

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE 16TH OF EVERY MONTH:

16th September: We dedicate this day of prayer for the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI and for the Universal Church, so that at this moment of great trial, God can continue to strengthen his faith and be like a LIGHT ON THE MOUNTAIN.

16th October: We pray for the sisters participating at the General Assembly of the Institute, so that being docile to the voice of the Spirit, they can find and indicate new directions which respond with fidelity to the plan of God for our religious family.

Did you know that...

From the Missionary Exhibition of the Mother House, you can order and receive by post:

- ✓ Missionary pencils
- ✓ Recycled paper pens
- ✓ Biodegradable pens
- ✓ Biological pens in maize paste
- ✓ Solid posters
- ✓ Bags in ecological cotton
- ✓ Literature on "New style of life"
- ✓ Books in various languages which narrate the life of St. Francis, St. Clare. The Bible for youths and children.
- ✓ Missionary Rosaries

*Spreading these objects,
you are doing Missionary animation!*

FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY

SISTERS OF ASSISI



IN THE WORLD

China
Italy
Croatia
Philippines
Japan
Brazil
Kenya
Indonesia

USA
Mexico
Moldavia
Romania
Russia
Zambia
Korea

September ~ October 2010



Dear sister, dear friends,

The Lord Give you Peace!

*It is with grateful hearts that we celebrate **Missionary Day** of the Institute, a day of prayer, reflection and sacrifice in favour of the Sisters most in need. It is a day of thanksgiving to the Lord because from a small seed of a “tree” planted in Assisi, has grown up like a big oak tree: solid, centenary, capable of maintaining its leaves, until other trees bring up theirs ...*

The missions have blossomed since the trunk (the first community) put down solid roots to be able to support and nurture the small branches which would give beauty and refreshment to the Church of God.

I would like to go through again with you into the history of our community, reviewing some witnesses, fruits of the love the Conventual Fathers have had for us.

Mother Guerrini tells us about Fr. Master Mola, who “...the day will come that those holy walls will be kissed...I long for the day I will be able to go back to that sacred place, to celebrate Mass because, in spite of having all good Sisters living there now, there will be a time all those who will live there will be all soul burning by divine love...”.

The witness of Fr. Fabriziani is also wonderful, who, coming to the community, wanted to see all the sisters in order to tell them his particular intuition: “Listen, I saw all your passed sisters, all of you and the future ones, who were in a big number, in a long and well ordered procession, that two by two, with joy that would fill the soul and, at such sight I asked what that music might mean, and I was answered that, it was the dedication the Sisters had for the Church lines and care for a worth cult of the Lord which was very pleasing to God”.

Fr. Caratelli, to the Card. Ledóchowski of Propaganda Fide, in the letter of request to send the first Missionary sisters to Greece “...the Sisters themselves as well as the Institute, are capable for the type of teaching required in the mission and, with their holy lives, the maternal affection, they know how to instruct in the best way the youth. Regarding my request for such a need of this holy Ministry, that is in part carried out by the Friars; the Sisters depend on our Order, yet they are to be preferred because of their franciscan simplicity and good acceptance of people of any colour or race. This quality, looking at the situation of the mission, is precious, I would say: indispensable...”

How can one not be proud of our sisters who put down the basic and solid foundation of our missionary life, remaining models who inspire us even today, in order to be true Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi!

Wishing you true holiness, that which was lived by our sisters.

Sr M. Rosalinda

News

ASSISI - On July 31st, 14 sisters celebrated their 60th, 50th, and 25th anniversary of their religious profession. The ceremony took place at the major altar of the inferior Basilica of St. Francis, with the participation of many sisters, relatives and friends of the sisters. The feast which speaks of fidelity and joy, and which invites us to live our consecrated life with great joy and trust.



ASSISI - The parents of Sr. Ornella, dad Lucio and mum Marta, celebrated the 50th anniversary of their wedding at the Mother House in Assisi. It was a wonderful celebration which allowed us to embrace the whole family and to say thank you for their missionary collaboration which is carried on with great commitment. Best wishes to dad and mum Ciccone, as they look forward to celebrate their 60th anniversary.



ZAMBIA - Sr. Giuliana Ferrazza, Sr. Orlanda Del Dotto, Sr. Maria Porunde and Sr. Mirriam Lee went to Zambia for the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the mission there. Also the friends from San Marino, Genova and eight youths participated at the celebration. The eight youths remained there to give a service at St. Anthony's Orphanage and at the nutrition centres.



KOREA - The two Chinese Postulants have initiated their novitiate formation at the house of formation in Korea. They are Maria Wang and Magdalena Dang. Teresa Jeong, a Korean was also received together with them. We wish these young sisters, a joyous journey towards a total consecration to the Lord.



ROME - The 25th Franciscan Missionary Assembly took place at Seraphicum. It was a moment of reflection on the theme of: “New people for a new Evangelization,” and it was also a meeting of fraternity which continues to strengthen our bonds and commitment for mission. The meeting was organized by the Minor Conventual Fathers, who as usual, share with us a good journey of fraternity.



50 YEARS OF GRACE IN THE LAND OF SMILES

Let us bow our heads in thanksgiving to God for the challenges and fruitful 50 years of our presence in Zambia.

I recall the beautiful symbol we used when we celebrated 25th anniversary: a tree grown with flowers and fruits on, we still remember that same tree, which has now grown big and blossomed, giving out many fruits and it is the source of our happiness in this significant celebration. It is truly an occasion of narrating the history of our Province in all the different situations the Lord has been leading us; sunny, cloudy and rainy days, moments of joy, struggles and trials which resulted into new impulses, new strengths, new challenges and vigour of continuing our mission with authenticity. In all this, we have been helped to see and to experience the hand of God holding us and guiding us in accomplishing his will which is manifested in our ministries.

We, the sisters in foreign missions, unite ourselves spiritually with you all who are living and celebrating this special event of grace. Our gratitude goes back to the first sisters and all those who came after them and gave birth to this mission and nurtured it. The precious seed of our Charism which you sowed in the fertile soil of Zambia has grown into a big tree, providing comfort and shelter to the poor and the needy people of our nation. Our mission in the soil of Zambia and in the local Church could not have reached its present state without your sacrifices, untiring efforts and your continuous support in prayer. **Twatotela, Mwabombeni! Lesa alemupaale lyonse!**

We are very grateful to you Sr. Egidia and Sr. Ilaria for cooperating with the will of God and for your perseverance which has brought you to the witnessing of this significant celebration. Your dedication to the sick, the poor and the needy people have taught us to look into the context of the Gospel and our charism in which the least are most favoured.

We acknowledge and we are very grateful for the humble services rendered with love and in simplicity by Sr. Domenica and Sr. Colomba. We are certain that you are resting in God's hands and you have continued interceding for us so that we may accomplish the will of God with the same zeal and commitment you had.

Twatotela sana. Musendame mu cibote ca Mfumu.

We are also very grateful to all the sisters who have served in Zambia and in Kenya in the new era.

Our gratitude also goes to all our benefactors. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts because through you and your material and financial support, we have experienced the flourishing of our projects and have seen the brighter future of our sponsored children. Through your hard work and untiring efforts, you are directly serving God in our Mission. May God bless your families and the work you do in His name.

Last but not the least, to all the sisters in the Province, we say, **“Congratulations! and Mwabombeni mukwai,”** for having grasped the deep significance of the mission God has entrusted to us. Aware of our nothingness, let us give thanks to God, for having done such wonderful things in us and through us. Looking at what has been done, makes us also confirm that the heritage of our Charism sown in Zambia was a gift from the Spirit. For this, we continue believing, hoping and praying that the same Spirit may continue guiding and inspiring us in recognizing and interpreting the signs of the times, in the light of the Gospel and be able to incarnate it in the present context.

Reflecting on this event in our Province is responding to the invitation of a deeper renewal which would bring us to reconciliation with Christ, with our sisters in the communities, with everyone and with the people we are serving in our apostolate. With love and solidarity with one another, let us discover the ways of reviving our Charism and in its spiritual and missionary dimension of our calling. May God the Almighty continue blessing and sustaining our Province. May the Blessed Mother who is the model of our consecration be our guide in all we do and be the Protector of our Mission.

With great pride, we conclude by saying, **“Let us begin Sisters, for up to now, we have done little or nothing.”**

Kind regards,

Sr. Theresa Simwizi (Philippines)

ROMANIA – FROM ST. FRANCIS CENTRE OF HALAUCEST, A TESTIMONY WHICH SPEAKS TO US OF THE SMALL GESTURES WHICH BUILD UP LIVES

We bring up the letter of Sr. Monica Roca, which accompanies the letter of the two girls who were going to “St. Francis” Centre.

“... I have known the family Bursuc from 2001, when we opened the day Centre at the ex orphanage of Halaucest. Since then, we had been always discouraging Monica from going abroad, leaving the family behind with small children, because she was not being supported by the husband. From her sewing, she was not able to provide the necessary needs for her daughters, even though, she was working without rest. The possibility of going to the Centre and the adoption of the children from afar, have been precious helps which convinced her to remain at home. She continued with great responsibility the duty of a mother, in this way, imparting in her daughters the desire of committing themselves in all ways responsibly and at the same time, praying for the father to be able to change ...”

Monica, the mother writes: “... I am a mother of three, two children have been going to St. Francis Centre, for four years, while the youngest, Diana Larissa, will begin this year.

I want to say thank you to all the benefactors, because with their help, they have sustained me in overcoming the difficulty situations. Thanks to the sisters, for I was able to work knowing that my daughters were safe. My daughters have been very affectionate to the sisters from whom they have had support and a good education and have been well prepared for life. What I get from my sewing is not sufficient to meet my family's needs, but with your help, we now have a peaceful life.”

Alexandra and Andreea Bursuc write: “We are the daughters of Monica and both of us have been frequenting the Day Centre, and now I am 17 years old and I am doing the eleventh class, my sister is 13 and she is in the eighth class.

We are very happy with the education we have received from the Centre and we are very grateful to the sisters for the help that we have received, especially for the school preparation which has allowed us to study, having had the basic foundation for education, not forgetting the human and social formation received with much warmth and love, which has brought us to know Jesus.

We will never forget what has been done for us and for other children, and it is with much gratitude that we recall to mind these memories, even if we have grown up. We do this, praying to God for them, so that they continue to help other children as well, as they have done for us.

The programme of the Centre was always well organized, a good lunch and then, we were able to do our homework and also to have time to play and to do some other activities which were preparing us for life: e.g. hygienic – health, religious activities, recreation, etc...

We join our mother in thanking you and we are very grateful because in helping us, you have made it possible for mother to remain close to us in order to have a harmonious growth.



Sisters and children of Moldova

THE REAL SITUATION OF AIDS IN ZAMBIA

A story which speaks a lot...

"My name is Josephine Nakombe and I live in Kakoso compound in Chililabombwe town (where the copper mine is connected with that of Congo DR). I am 35 years old and I am married with four children, but my husband, our youngest child and I are sick with AIDS.

After the sad diagnosis, it was proposed to us to start taking ARVS (anti retrovirus), more for the prolonging of life, than for the cure, since it does not exist. Beginning the treatment, we were confronted with many difficulties, like for example, not having a watch so as to take the medicines at the exact hours, my husband is alcoholic and there was no one to show us how to live well with alcohol and

AIDS; It is necessary for whoever takes these medicines, to eat well, but for us, we did not even have the possibility of one meal a day. This difficulties made the treatment inadequate. When the doctor found out that our situation was getting worse, he referred us to a support group of the Franciscan Sisters, where our three children receive regularly three meals a day.

On the first day, we met with the Sister nurse, Sr. Dorothy Lungu and immediately, I felt a sense of belonging to that group of people struck by the same sickness like ours. The group Assistant informed us on how to live our situation positively. Now, with the food that we receive once a month from the sisters, we man-

age to have two meals a day and this helps us to be able to take the medicines.

The programme of the sisters has been of great help for me and my baby has improved very much. If only I had known about this initiative before, my baby would not have become sick because he was born health and negative, but he got the virus through breastfeeding.

My husband has stopped drinking and he follows all the instructions of the programme. We have also been taught about how to be punctual in taking the medicines, even without a watch.

We wish that the programme will continue so as to save many more lives and to improve others."



Josephine and her child

When a child is a victim of AIDS

"I had just entered the house, intending to start preparing supper and as I was talking to Sr. Eunice, I saw a child clinging to the window. I asked her what she was looking for at that hour when it was already dark. She told me that she wanted to talk to Sr. Petronella. Then, I recognized the child because I used to see her often at the hospital, being an AIDS patient. I opened the door and she immediately told me that she was sent away from the village together with her grandmother.

Anna had had in her hands a plastic bag where she was keeping all her goods: an old blanket which she was given by a lady of the parish, a skirt and a blouse soaked with water.

With tears in my eyes, I went to look for some warm clothes, soap and a towel. Putting them in the plastic bag she had, I noticed that in the blanket, there were thorns and pieces of glass and I asked her why? Anna explained to me that they were forced to sleep outside the house, in the shade (insaka) served as village kitchen, while the other children were sleeping in the house. During the day, she had to put the blanket on a plant because the kitchen was being used. Then, the neighbours informed me about the life of Anna and they confirmed to me that even as a child, she was given a plate apart to be eating alone and all the others were told to stay away from her because her disease was contagious. As a result, all attempts to play with the others ended up in being rejected, and then she would remain alone, hidden, observing other children playing.

Even Anna's grandmother is an AIDS patient and she suffers from TB, and she was also sent away. A nurse

by the name of Charity, received both of them in her house for some hours, but she was afraid to keep them in case of death, whereby the traditions are very precise. Charity asked the grandmother to sign up so that the child can remain with her. Not knowing how to write, the grandmother while weeping, asked Sr. Petronella to write for her the following: "I, Grace Kamelu, grandmother of Anna Mumdumbu, declare that the child can be entrusted to Charity Sowi, so that she can begin going to school and learn the things that each child deserves to know. I will not claim anything and I will not accuse Charity in case of sickness or death or any other reasons".

Anna is only 11 years old and she is a joyous child, but she has nobody with whom to share her joy.

I was very much struck by the story of Anna and I found the response only in the reading of the Psalm which says: "... children of God, heirs of the kingdom of God, a God who loves us infinitely." This made me realise that we are all members of one family, the family of God, where He cares for each one of us in his/her particular situation of life.

Please, whatever kind of help would be offered to Anna and her grandmother will become our joy and will be very much appreciated. The little Anna has been exiled from her village to which she thought she belonged, but we hope that where she lives now, she will find a new family that would give her good and adequate care."

Sr. Evelyn Kamanga
(St. Kalembe Mission)