



## “White” Smoke

All of the congregation and so many Catholics throughout the world have been praying these past four weeks since Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation. Sister Ieda and I were on visitation in Paran , Brazil when the Pope’s resignation happened and we did not return to Rome until the morning of his last day in office. So we missed a lot of the speculation and “buzz” happening in Rome. Fortunately we were here for Pope Benedict XVI’s last day and farewell journey to Castle Gondolfo by helicopter, which we could see from our terrace.

Naturally, like many of you, our Generalate community, wondered on which day after the Conclave began, the new Pope would be elected. So we tried to estimate when we should head out to St. Peter’s Square in hopes

*Sr. Sally Hodgdon*  
(SUPERIOR GENERAL)

of being present for the appearance of the “white” smoke. We thought it might be after 5 ballots, so Wednesday night or maybe more likely Thursday morning. Sister Donna Hoffman and Ieda had just arrived from a meeting in Sweden on Wednesday around 5 p.m.. So after a quick snack, we all rushed out in the rain to St. Peter’s Square hoping to arrive there before 7:00 for the evening “smoke.” The Square was filled with thousands of people most of whom had their colorful umbrellas raised against the rain. Many of the people had been there much of the day waiting for news, but the area became more crowded as 7 o’clock approached. We quickly

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found a very good place to stand where we could see both the famous "chimney" on the roof of the Sistine Chapel and the balcony on which the new Pope would appear. We also had a huge TV screen to our left for a closer view of it all.

For the first couple of seconds after the smoke finally appeared around 7:10, I was not certain if it was "white" smoke or gray which would turn to black. But quickly it became "whiter and whiter" and the crowd became more and more excited. Truly it was a great and emotional moment as we all cheered and hugged and clapped, the huge bells rang throughout the Square and the city and we thanked God for the new Pope and for being present at this historic moment.

The next hour of standing and waiting to see who had been elected Pope felt much longer than 60 minutes, although we were busy taking photos of the smoke and the crowd, texting and phoning the United States and other countries, and trying to stay dry. Also, a couple of reporters stopped to interview us about our reaction to the news. Fortunately the rain stopped before Pope Francisco appeared. When the announcement was finally made it was hard to understand the Cardinal telling us who the new Pope was, so the response was not immediate overwhelming



*Pope Francis greets the crowds after his election*

applause. The applause came when people figured out who he was.

The new Pope looked stunned as he came out onto the balcony! But as he spoke you could feel his desire to be one with us as he thanked everyone for their prayers. When he asked for our blessing before he would bless us, the power of the silence and reverence in the Square was awe-inspiring. This request of his spoke volumes to us about the type of man he is.

During his first day in Rome as the new Pope, Francisco tried to follow his normal routines and

en route to pray at one of the basilicas stopped to chat with people going to work. Everyone here is excited to have a Pope from South America, a Jesuit with pastoral and provincial leadership experience, a love for the poor and one who seems to be attracted to listening to and being with people. And of course the "Romans" around town are happy that he is of Italian heritage!

Our prayer is that God bless Pope Francisco and all those who advise him, that they be open and willing to see new possibilities for our church.

## New Saints

<b>Sr. Maria Concetta Ciarcelluto</b> (86)	ITALY	12/03/2013
<b>Sr. Marie Lutgarde Leppens</b> (82)	FRANCE	12/03/2013
<b>Sr. Vernice Molinari</b> (83)	USA	26/03/2013
<b>Sr. Mary Anne Roddy</b> (87)	USA	27/03/2013
<b>Sr. François Régis Valet</b> (86)	FRANCE	04/04/2013
<b>Sr. Maria Veronica Lütke Brochtrup</b> (78)	NORWAY	12/04/2013
<b>Sr. Joana Margarida Gasparin</b> (83)	CAXIAS DO SUL	13/04/2013
<b>Sr. Alirce Paulina Frigotto Zanella</b> (67)	PORTO ALEGRE	16/04/2013
<b>Sr. Maria das Graças Iacoponi</b> (95)	SÃO PAULO	17/04/2013

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

# Ethics in the Pursuit of Justice and Solidarity

*Sr. Nilva Rosin*

(LAGOA VERMELHA, BRAZIL – JPIC)

This text aims to initiate a reflection leading to commitment and solidarity with people who are wronged, and who are affected by the perverse logic of an unjust unethical world. An ethical challenge for all is the struggle for the emancipation of marginalized and unprotected human beings with regard to their fundamental human rights. The concern is to propose a dynamic experience that generates an attitude of caring, from the perspective of a human and world view that calls for respect for others. What is being ethical? Why be ethical? Human beings, who are always changing, need ethics. The ethical is understood as the art of living together which leads us to act responsibly. An ethics of universal and unconditional love aims to guide the attitudes and behavior of human beings in relation to others in society. The ethical call is to think about "how we live." An ethical stance is the ability to resist and say "no" to circumstances that deny life. One of the Urgencies of the Congregation and of the Planet assumed in the 2009 General Chapter is "to live an ethical lifestyle, conscious of our own consumerism and all that hurts humanity and the integrity of creation, in critical awareness that every choice we make has



*Sr. Nilva Rosin*

an impact on society and the planet." (Final Doc. 2009 CG) In view of such a position, it is necessary to reflect and educate ourselves continuously concerning an ethical life and solidarity. Foremost in this respect, we must question ourselves about our responsibility and about the impact of our work in the world. Because, when we inquire about "what we do" and "what we believe," we are referring to the ethics of commitment. Given this, ethics deals with the meaning of our life each day, which means modifying habits and reaffirming attitudes of respect regarding human ecology. The cultivation of ethics leads to postures of respect for differences, leading one to assume ethical values such as commitment to the cause of the impoverished. Justice and peace are seen to be critical in the

world, just as in the Gospel. The purpose of ethics is to help us make well-founded choices. According to Mário Sérgio Cortella, "I have things that I want, but shouldn't have; things that I should do, but can't; and there are things that I can do, but don't want to." Within Cortella's thought, we find some guidance on how to struggle against prejudice to ensure an education of substantial changes without violating human dignity. The Gospel and our charism continuously invite us to responsibility regarding ourselves and others. We have to improve in our duty to be informed and in the right of all to a relevant education for our times. We need to open up spaces for discussion, so that together, we may build educational processes of human coexistence that promote peace and justice.

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

# Nurturing Our Neighborhood in Tanzania

*Sr. Jacqueline Goodin*  
(TANZANIA)

**A**t St. Joseph Hostel in Songea, Sisters Eliana Aparecida dos Santos of Caxias do Sul, Mary Priscilla Kakanatt of Tanmaya province, and Sr. Jacqueline Goodin of the Congregation of St. Joseph, USA, see their work as a ministry of justice through their “shepherding” of a handful of girls throughout four years of secondary education. The Hostel is a year-round residence where the girls live while attending government and private secondary schools in town.

We consider this indirect form of education an act of Justice for several reasons. By making it possible for the girls to continue their studies beyond primary school, it gives them an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty, unfulfilled dreams, and dependency by supporting their education and thus the opportunities for development and self-sufficiency that education opens up. It also ensures that the girls are visible and making a contribution to the community. And beyond this, it affirms the dignity of womanhood and strengthens their voices in their society. And how do we do this? We provide a safe, clean, and nurturing living environment in which the girls are encouraged to study, learn, and develop.



*A group of hostel students at the computer*

Since 2012, Sr. Eliana has seen first-hand how St. Joseph Hostel impacts the girls. She has said: “We offer an opportunity for poor girls who have a strong desire and ability to study. We encourage their dream of an education that will give each one a life of dignity for herself and her family. We encourage them to see themselves as future professionals, to help in the development of their country that has so many health, educational, economic, political, and social needs. In this way, our work with these girls supports their motivation. This is, I am sure, the work of justice, in this reality, full of injustice for women.”

In Tanzania, girls are prone to dropping out of school, which gives them far fewer choices in life. Girls are typically marginalized in this patriarchal society in so many ways. Here we help them to develop their “voice” in society. We continually identify girls with strong leadership potential—so they can have opportunities to

organize work and play activities and be good examples to the younger girls. They begin to see themselves as leaders. All this is part of the “wholistic development of a child” that to which Sr. Priscilla has committed herself for six years in this mission. She sees that this focus on development is at work in the Hostel. “This is what will give them a better life in their society,” she states. We try to convey to “our” children at St. Joseph Hostel that they are gifts of a loving God to the world, worthy of dreams and bright futures, regardless of socio-economic backgrounds. “You are somebody! So study and act like you care about yourself and your future,” we say to them through our relationships with them. We offer the girls who are with us many opportunities but we meet with disappointments as well as success. Yet knowing that we can help even a few girls grow in ways that had previously seemed impossible makes all our efforts worthwhile.

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

# A Love Story about Life



*Sister Maria de Lurdes with volunteers in pastoral work for children in Angola, Africa*

**D**uring my training beginning in 1970, the dream of being a missionary was germinating and growing stronger. I chose the area of healthcare and trained in nursing. February 5, 1986 was a special and exciting day for me, when I left for my new mission at Itanhém, in the far south of Bahia in northeastern Brazil, where the Congregation had developed projects in evangelization.

With only one year in Bahia, I was called by Dom Antônio Elizeu Zuquetto to establish the Pastoral da Criança program (social work with children) in the Diocese of Teixeira de Freitas, also in Bahia. The goal was to reduce the high incidence of child mortality in the region. I was the diocesan coordinator of this program for 18 years, and, for two years, coordinated the income-generating projects. Currently I work as a coordinator, training volunteers in the Pastoral da Criança program in Bahia, and in the

International Mission of Pastoral da Criança.

What moves me and drives me to continue the work in the Pastoral da Criança program is the mission to continue the project of Jesus that, with its life-giving presence, proclaims the hope of a more just world and solidarity: "I came so that all may have life and life in abundance." (John 10:10)

The Pastoral da Criança is an organization created in Brazil that is playing an important role in the fight against infant mortality and is improving the quality of life of children and their families. It is based on solidarity and the sharing of knowledge, having as objective the whole development of children from conception to six years of life, in a family and community context. The activities in the communities are aimed at human development in the fight against infant mortality, malnutrition, domestic violence and social marginalization. This program helps educate toward a

*Sr. Maria de Lurdes Mattiello*  
(LAGOA VERMELHA, BRAZIL)

culture of peace and improving the quality of life for the poorest. Currently, the methodology of Pastoral da Criança has moved beyond the boundaries of Brazil. Through its simple, low-cost actions, it has become an international reference for success, and it is present today in 17 other countries.

One day, I received an unexpected phone call from Dr. Zilda Arns Neumann, who had founded and coordinated the Pastoral da Criança internationally, until her death in the earthquake in Port-au-Prince on January 12, 2010. She invited me to begin Pastoral da Criança in East Timor. Remembering my first desire to be a missionary, I accepted the challenge of working in a post-war country, where the suffering and the needs of the people were great. That was in the year 2001. However, the mission abroad did not stop there, but has opened up new possibilities. The following year, I was sent to Angola in Africa and to Guinea-Bissau in 2007. I returned to Angola in 2009 and again in 2011, with the goal of empowering new coordinators, improving and strengthening teams in new dioceses.

I have been a part of this love story of life for 25 years. What

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

strengthens and encourages me in the work of Pastoral da Criança is that, through simple means, there is evidence that it is possible to change the reality of a country. I say that it is worth donating my love for the construction of a more just and fraternal world, in the service of life and hope, so that all children may have life and have it in abundance.



*Sister Maria de Lurdes  
in Angola, Africa*

## Women: Justice and the Right to Personhood

**Lúcia Ivani**  
(ASSOCIATE,  
PROVINCE OF SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL)



*Lúcia Ivani and Sisters of Saint Joseph in the Cooperative*

In Goiania, a municipality located in the central-west region of Brazil, as in so many other places, the status of women is very precarious. Reports of mistreatment and beatings are often reported to the women's police precinct – an establishment that works for women's rights and citizenship. There is a place for recycling on the outskirts of the city, with an established waste recycling cooperative (COOPREC). In

addition to caring for the environment and supporting sustainability, the cooperative fights in favor of their members, mostly women. Two small incidents reported below demonstrate this aspect of the cooperative.

First, a woman who was beaten almost every day by her husband went to work in the cooperative. Her companions began to encourage her to go to the police station to report her husband. Finally, she made the complaint. Arriving home, she was beaten again, and this time even worse. All it took was a phone call, and the police came and arrested her husband, and he later left the house. This woman's life changed completely, and she became a lively and engaged person. The second incident refers to another woman, regarded as a quiet person, who spoke to no one, nor did she communicate with her family. After she began working in the cooperative, she started to live, work and



*Lúcia Ivani working in the Cooperative*

participate in the training and important events, and she became more open. Today, she is a new person at home and in her neighborhood. Her transformation is visible. So, our recycling cooperative develops professional characteristics and fulfills an important role for justice and women's rights.

# Following an Uncharted Path to the Future

**Sr. Philomina Pazhuru Parambil**  
(GENERAL COUNCIL)

As I have worked with the organizing committee in preparation for the meeting of the Newer Members to be held July 13-29, 2013, I have been forcefully struck by the word "future" and what it means for us as a congregation. Every congregation, conscious of the realities of our time, is re-visioning its future. Each member is reflecting on what is on the horizon for religious life and dreaming of the ways in which this life can be most responsive to the changing realities of the world. We, in general, are going through one of the major upheavals that take place periodically in religious life with the demise of some congregations, the birth of others, and re-vitalization of a few. Membership is steadily falling. New vocations have eluded us. While in the past consecrated life was seen as a necessary component of selfless ministry, an increasing number of dedicated lay people believe that much of our ministry can be accomplished without committing oneself by vow. We live in a time committed to the search for excellence and perfection in many dimensions of one's life, but this does not always include the spiritual life. All forms of media present images calling us to become physically attractive and to present a good image before others. Acquiring power and position are seen as the criteria for evaluating one's life. In the midst of these societal changes, the Church is facing acute crises.

Lack of commitment, lax witness in consecrated life and declining spiritual leadership has led to a crisis of credibility for the Church.

The inspiration that animated the founder/foundress is what is most important, and this inspiration must be experienced anew by all of the members. In all the challenges we face today, we must be attuned to the creative disturbances of the Spirit who often beckons us to take the less travelled and unfamiliar roads, in living our charism with creative fidelity, as we carry out the mission of Jesus.

Our present time is holy, and our challenges are a blessing. These are moments when the old must give way to the new. Should we not ask ourselves to let go of an idealized past so that the charism will continue to inspire future generations and respond to the needs of different times and cultures? Anything less than that should be unacceptable. Our future does not demand impossible feats from us. It demands that we embrace a fresh way of looking at our life and mission. It invites all of us to give our energy, prayer and



**Logo for the meeting of newer members**

commitment to this uncharted path. This is the challenge facing all of us, but one facing the newer members in a particular way.

How relevant is a church, a Gospel, a word of God that does not provoke a response, unsettle us, and point out sinful structures in the society in which it is proclaimed?

The Gospel, with its challenges and promises, must remain the basis and inspiration of our mission and identity. We must seize the opportunity to fulfill our mission to be counter-cultural, inclusive and embracing of a genuine option for the disadvantaged. To do anything less is to betray our charism and the foundations upon which we stand.



**Sisters Susanna Hoyos (Denmark), Philomina Pazhuru Parambil (General Council), Bénédicte de Vaublanc (France) and Eluiza Maria Silva (France/Brazil)**

# Missionary Experience in Tanzania

*Sr. Eliete Dal Molin*  
(TANZANIA)



*Sister Eliete becoming acquainted with the reality*

**M**ission is a great life experience that teaches us a little more about our world. This is what I became aware of as a sister in temporary vows from Caxias do Sul, Brazil, on mission in Tanzania. After a time of living with the people, I'm still struggling to learn the native language, Swahili, and understand their customs, their culture, and way of living. I am in admiration, enjoying, listening and seeing the place and their lives. The Tanzanians, in their way of living and being, are spontaneously and warmly welcoming.

I have had many beautiful surprises. One of them occurred when I lived for a time in Msalaba Mkuu, a village 30 miles from Songea. During the time that I lived in this town, I visited and I developed some activities in a nursery school. I sang songs in Swahili with the children. Their eyes shone with

satisfaction because they were learning a different song and were so happy when singing. I felt very happy to be with and learn from them. For me, it was something small, but for them, it

was a big celebration. I also helped the children to plant mango seeds in bags, to monitor their growth and contribute to the planting of fruit trees. For them, this activity was a quiet one, because they have known, since they were very young, about working with the land and helping their parents on the farm.

I also visited some elderly people with health problems and our visits gave hope. They rejoice and share their joys and difficulties. I participated in the life of the church community in different ways. Children have religious instruction daily, where they decorate prayers for celebrations and receive guidance for life. The choir spends hours, every day,



*Children preparing bags for planting seeds*

rehearsing the hymns for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, which is wonderful. Sunday is the day to meet, pray and celebrate without haste. The Eucharistic Celebration usually lasts three to four hours or even more, with the participation of children, youth, adults and seniors. In addition to the mass, a time is reserved for village news and community organization. After the Eucharistic Celebration, people sell and buy agricultural products. One can feel within oneself the difficulties that people face for survival, fetching water from the well for domestic activities, working on the farm and harvesting food for daily consumption. The food supply is basically corn, squash, potatoes, beans and vegetables from the region or from what one can grow. Medical care is poor and people end up dying at home because of this. Malaria, AIDS and typhus are common diseases in this region. So life goes on, one day after another, without competition, ambition, envy or greed. The people here live with what they produce. Despite the difficulties, they live in a quiet way, where there is respect and mutual assistance. There are many families, and children learn early on to wash their clothes and help with domestic activities. These simple poor people show surprising generosity and kindness. I learned that solidarity with the least brings me closer to the ideal of Jesus Christ, giving more meaning to life. With solidarity, you put yourself at the disposal of the poor and in generosity, experience the most beautiful life lessons.

## A Remembrance that Rekindles the Flame



*Giving the banner to another community*

**Sr. Rosalia Fávero**

(NORTH/NORTHEAST REGION, BRAZIL)

The bicentennial of the founding of our Congregation was a very important moment experienced by all the Sisters and Associates in the N/NE of Brazil. We took the initiative to make a banner with the picture of Mother Saint John Marcoux and, for one month, celebrations were held with symbols and dramatizations. Each night, a family received the banner and there was a celebration of the word of God, prayers, chants, litanies and the retelling of the life of Mother Marcoux at their homes. These were very popular celebrations for the families of our Associates, as well as the people living on the same street and in the surrounding area. We lived this feast with the families as an important moment of missionary experience. The passage of the banner from one location to another was done in a caravan, making it possible to strengthen the bonds of friendship and communion among the Sisters and Associates. This celebratory time

even reached out to the most distant community geographically, in the state of Amazonas, where we sent a picture of Mother Marcoux. We can say that where she passed by, Mother Marcoux blessed homes, inspired men and women and produced real miracles,

leading to people forgiving each other and uniting families. We feel very strengthened by the expressions of faith and the recognition of the heroic virtue of our founder. She rekindled in us and in the people who knew a little bit about her life, the flame of love for God's project of serving the beloved neighbor. This initiative enabled greater dissemination of our charism and knowledge of our history. It captivated many people: youth, adults and even children. We Sisters and Associates realize that we have before us a great example of a life given to God through serving the most vulnerable and needy people. The missionary zeal of Mother Marcoux gives new energy to the experience of mission, even if it seems difficult or contrary to our sense of logic. God's plans come to fruition, despite our human limitations. What God wants from us is that we be docile instruments in God's hands. The pilgrimage of the banner of Mother Saint Jean Marcoux made it clear that humanity needs models and witnesses who show with their lives that it is worthwhile to spend one's life for others and to discover the great love of the Trinitarian God.

# Struggling to Create a More Just Society

*Sr. Barbara Bozak*  
(USA)



*An audience of young women listen to a presentation on the Children's Parliament*

February and March are months during which two important meetings are held at the United Nations in New York: that of the Commission for Social Development (in February) and that of the Commission on the Status of Women (in March). This year the themes of the two meetings, while distinct, were intertwined: "Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all" for the Commission for Social Development; "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" for the Commission on the Status of Women.

These meetings are important not only for the official government delegations who speak of their successes and challenges in the areas addressed, but also for NGO's, including Griselda Martinez-Morales, CSJ (Lyon – Mexico) who represents the

Congregations of St. Joseph at the UN, offering them an opportunity to speak to these issues in a public forum. Throughout the official meetings and the side events (activities organized on the UN premises outside the formal program) many NGO's brought their concerns and questions to ambassadors and other UN personnel, engaging in a dialogue to effect change. It was clear that what the UN calls "civil society" has an important role, not only in lobbying for legal structures that will create a more just world, but also in developing local, grass roots movements and holding governments accountable for their commitment to UN resolutions, recommendations and programs.

While no single definition of empowerment embraces the whole reality, the focus of the discussion during the Social Development meeting was around creating an enabling environment so the marginalized become active agents in shaping their own future. In this context there was a shift in language, avoiding calling any persons "poor" but rather recognizing that they are persons "living in poverty." Such a shift in language shifts our perception of these individuals to a more positive light.

During the meeting on the Status of Women many issues were addressed. While two gatherings among many at the UN addressed the response of the EU to the trafficking of women and girls and the safety of women journalists, individual NGO's addressed other, more local, issues. Parallel events

(gatherings organized by different groups at other venues) gave an opportunity for learning of what some groups are accomplishing or struggling with in their own countries and/or organizations. The Women's Consortium of Nigeria spoke of violence against women in their own country and the steps being taken to how they are working to prevent this. One presentation focused on how the Children's Parliament in India has empowered youth to effect change in their own communities and speak for the rights of the girl child. Another event asked those gathered to share their experience and wisdom concerning the violence suffered by migrant women, with the hope that this can be used to change the reality. Every event, large or small, was an opportunity to learn how nations, groups and individuals are working to create a more just society, one in which violence against women will no longer exist, one in which every person will be the protagonist to shape his or her own future.



*Ms. Sewa Adhikari, Chair of the Commission for Social Development addresses members of Civil Society*

# A Woman Can Make the Difference

*Sr. Cecile Coutinho*  
(NAGPUR, INDIA)

International Women's Day, celebrated on March 8, means different things to different people. Some celebrate it as a festival, others as a day that calls for action. 'A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women.' was the theme of 2013 International Women's Day according to the United Nations (UN).

In spite of continuing exploitation and injustice in both the domestic and work sectors, several milestones have been achieved by women in terms of education, freedom of choice, liberty and equality. With growing literacy and financial independence, women are more empowered today to assert their right to a life of dignity and self-worth.

In present day society in India, the status of women is repeatedly questioned. We keep consoling ourselves that everything is fine, but actually it is not. Though many Indian women do hold high offices or have equal rights, more than half have to face discrimination, social crime, violence and challenges in their day-to-day life.

In the face of this women have played vital roles in the villages of Nagpur, bringing about awareness and solidarity among themselves. Under the guidance of Sr. Philomena Pichapilly, several programmes were conducted to celebrate International Women's Day. Women social workers from Nav



*Sr. Philomena giving a session*

Jeevan Society presented the life of a woman from birth to death with the various ordeals she has to suffer as she grows up: as a married woman, a mother, in her old age, as a widow. The negative mentality of Indian society was depicted in drama form. The audience was made aware of the laws in favour of women and the protection of women from domestic violence. If a woman is taken into custody by police, she must be informed of the grounds of arrest. She must be free to inform her people about the arrest and she can choose a legal practitioner of her choice. Sometimes police do certain things which are against the law and people must be aware of their rights.

Sr. Philo stressed the need to organize women as one body and register their association. She also noted the helps and support they can receive from the government to get their rights and the various government schemes for women. For example, women can get subsidized loans to start

their own small business, and the women who forms micro-credit unions get free training to start their own self employments.

A very special day was also organized at our Hospital at Yerla, Nagpur, through the encouragement received from the IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) Director. This University introduced a a six-month program for a Certificate in Home Based Health Care. This course aims to empower women of nearby villages and inculcate in them the values of hope, love and service especially for the underprivileged. The programme gave a boost to the young village girls who had completed their six-month training sessions at our Hospital. To congratulate them, IGNOU had organized this programme at the hospital.

It is clear that empowering girls and women is not just a moral duty, but a solution to many of the greatest challenges faced in the quest for development and peace.

# Mission Responses

**Sr. Dominga Zolet**  
(N/NE REGION, BRAZIL)

I am sharing a small but significant experience of our missionary presence in the Canaan Settlement in Marituba, Pará, in northern Brazil. Our "official" presence in this area began on October 28, 2012 when we had a celebration of the Word of God and made a brief visit to the house that would serve to support the missionary team!

This is a concrete step in the N/NE Region of Brazil as part of the celebration of our 200 years, following in the footsteps of the daring Mother Saint John Marcoux. It is an action in response to the challenges of the 2009 General Chapter, a response to the incessant calls from the local reality, and an act of fidelity to Jesus' mandate to, "go to all the world..."

After the decisions taken in the N/NE regional assemblies in 2011 and 2012, the Sisters of the community of Marituba visited several urban settlements – areas characterized by the appropriation of land for housing, but land without any infrastructure: water, sanitation, electricity etc. The municipality of Marituba is situated in the metropolitan region of Belém and currently has more than 20 urban settlements and/or housing areas. The forecast for these areas is an increase of 100,000 inhabitants by 2020, double the current population. We chose the settlement of Canaan which houses 1,800 families and has no presence of an organized Catholic Church, but already has 12 Evangelical temples. This area has been



*Sisters Aline Tessaro and Odila Cadore (near the door) and Sister Dominga Zolet (on the right) during a moment of reflection with the people of the settlement*



*Residences of the Canaan settlement*

settled for over six years and thus offers greater stability and greater ease of access. In 2012, we visited the city from time to time and participated in events organized by the Association of Residents. In 2013, we are organizing a systematic presence, involving the leaders that we find in the area and lay Associates, lay missionaries and Sisters of other congregations! With the arrival of Sisters Odila Cadore and Aline Tessaro, coming from the south of Brazil, we can be more present and more active in this new mission field, while dreaming of a new community in the region.

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