

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE 16TH OF EVERY MONTH:

July 16TH: *We pray for the Province of St. Francis in Zambia which celebrates 50 years of presence in this country. We raise up our prayers of thanksgiving to God, touched by the richness of grace given by the Lord to this portion of our religious family, without forgetting the precious gift of the presence of Mother General, as a tangible sign of vitality and grace.*

The mission in Zambia was initiated by three pioneer sisters who went to St. Mary's mission, these are: Sr. Ermana, Sr. Victorina and Sr. Eulalia. It is pleasing to remember Sr. Ermana, who despite her respiratory difficulties, she is still full of enthusiasm and living memories of her mission.

We do not have the dates for describing the Zambian Province today, but we know that it is a lively and active reality, which renders its services in hospitals, schools, rehabilitation centres, projects of development and service to the Dioceses.

The Province has a Delegation in Kenya, with two communities and some Kenyan sisters and some young women in novitiate.

The opening of a new community in Malawi is in prospective.

The sisters who are rendering their services in other areas are: 5 in United States of America; 2 in the Philippines; 2 in the Italian Province; 5 in the Generalate Curia.

August 16TH: *We pray for the sisters in the Vice Province of the United States, which is going to celebrate its 10th Vice Provincial Chapter. It is a Little Assembly which "bears fruit and is rigorous" because it continues to rejoice in the blessings of the Lord. Our prayer is that this vitality becomes the heredity of many sisters of this land.*

When we talk about the evangelical presence, of the little flock, of the sign of the kingdom, I think that we can easily refer to the reality of the Vice Province of the United States.

The community of the United States has always lived the evangelical dimension of free service in little things done with great love. The Franciscan priests among whom the sisters have lived, still have as a point of reference, their maternal presence, fully involved in their journey of priesthood.

The community has continued being a "little flock," trusting in the only one driver: The Good Shepherd. Even in moments of great choices, they have had significant presences which were guiding them in their journey: the same Franciscans who have always felt like their sons.

The sisters in the United States have continued to be signs of the kingdom, living an inter cultural reality which does not rouse up victory, but tries to live an evangelical fraternity, of sisters converted in order to convert others.

FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY

SISTERS OF ASSISI



IN THE WORLD

Cina

Italy

Croazia

Philippines

Japan

Brasil

Kenya

Indonesia

USA

Mexico

Moldavia

Romania

Russia

Zambia

Korea

July - August 2010

Dear sisters and friends,

Peace and Goodness!

Twelve years have passed by since the "Missionary Day" was instituted, to be celebrated on September 7th of every year, with prayer and fasting. On this day, we want to invite also our friends the lay collaborators to join us in prayer, invoking the blessing of God on our new missions opened or still to be opened soon and also for our new difficult reality. From the very beginning the "Missionary Day of the Institute" must be promoted by the Missionary Animators. In this way it becomes an occasion of sensitizing in us and in others, the missionary awareness, maintaining the missionary spirit. A day in which to keep in mind the deeper meaning and sense of mission, where the Church takes on the "obligation and the strength for the missionary leap." (CCC 851), that is, the love of God for all peoples.

In preparation for the celebration of the Missionary Day of the Institute this year, I believe it is an opportune time, first of all, to thank God for all that he has accomplished among us, through us and in spite of us in the missionary field. In a small and simple way, we managed to have sisters ready to commit themselves for life in mission lands, for the building up of the kingdom of God, with the Church and in the Church. This is also the right moment to thank all our missionary sisters in mission yesterday and today, who have spent their lives in proclaiming the Good News. They have lived their faith with joy and hope, announcing it to others. All this is because there have been groups of lay people besides us in commitment and in prayer. We thank God for all this.

Moreover, it is a day in which we try to live charity in the first person expressed by our solidarity. An offering is requested of each community, a fruit of the sacrifice they have made. An invitation to live evangelical charity, which requires a sacrifice on the part of the person who gives it. The offering for this year, will go to help the sisters of Indonesia to build a house of formation. It is also a reminder that charity, should be lived first of all, among ourselves and then, with others, especially with the poor. If the Lord gives some sisters the joy of giving themselves and spending themselves for the mission, it is our duty first to receive such gifts from the Lord with joy and then also with concrete signs. If there are vocations, then, we have even the more reason to be grateful but also, the commitment for the good of all our religious family, and also for the growth of the Church and the kingdom of God on earth. A valid way of receiving such gifts of God among us, is that of helping our sisters in the missions to respond better and concretely to their call and to live their mission with faith hope and charity.

Suor Juliana Malama



News

SAN MARINO - Rita Berardi, with the other four friends have returned from Zambia, where they visited the communities in which they support various projects. They also went to Congo to meet a Salesian priest who is originally from San Marino.

INDONESIA - The community of sisters receives other three young women who desire to share the style of consecrated life of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi.

The young women from other islands of Indonesia are arriving in our community of Medan, in this way, opening up the horizons towards a significant expansion.

You are invited to look at the map of Indonesia in order to understand how vast and extensive is this nation.

ZAMBIA - On August 14th, there will be a 50th Jubilee celebration of the presence of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi in Zambia. The celebration will take place at St. Theresa's Mission, the cradle and an important point of reference for all the sisters in Zambia.

ROMA - The White Fathers have a new African Superior General. He is Fr. Richard Baawobar, from Ghana. A choice happily welcomed by the congregation which counts about 1600 members, present in 41 nations. The outgoing Father General, Gerard Chabanon declared: "even at Rome, they have to entrust the charges to the representatives of the young African Church. They are protagonists well prepared, who should be taken seriously.

ASSISI - IMPORTANT!!!

At the Missionary Exhibition of the Mother House, the missionary pencils, the biodegradable pens in recycled paper, cotton bags and soap made from used oil by Sr. Victoria are now available. It is a way of creating a mentality for a new style of life. Whoever is interested in the use and the distribution of these materials, can request for them at the Secretariat for the Missions.



FLASHES OF LIGHT...

USA – Sr. Regina arrives in the international community of Holyoke and she communicates: “I have come to be part of this Vice province and I live the reality of being a MISSIONARY of Assisi. It is indeed a wonderful testimony to see Korean, Zambian, American, Italian, Romanian sisters living under one roof with common aim: saying yes, to the plan of the Lord. I strongly feel that we are carrying out a ministry of PRESENCE, as St. Francis would say, in a world in which ethnic, tribal and racial wars are rampant. We entrust ourselves to your prayers in order to live fully this mission of presence.”

ITALIA – Maria is a widow who lives on very little. She sends her twenty Euro whenever she can, for those who are more in need than herself. With a touching message, we relate the last one: “... it squeezes my heart to hear how much suffering there is in the world. I would like to embrace all with my prayer which I hope reaches in every corner of the world., that the Lord may sustain all. That which I can not write down, I keep in my heart, where every human being I embrace finds space, embracing the whole world ...” “The kingdom of God belongs to this ...”

MOLDAVIA – The three sisters who have been in Moldavia for some months share with us the following: “... We have now started to understand the Russian language; we still do not have a house, but we continue to look around, seeking to understand the reality and to see the more urgent needs. We have seen that the old people are the ones who are more in need because they do not have sufficient money for food and for the heaters; the winter was very cold. We buy bread for them, but we do not do it always because we do

not have enough money even for ourselves. We are happy to know that the paper swans that we send for the missionary exhibition in Assisi are useful. We are thinking of making other handicraft objects in order to help ourselves and others.

In our new mission, we live with confidence and trust despite the initial difficulties and we count on the prayers of all the sisters.

Sr. Daniela, Sr. Magda, Sr. Maria

ITALIA – The support from afar, besides changing the life of a needy child, becomes a pedagogical instrument for the children at a nursery school, who together in one class commit themselves to help other needy children. Here is a confirmation of this from a letter written by Sr. Celestina from Oristano: “The photo of Julian, the child adopted from afar by our class, brought about rage. When I presented the photo and the letter, first to the children, who have a good and kind heart, then, to the parents, they at once, accepted to become little brothers and sisters of little Julian. Immediately, the day after, they brought some money for the cure of the child's eyes. Even the parents did not have any difficulty in contributing. We will send you the money as soon as possible, hoping that the child will be able to recover quickly.

A three year old child, some days after having brought his money, looking at the photo of Julian displayed in class, he exclaimed: “Sr. Celestina look, our little brother has eyes open, which means that our money has made him well.” Therefore, for him, this gesture of love worked to heal the little friend far away.

We hope to be able to follow him up until he grows up, as we had done for Ecaterina, who is now at the university.

I was very happy to be able to present the initiative and the meaning of adoption from afar to the new arrivals in our section.”

THE YEAR OF PRIESTHOOD

The Vatican City – The year of priesthood, the year of great commitment and renewal has just been concluded. From the discourse of Cardinal Hummes, we pick up some important elements of Mission and the Missionary urgency: Here are some extracts:

“... the mission **Ad gentes** and the mission for **new evangelisation** in the lands already evangelized are always very urgent everywhere and they need to be realized with new missionary zeal, new methods and new expressions ... The Holy Father Benedict XVI said that it is not enough to preserve the communities already in existence, even if this is also important, which means that it is urgent to rise up and to go in mission ...we should be very much aware of realising the missionary urgency. Let us feel once more called and sent by the Lord. We need to rise up and to go on mission everywhere. On one hand, the dischristianization of the old evangelized countries, and on the other hand, the new Evangelization which is often a true and first evangelization ... In a particular way, the first ones to whom the mission is addressed are the poor. “Still today, there are hundreds of millions of human beings who are constrained to live in utter poverty and even in misery and with hunger,” – the Cardinal made it clear - “They have

been marginalized and excluded from the table of material, social and cultural goods, and often times, even from the table of spiritual goods. They are the first ones who have the right to receive the Good News that God is the Father who loves them without any reserve or limit and that he does not approval of inhuman conditions in which the poor have been kept, but requests that their human rights are also recognized, respected, and wholly realised in concrete for them as well ... The poor people in the city outskirts and in the countryside have the need of feeling the closeness of the Church, be it for more urgent necessary help or for the defence of their rights and promotion of a society founded on justice and peace.”



Dearest friends, after a long pause of commitment at the school of specialization in paediatrics, finally, I now write to you from Novaliches, where I have returned a little while ago.

It is difficult to explain to you my joy of embracing again the many people that I left behind some years ago, which time seems to have stopped, in order to continue the dialogue again. Many times, smiles, greetings, stories ...children I left young whom I had known only by the smile and from the look have now grown up. Wonderful stories and sad stories: some people who are much better now than when I left them, others who have not made it or are sick. The stories of the typhoon that had gravely struck Manila in 2009 are still vivid : the flooded houses, much fear, evacuations to the centre for makeshift. Thanks be to God our area was not struck in a severe way in comparison to the other areas and there was more damage to things than to the people.

I found some improvement in the slums, even if the environmental condition and the life in many areas still remain very poor and uncertain. The clinic where I was working has continued to function with local medical people, a sign that the work, thanks also for your precious help, has born lasting fruits in time.

My greatest joy above all, was returning to St. Francis Mission House, where the sisters have continued to receive and welcome children from poorer families and in difficulty, offering them breakfast and lunch, besides a space to play and to study.

Thanks from the heart, on behalf of all of us and these families for the help that you have continued to give in the course

of these years, with which besides the activity at the centre, we have been able to help many other people.

Few days ago, I went to visit a family, which on our arrival was in a terrible condition. The mother was finished from fatigue and lack of food. She had just given birth to two twins (5th and 6th born) in a very precarious health condition and both babies are infected with scabbies. The elder daughter had had a very grave scoliosis, which briefly would have compromised also the function of the respiratory-cardiac. The father perhaps, crushed by discouragement of the situation, was very often drunk. It needed many years of help and support ..., but now I have found the family serene and they live in a brick house, which the father himself has built with the materials we acquired for them. The elder daughter after having successfully gone through a delicate and costly surgery, she has finished school and now lives with her new family.

A mission that continues, being supported by all of you! Thanks from the heart for your commitment and for your solidarity. A dear greeting also to your families from us the sisters and the children.



On September 1st, we will celebrate the fifth Day for the safeguard of creation. We report part of the message of the Commission of CEI.

One or the other Testament converge in emphasizing the narrow link that exists between peace and justice. "practising justice will bring about peace, honouring justice will always give tranquillity and security." (Is. 32:17). In the Biblical perspective, the abundance of the gifts of the earth offered by the Creator lays the foundation for the possibility of a social life characterized by an equal distribution of goods. It is the logic of manna: "When they measured out what each one had collected, no one who had collected more had too much, no one who had collected less had too little." (Ex. 16:18).

Benedict XVI has underlined many times the obstacles which the poor people encounter today, in order to access the environmental resources, including those fundamental ones like, water, food and energetic funds. Often times, in fact, the exploitation of the environment is so intense as to determine the situation of strong degradation, that threatens the habitability of the earth for the present generation and even more for the future generations. The climatic change is capable of affecting the quality of life and health even of the far away places. There is need to remark the fact that in the recent years, the flow of natural resources and energetics from the poorer countries go to sustain the economies of the industrialized nations.

Peace, justice and the care for the earth only grow together and the threat of one of them is reflected also on the other.

It is in this context that the Pope recalls for a greater responsibility, for a grave duty (...) of handing over the earth to the new generations in a state such that they can also worthily inhabit it and further more cultivate it. Such a duty demands a deeper revision of the model of development, a true and proper "ecological conversion". It is impossible to talk about common good without considering the environmental dimension, or even to guarantee respect

for fundamental human rights neglecting those of living in a health environment. It deals with a commitment of a great moment: making peace with justice means to orient ourselves towards a more simple style of life, both personally and communally, avoiding unnecessary waste and preferring renewable energies. Every subject is invited to become an agent of peace in taking responsibility for creation, working with consistence in the areas of ones own. (even making a bed for a patient).

Contemplating the beauty of creation, the space in which we can grasp God himself who takes care of his creatures, environmental justice finds consistence. We are therefore, invited to look at the variety of creation with love, of which the earth is very rich, discovering the gift of the Creator, which in itself manifests something of Himself.

This spirituality of creation can draw nourishment from many elements of Christian tradition, starting from the Eucharistic celebration, in which we give thanks for the fruits of the earth, which becomes for us bread of life and drink of salvation. We celebrate therefore, the 5th Day for the safeguard of creation in a spirit of ecumenical fraternity, thanking God who takes care of us."

