrows, joys and sufferings of our brothers and sisters.



Ireland



Well it's all feeling very grim at the moment so here is a little poem (sent by Sr Mairead Kelleher):

T'was a week before Christmas,
And all through the town,
People wore masks,
That covered their frown.



The frown had begun
Way back in the Spring,
When a global pandemic
Changed everything.

They called it corona,
But unlike the beer,
It didn't bring good times,
It didn't bring cheer.



Airplanes were grounded,
Travel was banned.
Borders were closed
Across air, sea and land.

As the world entered lockdown
To flatten the curve,
The economy halted,



And folks lost their nerve.
From March to July
We rode the first wave,
People stayed home,
They tried to behave.

When summer emerged
The lockdown was lifted.
But away from caution,
Many folks drifted.



Now it's December
And cases are spiking,
Wave two has arrived,
Much to our disliking.



It's true that this year
Has had sadness a plenty,
We'll never forget
The year 2020.

And just 'round the corner -
The holiday season,

But why be merry?
Is there even one reason?

To decorate the house
And put up the tree,
Who will see it,
No one but me.



But outside my window
The rain gently falls,
And I think to myself,
Let's deck the halls!

So, I gather the ribbon,
The garland and bows,
As I play those old carols,
My happiness grows.

Christmas is not cancelled
And neither is hope.
If we lean on each other,
I know we can cope ♥️🙌



Just a few thoughts on 2020

Like everyone else it was a very difficult and challenging year for us. The first wave came so quickly and so unexpectedly that we found it challenging to go into lockdown and the isolation that followed was a constant challenge for many of us. We were blessed to have daily Mass in the Convent up to the end of March but then our Chaplain thought it wiser to stay at home as he is quite vulnerable. Soon after in early April there were cases of the Virus in the Nursing Home and a small number of residents contracted it and passed away. Sadly Sr. Fachanan was one of those who succumbed to the virus and she was quietly laid to rest in the Plot belonging to the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Ballybay, on the 25th of April 2020. Seven sisters attended the funeral. The sun shone and the birds sang and our little group sang the Salve Regina and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart as the coffin was lowered. May her dear soul rest in peace.



Sr Anna Maria and Sr Elizabeth enjoying an ice lolly

On the positive side, Sr. Anna Maria and Sr. Elizabeth who also tested positive at the time, survived and made a good recovery. *Buiochas mor le Dia*. The seven sisters in the Convent remain safe. We are in another lock down now and this is our fourth (I have lost count) but I do know that we had some respite during July and August and early September and we were able to go out to the Parish Church for Mass and able to travel

further than the five kilometres.

Now we stay at home, all that we had taken for granted like visiting, shopping, suddenly changed and once again on the 26th December as the third wave hit us we entered another lockdown. Like everyone else we wash our hands, wear face



Sr Aloysius Diamond Jubilee. High point of the year. Fr Patsy celebrated the Mass 25th August 2020

coverings, refrain from embracing and maintain distance, always mindful that the action of each one of us has the potential to protect or endanger each other. We are more aware of the importance of keeping in touch by phone and we are reminded that we have the potential to benefit others by holding them in prayer. In fact various people have contacted us requesting prayers for sick and loved ones in distress. We have time to pray to reflect and to think of others who are in need of prayer. On the whole we have become more reflective, quieter and more aware of the beauty of nature and of our surroundings.



Our Church has been part of the collective response in seeking to act in the interest of those who are most vulnerable. We have sought to live out our Faith in the context of the Corona virus. Faith has been a great source of strength and support throughout this year.

We are blessed to have Sr. Vianney, our computer wizard, who is ever ready to live stream Holy Mass from various churches and from our own Parish church on a daily basis during lockdown. We were able to participate virtually, in prayer services and pilgrimages, and even a Retreat. This has been a lifeline to our

community. We are also able to get on Zoom for Meetings.



We are now even more aware of our interconnectedness and we must all try to work together to build a more hope filled community. We are constantly being reminded that God is at the helm and that all the efforts to stop the spread of the virus are very limited as new variants appear all the time. The vaccine is to be rolled out at St. Anne's Nursing Home on Tuesday 20th January, so that is giving us hope. Older communities will be following in some weeks we hope! In the meantime we try to keep safe and well.

We find it difficult to stay the course but we also know that if we are to experience a new dawn, we will be able to lend an encouraging word or hand to those who find the journey wearisome and tiresome. We live in Faith and Hope that some day soon there may be an end to Covid 19.



Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo aris

(A Gaelic wish - That we may be alive this time next year)



Here in Italy, the "State of Emergency" has just been extended to 30 April 2021. We still have a long way to go but we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel. Looking back at the year 2020, I see a year when TIME and SPACE have been redefined. The three phrases that for me describe what the year had been like are:

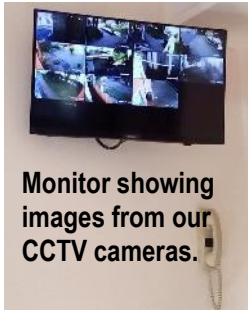


Suspended Time

Since the arrival of the corona virus to Italy in late February, we have been living in "suspended time." Our General Chapter scheduled for March 2020 was cancelled just in time before the whole country went into national lockdown. We could not plan ahead because we have no idea (even until now) when international travels will be safe again and allowed by the different countries. Everything is tentative. For now, the "future" is suspended and we live in the present, one day at a time.

This suspended time is also "available time" for many things – projects, community works, personal connections, and all kinds of webinars and zoominars. Time suspended, time available! And our biggest project is the installation of the FDNCS Generalate Security System triggered by the break-in on 29 October where burglars entered our Generalate from one of our front windows - four rooms entered, two rooms ransacked! Now we have wireless alarms fitted in almost all of our windows and doors, we





Monitor showing images from our CCTV cameras.

have big spot lights and video cameras all around our property with monitors in the dining room and the meeting room, and a video doorbell too (citofono). Our cameras and doorbell record all movements, we have the ability to playback and even save what was recorded. We can even watch all the cars passing in front of our gate from the comfort of our dining room!

So near and yet so far

The Generalate and our Italian Community live just a few meters away from each other. We can see each other's houses from our windows. Yet, since 9 March 2020, we have not been with each other,

neither for Mass nor for meals. Our traditional joint meals on Easter, feast of Our Lady and Christmas have all been cancelled. The only times we saw each other (with masks and separated by more than 2 meters) were during the funerals of our sisters who passed away during the lockdown. The same can be said of our friends here in Rome. Since March, none of us had been able to meet friends and enjoy a cup of coffee with them, face to face. Really, they are so near... and yet so far!



So far and yet so near

The opposite can be said of sisters, families and friends from other countries. Thanks to technology – smart phones, laptops, various platforms like Zoom, googleMeet, WhatsApp and Facebook – distance has been bridged. We live in a different “space.” Just one example - in November, two of our sisters in the Generalate attended a week-long seminar on project funding with six of our sisters from different countries in Africa. Although miles and miles apart, each one was just a screen away from the other. Suddenly, it did not matter anymore where one is in the world, we could be, and we actually were, together for celebrations, meetings and conferences. So far and yet so near!

I look back and thank God for it has truly been a unique, challenging and blessed journey – when both TIME and SPACE were simply beyond our control. 2020 was a year when the only things that were certain are that we are in God's loving hands, living in God's time, secure in God's space!

Sr Merle Salazar, fdnsc



BRIDGES (Sr Narie Borja, fdnsc)

I would like to use a bridge as a symbol to describe the year 2020 in our community. Bridges are a very essential part in our road of life. There are different forms and shapes of bridges. Some are short, some

are long and some of them are colourful and beautiful. No matter what the form or shape, the bridge is essential and the purpose for which it is made remains the same. Life`s journey is also like crossing many bridges. Sometimes we are invited to cross a bridge with no choice but go through to it knowing and believing that there is something good ahead of the journey.



This is what had happened to me personally. Maybe this year was the longest bridge I ever crossed and I am still crossing. I don't know what lies ahead of the crossing but with confident hope, I believe all will be well because God's word is always true - I AM WITH YOU in all your crossing.

Life is full of uncertainties. Fears and doubts confront us every day. But with hope in our hearts we continue to face the unknown BRIDGES of life with great trust that God is there. After 25 years since the foundation of the Japan mission, we are invited to cross to a new way of living and loving as Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. The purpose is the same - to be God's heart for others!

Parakan Community

2020 is a year unlike any for the whole world. In Indonesia, since March, 2020 President Jokowi has declared that the country is

Java (Indonesia)

experiencing a non-natural disaster or pandemic due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The Indonesian people are experiencing an economic and social crisis and we, the Indonesian FDNSC Sisters, have also been affected. Like everyone else, we have to maintain social distancing, work from home, learn from home and worship from home. Offices and schools were closed including the Ade Irma Suryani Kindergarten and Santa Maria Elementary School in Parakan. The Bunda Hati Kudus (Our Lady of the Sacred Heart) Parakan Retreat House is temporarily not holding retreats and some employees were forced to temporarily stay at home. Churches and other places of worship have been temporarily closed, including the Parakan Holy Family Church.

As a result of this pandemic, many people lost their jobs due to Termination of Employment. The economy is getting more difficult, there are many poor people whose lives are getting harder due to the prolonged economic crisis. Crimes also increased. It is really very sad and painful. However, the Indonesian government did not remain silent. Government officials are trying to overcome the economic crisis and help the Indonesian people, especially those who are very poor, and trying various ways to provide health services for those exposed to Covid 19 by providing hospitals, medical personnel, doctors, nurses and volunteers. Those who died were buried properly according to health protocols.



Thank God, after three months of the implementation of the Large-Scale Social Restrictions policy that severely limited activities, in July 2020, President Jokowi had invited the public to live in peace with Covid-19. This means there is no need to be afraid and panic about the corona virus, but remain vigilant and be able to adjust to this new situation. So the so-called "New Normal", a new life order or new habit, was introduced which mainly means wearing masks, maintaining distance and washing hands diligently (3 M). Maintain body immunity and pray diligently to God to end the Covid-19 outbreak.



In the midst of a situation of struggle to face the Covid-19 Pandemic, we celebrated Christmas on December 25, the birthday of the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ. The fundamental question for us is, of course, what is the meaning of Christmas for us when we are facing the Covid-19 challenge? Is Allah still with us? The answer is Yes! Allah is still with all of us in any situation forever. He is still God Immanuel, God with us. **It is our faith as Christians**, as in the Scriptures, God's presence in the lives of His people in Old Testament times was marked by "a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire" (Ex. 13: 21).



It is written in the Old Testament: "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night". **God's presence is forever despite the unfaithfulness of His people.** It is truly evident through the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior to save all people from their sins. He was born to atone for our sins. In Matthew 1:18-25 we read "But before they were married, she learned that she was going to have a baby by God's Holy Spirit... Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

So, Parakan community celebrated Christmas 2020 in a simple but meaningful way. The teachers and staff at Ade Irma Suryani Kindergarten and Santa Maria Elementary School also celebrated Christmas with simplicity, but full of joy.



We also took part in choirs of the Holy Family Parish Church of Parakan on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning with a limited number of people and strict health protocols. Even in the midst of this pandemic, we share our love by providing Christmas charity, especially for those who are poor and needy, even though we also experienced difficulties in the school. We could still feel the joy of Christmas together in Parakan community and with the teachers, even in the midst of this pandemic.

Conclusion: The good news and joy of Christmas is truly extraordinary, since in the midst of a situation where we are hit by various problems, especially because of the Covid-19 pandemic, this joyful news is conveyed, namely God is always with us. Because He is Immanuel. God loves us so much that He came into the world and became human. Celebrating Christmas during the Covid-19 pandemic, through this year's Christmas theme, "They will name Him Immanuel, which means God is with us", gives a message to us that in any condition and situation God never leaves us, because He is Immanuel, God is with us. Let each one of us value this Christmas celebration with full confidence that God is with us, no matter what difficulties we face.



And we are still grateful for God's mercy in 2020, even in the midst of this pandemic because schools are still running, even though there are many difficulties and with health protocols, we can still enjoy life in 2021, be blessed with health and we can still serve children in the school even though online. There are so many reasons to be grateful - for all the gifts of God, especially for God's presence in 2020, for the Child Jesus who was born in our hearts, and for being able to greet the new year 2021. We are convinced that God is with us – Immanuel - and with a renewed spirit we journey to the year 2021.



Sr. M. Goretti Indra Sartika, FDNSC

New Normal Life of Pius Senior High School in Tegal, Central Java

In early February 2020, Indonesia was busy with the evacuation of students living in Wuhan-China to return to Indonesia. Pius Senior High School got a phone call asking if there were any alumni studying in Wuhan. So, I was trying to look for all graduates data studying in China. After searching we found several alumni studying in China, so the school quickly followed up by contacting their families in Tegal. Soon we got the information from all Pius Senior High School alumni that they had returned and lived at home before being infected with the deadly virus. Watching the world news about Corona Virus Infection was terrible as we saw the virus spread from China to other countries. At that time, Indonesia had not felt the anxiety yet. It was only in March that the Corona Virus attacked Indonesia and spread to big cities and even villages.



In Tegal City, the local government issued a decision to undergo a Lockdown, main roads were closed and heavily guarded. The church at that time was still carrying out normal activities, but was more alert and vigilant and anticipated Covid-19 by removing the holy water fonts and prohibiting people from shaking hands during the sign of peace. The Sacred Heart of Jesus Tegal Parish still holds face to face Eucharistic Celebrations even though the neighboring Dioceses (Semarang and Jakarta) have already switched to online Eucharistic Celebrations both by Live streaming and TVRI (Indonesian Television) broadcasts. However, it was not long before the Purwokerto Diocese issued an official letter asking the Parishes to immediately eliminate liturgical activities that involved many people and replace them with online Eucharistic Celebrations.

At the beginning of the Lockdown, our community was following the Eucharistic Celebrations via radio broadcasts, with the permission of the Parish Priest, we were allowed to receive Holy Communion. Based on the consideration that our community is in the same complex as the Church, the Sisters were eventually allowed to attend the Eucharistic Celebrations in the Church. During the Holy Week the Sisters are assigned as Liturgy Officers (Choir, Readers, Psalmists) in the livestreamed masses so that every day the Sisters practice singing. People can also follow via radio broadcasting service. Since all dioceses and parishes hold mass online, people have the opportunity to choose the parish and time. Even the Archdiocese of Jakarta collaborates with TVRI to broadcast the Eucharistic celebrations so that it is easier for the faithful to participate. However, the faithful still feel that there is something lacking because they cannot receive Holy Communion physically but only in a spiritual way.

On the Closing of Marial Month, on the Pentecost Sunday, the FDNSC Tegal Community sang special songs . You can watch it on this link - <https://youtu.be/qFJnb2luU8U>



The FDNSC Tegal Community feels privileged for having been given the liturgical tasks, especially during the Eucharistic Celebrations, so they did not find it difficult to attend the daily Eucharist. So even during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Tegal Community was still able to carry out daily activities like pre-covid time. They were able to carry out regular spiritual activities: prayer together (morning, evening), spiritual reading, routine recollections every month and even confession.

The impact of the change was that the annual retreat was held online. Fortunately, the Parish Priest was willing to serve Eucharistic Celebrations in the Community, including the closing Mass of the retreat and the sacrament of reconciliation. The community had to develop new habits, limit going out of town and always implementing

strict health protocols. During the pandemic, the Community also participated in giving snacks to anyone passing the road in front of our convent. The News of the activities of the sisters was heard by the Social Economy Development Division of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish and so they helped with the cost of making snacks. Then, we were making different kinds of snack for one week to be distributed to Muslims who were about to break their fast. We were very happy because the Muslims joyfully accepted the snacks. In less than 30 minutes the snacks had run out. As a result, we lacked sleep during the week we prepared the snacks, starting from preparing ingredients, cooking, and packing until they were ready to be distributed to others. After finishing our duties at school, we prepared for the distribution of snacks. We were tired but happy.



With the Parish Priest, we distributed snacks on the street in front of our convent in Tegal.



In the field of education, we really felt a lot of changes in life arrangements and learning methods. As the principal of Pius Senior High School in Tegal, I would like to share my experiences of how to implement educational work of teaching-learning during the covid-19 pandemic.

The Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia issued a circular to carry out the Distance Learning Model in schools. In the beginning we were confused because of this sudden change. We did not know how to search for the required learning methods online, so at the beginning, the activities were carried out by sharing learning materials through the Whatsapp Group. The Central

Java Provincial Education Office issued a circular so that schools are able to manage interesting online learning and not be a burden to students. Pius Senior High School prepared teachers with In-House Training on various online learning methods so that the teachers are truly ready and able to present interesting learning methods.

Day by day, cases of Covid-19 increased in cities so online learning continued. The



Joint Principals' In House Training

Final Examinations and Graduation Test were done online. Extra-curricular activities stopped, there were no sports activities and canteens were closed. The teachers who went to the school were scheduled while others worked from home. The school was deserted with no students entering the staff and the principal's office. This situation led to boredom for both students and teachers. Parents felt overwhelmed as they had to assist their children in learning. The Principals' Union Organization wants to reopen schools with strict health protocols.

In my opinion, schools cannot teach Character Education through distance learning, especially at Pius Senior High School which has a vision and mission to present a Spirituality of the Heart. Pius Senior High School includes character education and aims to foster the 4 Cs (Compassion, Competence, Care and Change). Due to this covid-19 pandemic, character education is not fully implemented because every day lesson hours are limited and subjects that are tested are prioritized. All schools expect that learning is carried out face-to-face because the teachers are not satisfied with online learning methods. Pius Senior High School conducted a survey through a questionnaire with the following result: Parents who allow their children to participate in face-to-face learning were 71% (of 298 students). Supported by teachers who want Face-to-Face Learning, the principal made a request to the Tegal Branch of Education Office to reopen face-to-face learning since the city of Tegal is already in Green Zone (safe area), Face-to-Face learning is possible. The Tegal Branch Office of Education did not immediately respond to this request. Two weeks later the Head of the Tegal Branch of Education Office together with the school supervisor and his staff visited Pius Senior High School to conduct a school readiness verification to carry out Face-to-Face Learning. From the result of the visit, the Head of the Tegal Branch Office of Education appointed Pius Senior High School as the Face-to-Face Learning Pilot



Project representing private schools in Central Java Province. The Head of Education Office said that Pius Senior High School deserves to be a Pilot Project because the area is large and the classrooms and the toilets are clean.



The Head of the Education Office - Tegal Branch with his Staff Conducted a Verification for Face-to-Face Learning Readiness

Our initial activity was that we were called to the Central Java Provincial Education Office for a presentation with the Seven Pilot Projects of schools. Pius Senior High School displayed a video of the Implementation of New Normal Life (<https://youtu.be/Z0nUBi-29PQ>). Our video presentation was appreciated by the Provincial Education Staff but is still being revised and must be completed with a Guidebook. We had fulfilled all the requirements and then we had to present them all again to the Provincial Office. The second time in this presentation we had to complete with videos of student activities from going to school to going home from school. (<https://youtu.be/SZerXxFteW4>).

During the trial we were monitored by the Educational Officers, both the Branch and Provincial Education Officers, and we had to make daily reports. On the trial days we felt tired because we had to serve the guests who came to do some comparative studies. We also had to serve students in implementing health protocols. In the beginning one parent worried about her daughter taking face-to-face learning, however after witnessing how we served students who took face-to-face learning with the Health Protocol implementation services from the Pius High School Team, she was relieved and entrusted her daughter to the school to protect and keep her healthy.



Sr. M. Lidwina, fdnsc, making her presentation

Red Cross Officers and Pius High School Officers Ready to Implement Room Spraying



Red Cross Officers and Pius High School Officers Ready to Implement Room Spraying



Principal, Teachers and staff in collaboration cleaning all rooms



Temperature check and handwashing for everyone who enters the school.



During the trial, our school had a visit from the city government represented by the mayor. The visit was a tremendous support because our school is a Catholic school, but the government paid attention and even provided support. For 14 days we conducted a Face-to-Face Learning trial during the Covid -19 Pandemic with health protocols and Pius Senior High



The Deputy Mayor of Tegal and his entourage visited our school

School was successful, no students got sick or were exposed to the corona virus. Our school, one of seven Senior High Schools authorized to conduct face to face learning, is still asked to make Face-to-Face Learning Implementation report presentations along with videos. The presentation of Pius Senior High School was in the form of a video playback of Face-to-Face Learning. Pius Senior High School had received appreciation from the Educational Head Officer and was used as an example because the implementation of Face-to-Face Learning was completed with strict implementation of health protocols. As a document, we submit a Face-to-Face Learning Guide Book along with a Video.



Sr. Lidwina as Pius Senior High School Principal Attended the Presentation Program for the Report on the Implementation of Face-to-Face Learning Trials.

Pius Senior High School is able to make use of this event as a means of promotion to introduce itself to the public and videos are uploaded on Youtube. Of the seven senior high schools designated for the trials, Pius Senior High School is the only private school. We see that this event is an opportunity that God has granted us. We see it as a spiritual experience of how God really privileged our school. This event not only promoted our school as an institution but promoted the Spirituality of the Heart revealed in the Living Practice of the Four Cs (Compassion, Competence, Care and Change). In the implementation of this trial, it was very clear how our teachers carried out the four core values of the school. Our teachers are passionate about serving students, helping students, being disciplined in

implementing health protocols while teaching in the classes.

As a conclusion, the pandemic period is filled with anxiety and fear but there were spiritual values that developed. In the community and the apostolate, we had the opportunity to carry out the Spirituality of the Congregation. We became more caring towards others and more contemplating to reflect on God's will behind this pandemic. The Tegal community feels called to serve more in pastoral work, especially in the field of liturgy in parishes. The community continues to receive Eucharistic celebration services every day. Pius Senior High School itself has the opportunity to establish good relationships and communication with the community and the Education Office. We are involved in the concerns of the parents of students who are exposed to Covid-19 and some have even died. As a community, we pray for them. With Distance Learning Methods (on line), teachers are encouraged to formulate attractive online learning. We hope that this pandemic will end soon so that we can continue the dream of our founder, Father Jules Chevalier of "Presenting God's healing love in a world that is sick and injured."



Sr. M. Lidwina Suprapti PBHK

BOOSTING TALENT AND ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THE PANDEMIC TIME IN 2020

Our life realities keep rolling and turning from day to day. We experience grief, joy-sadness, success-failure. These two sides of life experience have colored the journey of our life every day until now. In 2020, more than 83% of people around the world, experienced grief, sadness and deep suffering as a result of the Covid-19 disaster. We are filled with anxiety and great fear. How sad are our hearts when we hear that our relatives have tested positive for the corona virus and finally died.

Many of our brothers and sisters have also lost their jobs and are unemployed. The order of life seems to be torn apart by this tiny, risky, even deadly virus. As Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, we are invited to reflect further on the values of our life experiences during this difficult time. We are called to survive and live in carrying out the missions entrusted to each one of us in any situation, especially in difficult times.

Our mission in the field of education is an effective means of proclaiming the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We, who are entrusted with managing the schools, continue to do our best to advance the quality of education. The difficulties and challenges that we experience invite us to learn more, have a fighting spirit, persevere and innovate ourselves. The main goal of our struggles is for students to fully grow and develop intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, that they experience God's love. We, as educators, continue to strive to explore the talents and the competences of students through the school curriculum that we apply in schools. We process together with students to develop themselves as much as possible in order to achieve their dreams and prepare for the future. We try to complete the facilities that can support the learning process and can facilitate teachers in educating students. We continue to update the school management system to keep up with the current developments, also during the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak.



Nathanael Arka Pandya, student of SD Pius Wonosobo, the First Champion of the National Student Arts Festival and Competition (FLS2N) in the field of solo singing at the Central Java Province level in 2020.

Painful experiences during the covid-19 pandemic opened our hearts to admire how great God is in this life. How we did not expect that when we participated in the National Student Festival and Art Competition (FLS2N) in the field of singing, one of our students, Nathanael Arka Pandya, who is usually called Arka, won the first place in the Central Java Province. Actually we did only a short preparation for the competition because the information from the education office was sudden and moreover the situation did not allow us to perform face to face. Since then Arka had practiced singing seriously trained by Mr. Yohanes Budi Santosa, Bachelor of Education, as a vocal and music teacher at Pius Wonosobo Elementary School. Thanks to Mr. Budi and Arka's persistence in singing practices, Arka was able to master three songs at once in a short time of about 3 days. Arka was able to master several notes which are classified as difficult in the lyrics of the competition material. We were proud of Arka who was able to beat thousands of students throughout Central Java in the field of solo singing. After the announcement of the results of the competition which was delivered online, we received various kinds of congratulations from

the county education office, the district education office, the Wonosobo district school principals, the parents and the sisters.



FDNSC Sisters, teachers, Arka and parents attending the online opening of the National Student Arts Festival and Competition (FLS2N) at the National level.

We believe that even though our school is small and the number of students currently has only 138 children, if it is managed properly, it will still be of high quality and achievement. We have a principle that the students may decrease, but the quality of education must not decrease. The quality of education must be fought for all the time. We are grateful to God, in the midst of this Covid-19 pandemic, we educators are given the trust of God to send one of our students to win the first place in solo singing at the Central Java Province level and the National level. The opportunity to advance to the national level is a very meaningful opportunity for us because getting to the national level is not an easy time. So far, we have only been able to win at the district level. We truly feel the enormous power of God. If it is God's will, nothing is impossible in this life. 2020 is a special year for us because we were able to boost the talents and artistic achievements of SD Pius Wonosobo during the Covid-19 pandemic. We believe that beautiful pearls will continue to shine beautifully in the years to come.

Sr. M. Emerentiana Kristiana Sukarsih. FDNSC

Moluccas (Indonesia)



Thank God, 2020 is a year full of grace and beautiful memories for FDNSC Sisters of the Indonesia Province because this year we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the first six Missionary Sisters in Kei Langgur as well as the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the FDNSC Province of Indonesia.

In the midst of our preparations for the 100th Jubilee Thanksgiving celebration in early March 2020, the Covid 19 pandemic shook the whole world. Because of this pandemic, we all have to obey the rules recommended by the Government and the Church to always be vigilant and avoid large crowds, so all events that have been prepared for the celebration of the Jubilee (July 14, 2020) and Province Foundation (July 13, 2020) were celebrated in a simple way in the Province, Region and communities by adhering to health protocols. However, it did not diminish the meaning of the events and the gratitude we felt for God's steadfast love for our congregation this year.

Langgur Community - 2020 was a year full of prayers and reflections



Conference and study with the sisters of the Langgur community in exploring: WHO IS JULES CHEVALIER? The goal is for the sisters to get to know Father Jules Chevalier personally, the qualities that exist in him that can be an example and a model for the sisters.

Prayer and reflection activities deepening the personality of Father Jules Chevalier and his qualities to be carried out by each community in Moluccas region.



Visitation and Mutual Activities

During the Covid 19 pandemic, the sisters of the Langgur community attended a vegetable harvest activity with the Regional Government (the Regent of Southeast Moluccas with Regional Work Units) in order to foster unity and solidarity among the people of Southeast Moluccas in the diversity of ethnicities, languages and religions on the island of Kei. The hope is for them to become stronger in living in peace with one another and respecting differences as brothers and sisters.



Our Activities of serving the marginal and the poor without limit.

The Sisters also went to outstations serving the marginal and the poor, not only helping the parish priests in distributing Holy Communion in the church and for the sick and elderly. They were also sent by the parish priests to lead the Paraliturgy and accompany the parishioners, giving them some kind of formation of the deepening of faith on Sundays and holidays more specifically in this COVID-19 pandemic situation. With the presence of the FDNSC sisters, the faith, hope and love of the people for God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are getting stronger and stronger. The Sisters are trying to carry out the recommendations of the IV Indonesian Province Chapter "**Being missionaries of hope in a broken world**".



Batu Meja Community In Ambon - Spiritual Activities



Ecological activities of Belakang Polda Community

Laudato si is about the sanctity of all living things and our place as human beings among other creatures. An integral ecology links respect for human dignity and care for nature. Sr.Sofia Belekubun and Sr. Esther Welerubun have been planting and caring for ornamental plants in Belakang Polda Community, in Ambon in order to participate in building a beautiful and clean environment.



Palolo Community - Serving the Parishioners

Sr.Rosina serves the parishioners by leading the liturgical activities and distributing Holy Communion in St. Theresia Liseux outstation of Palolo of the Paulus Parish Church.



Lay Chevalier Family Assistance



Palolo Community members accompany and give formation to the Lay Chevalier Family members in the prayer room of Palolo. The aim is to guide them to deepen and live out the Spirituality of the Heart; to live according to their hearts so that they can spread to others that God is love and whoever lives in love are children of God.

Ecological activities of the Palolo community

The sisters participate in caring for the planet by planting and caring for the environment. They help to create and increase love and respect for God's holy creation and our dignity as human persons.



WAUR COMMUNITY - Serving the Parishioners



The Sisters of Waur Community also regularly go to outstations serving the marginal and the poor more specifically in this COVID-19 pandemic situation. Representing the Waur Community, Sr.Stephani Fanartubun and Sr.Giasinta led a prayer service at Ohoi El Kei Besar outstation of the Waur Parish, Southeast Moluccas Regency.

Ecological activities of the Waur community



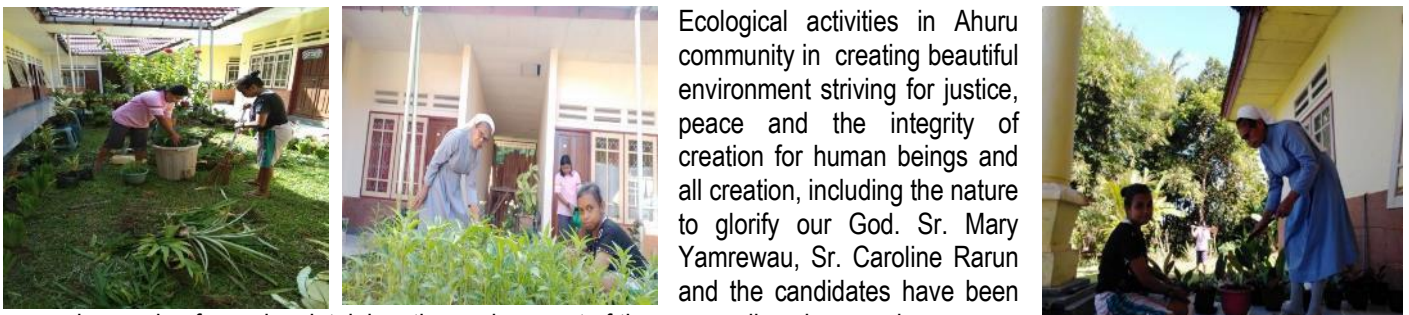
Sr. Huberta Sarkol, Sr. Stephani and Sr. Giasinta grow vegetables and ornamental plants and take care of the beautiful environment creating a fresh atmosphere that lightens the burden of life in the community. By this they take part in loving and honouring God's holy creation.

Community service activities of Fransiskus Waur kindergarten



Sisters, Parents and kindergarten students participated in cleaning the environment as a community service.

AHURU COMMUNITY



Ecological activities in Ahuru community in creating beautiful environment striving for justice, peace and the integrity of creation for human beings and all creation, including the nature to glorify our God. Sr. Mary Yamrewau, Sr. Caroline Rarun and the candidates have been

arranging, caring for and maintaining the environment of the surrounding vigorously.

Serving Without Limits the Marginal and the Poor in Community Health Service.

Sr. M. Sara together with the sisters of the Katlarat community and St. Joseph Clinic of Katlarat health workers serving the marginal and the poor in Community Health Service in Ohoi Deftel - Kei Besar. During the Covid 19 pandemic period, the community desperately needed health services in an increasing number of villages.

With the presence of the FDNSC sisters in health service in the community, the sisters and health workers proclaim the Good News of God's salvation for mankind, especially the little ones, the suffering and the sick.



Health services are given to all the different groups, ethnicities, religions and languages. The goal is to save the lives of those who are sick and who suffer. This way they experience that salvation comes from the hand of God.



SOCIAL APOSTOLATE - Sharing with the little ones

The Rinamakana Foundation hears the scream of the vulnerable people who are on the outskirts of the city and who desperately need a helping hand and attention in fulfilling the needs of life as children of God.



The Rinamakana Social Foundation does not only provide basic necessities to the poor who are in desperate need but provides guidance and assistance on how to organize and manage the daily household economy in an orderly manner for the development of their business and the fulfillment of the necessities of their lives.

SOCIAL APOSTOLATE - Assistance and guidance activities for orphanages

The sisters are sent to accompany and care for the children of the orphanages in Moluccas especially the Santa Maria Ahuru Ambon Orphanage and the Solandres Putri Langgur Orphanage and instill in them good character based on the charism and spirituality of the FDNSC. They provide a spiritual, mental and emotional development program as well as programs to develop the talents and interests of the children. This is in order to improve their skills and abilities. During the covid -19 pandemic, the health protocols are observed in order to maintain everyone's safety. Our aim is to educate the children in these two orphanages, that they become polite and intelligent children and have good characters as children of God.



SOCIAL APOSTOLATE - Formation and training of the students in the Dormitory of Rumah Tiga

The student residents of Poka Dormitory of Rumah Tiga Ambon are trained to live in an orderly, disciplined, organized and clean way. The goal is to produce a generation who has self-discipline and is clean, physically and mentally healthy. This way they are able to create a world of students who are cheerful, friendly and experiencing a world of love where there is good friendship, each one caring for the other.



Environmental cleaning and care activities coordinated by Sr. Fransine Yanwarin as a companion at the Poka Rumah Tiga Dormitory



EDUCATIONAL APOSTOLATE - Teaching-learning Program in School Units under Asti Dharma Foundation in Moluccas

During the Covid-19 pandemic, everything has changed in relation to managing education at the Asti Dharma Moluccas Foundation, from face-to-face teaching-learnig in the classrooms to the distance learning program. The teachers visited students' homes while still implementing health protocols for the safety of both teachers and students. Some activities were still conducted during the pandemic as shown by the following photos.





Some Brotherhood and togetherness activities

Coordination meeting of the Saumlaki Branch of the Asti Dharma Foundation Moluccas together with teachers of Don Bosco Elementary School in Oilit Barat, in providing some training for teachers and employees to deepen the values of heart spirituality and increase the spirit of good education services.

Ecological Activities

Opening new land for planting and growing bananas in Saumlaki Coordinated by Sr. Carla Toffy in preparing local food ingredients to increase community income.



For your attention, cooperation and support for us, sisters in the Moluccas Region, I thank you.
United in prayer & love,
Sr. M. Emile Rumangun, FDNSC Regional Leader



The Netherlands

Period of the Corona Pandemic in the Netherlands



Sr. Lies greeting Sr. Leokorda, who is in isolation.

A new word appeared in the Dutch language: **'Window Visit'**



In Overdinkel, where Srs. Leokorda and Castissima lived for many years, people pay their last respects.



Funeral of Sr. Castissima, who died on Christmas Day.



Funeral Mass Sr. Williberta, who died on the second Christmas Day.



Sr. Williberta and Sr. Marife

COMMUNITY BETHANIË



In the beginning, Community life was still possible but later on, the sisters had to stay in their rooms for nearly 3 weeks.



Sr. Norbertine died on 20 December.



18 November 2020:
Sr. José van der Salm celebrating her 90th birthday.



Community life on 1,5 meters distance from one another. Staff wearing face masks.



Sr. Jeannette had to stay for the whole month December in her apartment, but kept herself busy in a very creative way!

She compiled beautiful books about the founder of fdnsc and msc illustrated with mandalas designed by herself.



Making Christmas cards during Corona time: mandalas from parchment paper



Papua (Indonesia)

*Merauke. Papua 2020
The covid-19 pandemic also
brings grace*

where the world has stepped into a new stage, a stage where each of us is invited to live a better life, which means leaving bad habits and starting good habits for a new and healthy world. Unlike previous in years, in 2020 we had experienced times of struggle, sacrifice, worry and even loss. Covid-19 teaches us many things about how we should behave towards ourselves and others, especially in maintaining health and cleanliness. Covid-19 also gives us a great grace where we are given the opportunity to spend a lot of time with family and our respective communities.

We are also grateful that in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, we, the FDNSC Sisters of the Indonesian Province, especially in the Papua Region, are still given the opportunity to continue serving God's people in remote outstations. We always follow health protocol provisions such as wearing masks, maintaining distance, maintaining personal hygiene and washing hands. Covid 19 is not a barrier for us, the FDNSC Papua Region continue serving people in the interior because they also really need our services, especially during this Christmas.



We carry nothing but ourselves and the Christ we proclaim and we are sure that our ministry will always give joy to those we serve especially this Christmas 2020. The FDNSC Sisters of the Papuan Region were divided into several groups for the Christmas Service. For each parish there are two or three sisters whom the Parish Priest will assign to a designated area or outstation. Our task in this Christmas ministry is to lead worship services from Christmas Eve to the Feast of the Holy Family. During this service we, the Sisters, have to stay overnight at the house of one of the parishioners or in another place that has been provided by the local people. We are grateful for the facilities provided to us given the situation and condition of the local people. We will briefly share experiences and stories during the Christmas service in rural parishes.

Ministry in Muting



Sr. M. Thadea Renel FDNSC leads the Liturgical Service at the Muting Parish, especially at the Boha village outstation. Muting is a district in Merauke Regency, Papua, Indonesia. The trip to get there takes 2-3 hours. When the sisters on duty got there, they were escorted back to the villages to be served, using small boats through the big rivers with a distance of about 30 minutes. The very hot weather and difficult area did not dampen their spirit of service to the people in the interior because, for us, the mission to serve in the land of Papua has to be carried out unceasingly so that the Sacred Heart of Jesus is increasingly known and loved everywhere.

Ministry in Aziki

Sr. M. Emiliana FDNSC from Merauke Community was sent to serve at the Aziki Parish, especially at the Kem Tiga outstation and at the Kampung Naga Outstation. Serving with a sincere heart is one of our motivations to serve people in the interior of Merauke, Papua. In contrast to the situation for the services of the sisters in Muting, some of the sisters made a long journey through the oil palm forest in the Aziki area to get to the outstation to be served. The Sisters who serve at the Aziki Parish also experienced hot weather. The terrain that is traversed is not easy because it passes through lonely oil palm forests and potholes damaged roads. The Christmas service was carried out in the same way, namely by leading the Liturgical Service on Christmas Eve until the Feast of the Holy Family.





AZIKI PARISH



KUPER PARISH



Christmas Services at Kuper Parish Outstation

Sr. M. Priscilla Telaumbanua FDNSC, representing the Merauke Community, was assigned to serve at the Kuper Parish outstation, SP 2 and SP 4. The outstation is located not far from Merauke City and the distance is only about 30 minutes. The Christmas celebration in this outstation was very simple. Christmas decorations in the church were very limited due to the situation and conditions of the people who were poor and the budget for providing tools and materials for decoration was not yet available.

The number of Catholic families in this outstation is around seven families and among them there are more children in numbers.



Dear Sisters, this was a glimpse of the stories that we could share during the Christmas services at the Merauke inland parishes, Papua. Even though the situation and condition in each parish and outstation were quite difficult, we were grateful that we could still serve the people in the midst of this Covid 19 pandemic. We were also grateful that during the Christmas services the people still adhere to the health protocols set by the government and the Merauke Health Service, Papua.

Sr. M. Hilaria Rama, FDNSC



Papua New Guinea

Have you ever wondered how others perceive us? Well, here is a poem/prayer written by a sister from another congregation about our sisters in PNG. It is a joy to read! Thank you PNG sisters for your witness of life!

In this time of pandemic, our call "to have the heart of Mary" rings strong and clear!

THEY HAVE THE HEART OF MARY

Bless them O Lord,
For they are the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart,

I came as a stranger to some,
With the heart of Mary, I was welcomed,
With the heart of Mary, I was made into a loving friend
And felt at home.

At times I was doubting and wanted to give up,
With the heart of Mary,
Their shooting words were very encouraging.
With the heart of Mary,
Their smiles were and are sunshine to me
With the Heart of Mary,
Their laughter was a joy for me.



I never felt hungry
With the heart of Mary,
They fed me extra well.
The Kitchen was so inviting and the smells great.
With the heart of Mary, I was fed and grew extra fat.
With the heart of Mary,
Their love reminds me of my mother.
Yes, they are my 'mothers' too.
And I am so blest to be with them.
So, Lord, bless them,
For they are the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.



When I was down,
With the heart of Mary, they lifted me
So gentle and calming with the heart of Mary.
Their kind words and kindness,
Chanted and cooled me.

Yes, I felt renewed with new strength
I felt different from yesterday as time moved on.



A photo from 2012 – 125th anniversary of the arrival of the first FDNSCs in Yule Island

Surrounded by them with their smiles on,
With the heart of Mary,

I was energised for the next day.
I lack nothing, for with the heart of Mary
They know my needs.

My troubled heart was settled
With the heart of Mary,
What I needed was given, with smiles.

I don't know how they knew,
But I know, they don't know hate
But with the heart of Mary, Love.

So, Lord bless them
For they are the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Sr. Rose Salou AD
(used with permission from PNG News Around the Province)



The Philippines

**A YEAR OF ENDLESS LEARNING TO
CARRY THROUGH 2021 – FILLED
WITH HOPE!**

**YEAR 2020 – a
year like no
other**

- Face masks / face shields
- Quarantine pass / border pass
- Stay home
- Corona Virus
Pandemic

2021 – YEAR OF HOPE

**Taal Volcano eruption Jan 12, 2020
For the first time in 43 years**



Back to back typhoons slammed across the country in October and November which made life of every Filipino even more challenging! Thanks to our Congregation's Overseas Aid Fund (OAF) we reached out to those who were greatly affected!

A YEAR OF ENDLESS LEARNING TO CARRY THROUGH 2021 – FILLED WITH HOPE

Year 2020 brought threats – Taal volcano eruption, corona virus, back-to-back typhoons – that affected our people causing pain and suffering, giving rise to millions of jobless people. These harsh realities gave birth to the “Bayanihan” spirit wherein rich and poor alike reached out to those most in need. The worst that happened brought out the best in people.

As a Region, despite the pandemic, digitalization paved the way for connections through online gatherings of celebrations and conferences for our ongoing formation. All these have strengthened our relationships with God and with one another in order to continue our call as ‘missionaries of hope’ in our time.

With Year 2021, we have learned our lessons through the realities of Year 2020. We are therefore, filled with hope and confidence in God, who is always with us.

Meeting with Catherine McAleer for Badjao ministry in Surigao

Ongoing formation with Sr. Claudette Hiosan on Community

Vocation Animator’s meeting as a result of Sr. Ley’s talk on Vocation part of On-going

Conversations with interested young women from SACS

Advent Recollection with Associates

Our 11th Regional Council Meeting on Strategic Direction

Historic Virtual Christmas Celebration

Historic First Regional Council meeting via Google Duo with Sr. Philippa Murphy. Betty’s signal was unstable.

2020 is one of the most unforgettable years in our lifetime as a region yet it definitely did not put us on hold. We became more daring, resourceful, creative and innovative as we went about this new normal. The very thing we thought was keeping us apart before the pandemic is exactly what helped keep us to be together in our efforts to make the love of God alive in our time!

Senegal

The year 2020, a year unlike others!
a single word infected our health,
polluted our school atmosphere
and affected our faith COVID 19
contact; case; mask; hand gel; soap
2C2MGS



Key words that describe 2020
covid 19/confinement/curfew/protective measures/
equals 3COGB
Sister Marthe Adam SARR fdnsc



2020 a year truly not like others!

But very quickly, health worker musicians composed a song with the refrain:
"Restez chez vous! Stay at Home! Quédate en Casa!"

Alas, some people have never known the importance of staying with their family,
of meeting God in silence, and for this reason, they have preferred to kill themselves...
Others, however, took advantage of this hour of global misery to consolidate their family ties,
to turn to God and find new ways to speak to Him...in short, they turned their hearts to Him.
Still others are finding new opportunities to reflect, to consult Science
and to bring about the cure for what China has called Coronavirus?
The newspapers, as for them, they try to find a name for it: Covid 19.
No 2020 you are really not like the others!

This year is unique!
Churches and Mosques are closed; Restaurants and Bars are closed;
Flights are suspended; Borders are closed!
It's really life in slow motion!
And everyone is thinking about the economy, how to survive?
The Health Agents are overwhelmed.
It's thousands of deaths per week in the world.
Sad and lonely funerals!
They express the cry of their hearts: Respect distancing!
Wear your Masks! Wash your Hands!
But few people think about GOD...
WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF THE ETERNAL ONE FOR US TODAY,
VICTIMS OF THIS PANDEMIC????



Sr Thérèse Siga Séne, FDNCS

What deprives us of our freedom?
That's something I don't know.
We don't go to church anymore.
We don't go to school anymore
No more religious meetings
No more Catholic action movement
Everyone lives in insecurity
But what is this virus?
This virus wears a crown
But it is not a king.
It is something so small



Invasive and obstinate
Everyone is confined.
Everyone lives in insecurity
Let's stop the robbery of this villain
Let's respect the protective measures
And let's pray, let's pray again because the
Lord
is stronger than it.

Sister Hélène Adama MENDY fdnsc

Slovakia

Mysterious ways of God's loving Care and Surprises

The year started off with a happy and exciting news. Our Provincial and two other delegates from home were to visit us in Nitra, Slovakia.

The day came, when our sisters joyfully joined us late

in February. But not long after, news about a deadly strange virus (Covid 19) which was spreading in Asia and quickly in Europe, caused the postponement of the General Chapter and gradually created lockdowns and uncertainties in travelling, a panicking news, was reaching our side. As I-Kiribati we made imaginable jokes about our visitors getting stuck here or somewhere else or getting the virus on the way, but soon learned it was nothing to joke about. It was a deadly virus that is going to change everything.



The visitation was cut short. We had questions. Will our sisters get home to Kiribati in time? Changing tickets was not easy but thanks to the smartness of our MSC brothers, the sisters managed to leave us on 5 March. Out of concern and fear of the the virus, we prayed that they get home, straight away. Our sisters left us and went as far as Fiji and got stuck in Fiji until these days. Were our prayers not answered?

While the provincial and the two sisters are in Fiji the first blessing was the joy to get as far as Fiji but the most blessed activity of God's plan in it all, was a double blessing of opening a new mission of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in an existing school at the MSC parish in Lomary. What seemed to be a mess turned out to be a blessing from God. We believe our prayers were answered.

What to become of us in our Mission in Nitra, Slovakia? Certainly the Year 2020 raises a lot of questions, puzzles, uncertainties, panic at times and challenges in regards to the unknown effects of the pandemic in our mission, on us and the needy people we are here to minister. First news of the first case of the deadly Corona virus in Slovakia reached us on March 7, 2020 and from then on more cases. From this time things were



beginning to become uncertain and fear found its ways in and out of us. At the beginning, plans already in hand was unsteady. Are the people coming "clean" (free of the virus) since they come from different places? To make it worse there were fears and doubts when at times the centre had lock downs because the cases was up and then suddenly it was opened because the cases were down. To us it seemed that the uncertainties were much part of our world and it affected us in many ways. However one thing does not change and that was during this struggle and troubled time, our prayers, especially the Eucharistic Celebration, was our strength as a family, which we were never deprived of by our MSC brothers.

Soon we came to the realisation that in the midst of this pandemic many people, young and old, families and individuals, were desiring healing and they kept on coming to the Center. We knew there were more wanting to come but the rules and regulation just made it impossible to welcome them all. The programme that was already in place was not followed because of the lockdowns. In between, therefore, new programmes were put in place to meet the needs of the people, first to the maximum of 10 people then down to six to the end of the year.

Speaking of rules and regulations, this were all seriously taken - masks everywhere except in our rooms and in the kitchen, no shaking of hands, no embracing. There were also new rules at the reception desk and setting of dining tables. There were no exceptions which created a lot of work and tension at first since they must be remembered and followed. I must say that one change that made us very happy was



receiving communion by hands to these days. In the face of this situation we were able to joyfully live our community life together, celebrating our Congregation feast days and Independence days.

However in all these, regulations and distancing etc, there is one special thing we could not be deprived of - God's compassionate love and care. We and others were not victims of distancing. We served the people we minister to even to the very last. Now

looking back, we have been blessed and the mission we are in, in this beautiful Retreat Centre, *Ďom Srdca Ježišovho*, House or Home of the Sacred Heart. Reflecting back, the only one thing that have brought us together and strengthened us as a community and as individuals in our life and in our mission is God's continuous faithfulness, and the continuous protection of our Mother, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. We strongly felt the effect of all your prayers our sisters around the world. Our heart is full of appreciation to God and to you all.



We are proud in the Lord to have made it through the challenges of 2020. We graciously believe that God's ways are not our ways and His loving care shows up in the most mysterious and surprising ways. Our plans are not God's plans and that is what we learned from 2020, a Year not like other.



South Africa

2020 - A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER - IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 2020, I experienced in a new way, the weight of responsibility of leadership during this Pandemic. At times it weighed heavily upon me – I had to be strong and yet at the same time gentle and kind. I needed to listen to everyone's



fears and anxieties and recommendations. I realised the importance of teamwork – that I wasn't alone in this – but at times I did feel alone.

Taking decisions, after consultation with various groups within our Region and at Holy Family wasn't always easy. Sometimes I was very afraid.

At the end of the year, we could all look back together, and be grateful that we and the people in our care, were healthy, strong, wiser and more resilient.

Sr Sally Duigan, fdnsc



Delivering food and putting smiles on their faces

Looking back into the year 2020, for me it was a year of many uncertainties. I lived in the unknown. I only knew that the Lord is watching. A lot of things changed due to the Corona Virus pandemic, this made me realise that no one, not even I, can be in control of situations at all time. Only God can be in control and I was graced to experience in a different way **God's Love which surpasses all things and situations**, it was this love that urged me on to reach out to others in witnessing His love and Faith in him.

In spite of the uncertainties of the past year 2020, I am forever grateful to God all that I have experienced and lived.

May the Sacred Herat of Jesus be everywhere loved...Forever!!!



Home schooling during lockdown

Sr. Amaka Jane Ugochukwu

My key words - Being Positive

My experience - the very moment I was informed that I AM POSITIVE of covid 19 brought me some questions to ask myself. What have I done that I was infected? How did I feel within myself to have covid 19? What will happen to the students that I am responsible for? Etc... These questions invited me to create a space, sit back, relax, slow down with an open heart and mind to listen to my inner feelings and emotions of having covid 19. As a result I discovered a Positive Attitude that empowered me once again to let go of whatsoever and let God for He is in control. Even though I believe within myself that I did my best to take care of myself and others according to covid 19 regulations and when it is my turn, I can't run away.

I called the School Principal and the Boarding Manager to let them know that I have covid 19. Sr.Sally informed my Sisters. I also sent my message and video calls to my family and friends to let them know that I have covid 19. I asked them not to be scared but to have a Positive Attitude that I am ok. For I have chosen also to taste and experience this pandemic. I encouraged them that we journey together in prayer for only God knows what he is doing.

I stayed home with that positive attitude. I live in a community of three. We created another time table together that will help us to be more mindful of each other. I took my medications as were required, eat, rest with God, exercise and carry on with life in a different way. It was a wonderful experience. It reminded me of my experience at Heart of Life in some way of being alone with myself.

Being positive of covid 19, didn't paralyze me from having a Positive attitude to know that God is in control. With God there is peace, with God there is hope, with God there is also his own purpose and plan for each of us.

Thank you to you all my Sisters for your continuous love and support. In one way or another, we are all on the same boat journeying towards the same direction. Ametur!



Always with a grateful heart,
RoteeUriam – fdnsc

SISTER GABRIELLE'S EXPERIENCE ON THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

When I heard through the news about the outbreak of a new virus in China called coronavirus that was causing many deaths, I felt sorry for the Chinese people and prayed for their intentions. But when the virus began to spread all over the world and cause many deaths, I was very afraid. My fear was still great as I saw a big change in my lifestyle and habits that were being imposed on us by our government authorities. For example: social distancing, wearing masks, use of alcohol-based gel, no shaking hands when greeting each other, etc. I was very afraid of the virus. This led to mistrust of each other, suspicion about each other's health etc. Then came the time of confinement, when the whole economic system was almost paralysed, the population was imprisoned in their houses, the borders were closed, gatherings were forbidden, Eucharistic celebrations were forbidden, the General Chapter was abolished, etc. Life lost its harmony. Several feelings followed one another in me. The revolt for the closure of churches, when by going to church and praying the Lord will help us, the fear of being contaminated and contaminating others. But personally I have seen the miracle of God, the fact that in all these torments I am now in South Africa. I understood that the Lord has entrusted me with a mission that I must carry out with all my heart in spite of the circumstances in which He sent me. I feel that the world has changed, human being is nothing, rich and poor from different origins, we are all embarked on the same boat of the coronavirus.



When He knocked on my door, I was discouraged, thinking how can it be that coronavirus that I had heard about from far away in China is now arriving in my body? So I started asking myself a lot of questions such as: will I stay alive? Or will I lose my life? In the end I turned to God and told him that the last solution is in your hands, I only surrender myself. Now and forever I will never stop thanking my God, because He has decided in His goodness that I should live. It is not because I am better than those who have died, but just because of His love for me. This experience has aroused in me the desire to pray also for those who continue to be sick and also for those who continue to die as a result of this little virus.

On the other hand, the advent of the coronavirus stimulated me to meditate a lot on the meaning of life, the value of life and the importance of life. I understood that everything can stop but life goes on but if life stops everything also stops. Life has a great price. As long as the Lord hasn't taken it away, I must protect it and also protect that of others, hence the importance of observing the barrier gestures.

Not knowing when this pandemic will end, this teaches me to organise myself in such a way as to find my way to live our charism on different paths, because it remains current and adaptable to all situations. May I not cross my hands while



waiting for the world to return to what it was. This pandemic has increased in me the desire to follow the news in order to know what is happening in the world so that I can pray for the different intentions. It gives me the opportunity to take my relationship with God in hand, to take care of my spiritual life myself even if the churches are

closed. It has brought about the performance of technology, creating the zoom, etc. so that the world does not get discouraged, so that it learns to evolve, even though coronavirus is there.



In conclusion, I have to live our charism as a Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in these torments of coronavirus while

relying on the almighty grace of God.



Great thanks to my Lord, for His love to me is never ending. I am still alive. I am happy here with little Tsidi on New Year's Day! - Sr Jeanne fdnsc



South Sudan

2020, Our 25th Anniversary Year... Onwards to the next 25 years!

This year of 2021 welcomes the OLSH Sisters to the beginning of their next 25 years of presence in South Sudan. Having recently closed the first 25 years we have become so much

more aware that we stand on the shoulders of the many who have contributed so generously to the solid foundations laid in the first 25 years. Well done good and faithful servants.

We wish to express deep gratitude to the Province of Indonesia for responding so spontaneously and generously in supporting our mission in Mapuordit; just a little over two years ago the Indonesian Province provided two Sisters for the mission here with very short notice.

We pay special tribute to Sr Francisca who while here applied herself generously to working with the poorest of the poor. Sr Francisca has decided to remain for the time being in Indonesia.

Thank you Francisca for your faithful service to ministry in the Mapuordit mission.



Sr Bernadette

Sr Bernadette applied herself with equal generosity to running the Parish Nursery school. The Nursery was a shining example of the best foundational education in South Sudan. Well done good and faithful servant.

Sr. Wendy's work among the poor continues as also her daily pastoral visits to the hospital. Her hospital visits are especially welcome; her caring concern highlights the neglected, those with no visitors, children needing motherly love. Thanks Wendy.

Sr Rita continues her efforts of animating the various women's groups in the parish trying to provide some gospel foundation. Remote Satellite Schools are still supported though with Covid

19 they have remained closed for recent months.

Our gratitude to God for his wonderful protection to this part of the country. The Corona Virus has shown no signs of presence here.



Sr Rita

An AMETUR gift to the Diocese of Rumbek occurred towards the end of last year when Fr Alan msc arrived in South Sudan from the Irish Province. He is currently working with Loreto Sisters Rumbek hoping to establish an MSC base in South Sudan.

Floods this last year kept people very isolated. Roads were closed; market goods were reduced to essentials; but the essentials kept our works alive.

Gratitude to all for support and care.



Sr Francisca



Sr Wendy

USA



2020 in Bellmawr, NJ., USA



Masks and social distancing



Remembering the hardships of that first Christmas.



Remarkable donor support for food and funds



Materials and clothing for the poor

Paving it forward to needv families



Sharing our meal with Trudy, our next door neighbor



Physiotherapist doing exercises with Sr. Regina

Gratitude for everyday miracles



Srs. Rita, Evelyn and Catherine



Srs. Miriam, Philomena and Cecilia



Srs. Regina, Brigid and Linda

The community of Bellmawr, NJ, USA
Wishes you a joyous, safe and blessed New Year 2021



Before we finally say goodbye to 2020, we remember with joy and thanksgiving milestones in our FDNCS Mission History that we celebrated during the year...

SILVER JUBILEE OF MISSION



SOUTH SUDAN

Early in 1995, two Australian FDNCSs arrived in the Comboni mission station in Mapuordit to open the Congregation's mission in South Sudan.

JAPAN

On 8 December 1995, the FDNCS Mission in Japan was founded with a Eucharistic Celebration in Nagoya. The first four missionaries were one Australian, one Japanese from the Province of Brazil and two Indonesians.

INDONESIA

Six Dutch FDNCSs arrived in South East Moluccas on 14 July 1920 to begin the Congregation's mission in the islands of Indonesia.

BRAZIL

On 16 December 1920, an international group of FDNCS missionaries arrived in Alfenas to open our mission in Brazil. Six came, three French, 2 Dutch and 1 Belgian.



KIRIBATI

125 years ago, in 1895, nine FDNCSs reached the Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati). They arrived in the island of Nonouti to begin one of our oldest missions. It was an international group of missionaries with five French sisters, one Belgian, one Dutch and two Australians.

Truly, we are standing on the shoulders of great women – women totally dedicated to their call as missionaries of God's love, Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart! May we continue with zeal what they have started!



This year 2020, we said goodbye to 32 of our sisters who have entered the house of the Father in this year like no other. Of the 32, at least four were covid related deaths. We thank God for the gift of their lives and vocation. We thank them for their fidelity to their call as Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. We remember them in our prayers and ask them to remember us in theirs. May they rest in peace, in God's loving embrace.

Thank you - Srs Alies, Gertrudis, Mariëtta, Majella, Martha, Geziena, Norbertine, Castissima and Williberta from the Dutch Province; Srs Josephine, Chantal, Marie-Bernard and Reine from the French Province; Srs Angela, Elena, Eugenia and Leonia from the Italian Community; Srs Federica, Stefana, Richarda and Bernadette from the Belgian Province; Srs Francis, Chanel and Fachanan from the Irish Province; Srs Eleanor and Valerian from the Australian Province; Srs Ameri and Itabera from the Province of Kiribati; Srs Agatha and Goretti from the Province of PNG; Sr Neuza from the Brazilian Province; and Sr Pascaline from the community of Burkina Faso – Thank you for the witness of your lives!

