

French

English

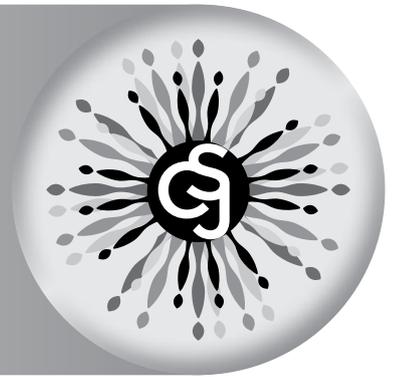
Italian

Portuguese

Norwegian

CSJOURNAL

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry
October - December • Year 2013 - n. 5



GENERAL COUNCIL

Moving as ONE in our Diversity

Sister Sally M. Hodgdon
General Council



The theme of the 2013 Extended Council held in Garibaldi, Brazil, was “Moving as ONE in our Diversity” a theme that became a lived reality during the meeting. As we, the General Council, planned the Extended Council, we articulated what our hopes were for this important meeting of leaders of our Provinces and Regions. We had wanted to create an atmosphere of prayer and trust in which honest sharing and real discernment could take place over the course of the weeks we were gathered. We had invited sisters from different provinces and missions, who were not attending the session, to prepare the daily small group prayer sheets based on the general theme for the given day. Their choices of scripture, passages from our primitive texts and reflective

questions centered us as we began each morning with faith sharing. It was moving how often a question or reflection would dovetail with comments made the previous day. As we became more and more at ease with each other, with the space, with our groups and with the daily flow of both presentations and time for reflection and discussion, our ability to listen attentively and with great openness increased. The sisters participating in this session had various levels of experience in leadership and ranged in age from 34 to 70. But we all learned from each other. As a congregation, we often have stated

SUMMARY

GENERAL COUNCIL

Moving as ONE in our Diversity

COVER

Charism Alive and Shared

2

PROVINCE/REGION/MISSION

Norway: Vietnamese Women Become Sisters of St. Joseph

3

Pakistan: Saint Joseph Gypsy Project in Pakistan

4

N/NE: To Live Is to Be Challenged

5

USA: Revisioning Our Constitution

6

Italy: CSJ Missioni: Working for Solidarity

6

Pachmarhi: Children Offered a New Platform for Life

8

Nirmala: Communication Workshop in India

9

Czech Republic: LAC Presence in the Czech Republic

10

New Saints

10

Sweden: Living the Mission of Religious Diversity

11

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

It Was God Who Chose Me

12

our hope to grow more and more deeply in our ability to be discerning women. Certainly, we have had many opportunities to do so in our provinces, regions and missions these past 25 years and we have grown. After we concluded the discernment process concerning the request by the Sisters of Notre Dame de la Croix and the one concerning revising our Constitutions, I was filled with joy and a very real sense

that I had just experienced one element of Religious Life, that of decision making, as it is truly meant to be lived. All of the above were precious ingredients which contributed to our discernment on several topics. But what also helped, was that each topic was developed and reflected on over a series of sessions, so that during our personal prayer time we prayed with the topic, allowing ourselves to be stretched and

opened and moved by the Spirit. As one of the leaders of the process on a couple of these topics, it was a blessing to see and watch what was happening within our group, how we let go of preconceived ideas as we became more comfortable. We often speak about God's Spirit hovering over the waters, but to actually watch this happening within a group of our own leaders, was truly a sacred moment.

Charism Alive and Shared

S. Clementina Copia

General Council

« YOUR MERE PRESENCE, AS SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH, IS FOR US A SOURCE OF LIFE, JOY, AND HOPE. »

This was one of the many sentiments expressed to us by our dear Associates, when participating for the first time in an Extended Council. Nair, Eli, Sandra, Pedrinha, Ivone and Marilene, laywomen Associates from 5 provinces and the North/Northeast Region of Brazil, left everything: husbands, children, home, work, and professional and pastoral commitments, to come to Garibaldi, accompanied by Sister Rosalia Favero. They were with us for three days, October 25 to 27, participating actively in the work of the assembly. They shared with us their joys and their hopes, their expectations and their ideas concerning the future of the laity of the Little Design. The most exciting and intense moment was when, in simplicity and frankness, they shared with all the participants their lives and their difficulties, but also how they live unity in family, social, and work life. They observed how the power of the charism challenges them every day to live

increasingly as sources of communion between themselves and among those to whom the Lord sends them. We lived with them moments of intense fellowship and sharing.

I breathed and tasted this same spirit in visiting the Province of Porto Alegre, as I met with many sisters and many lay people. These experiences reinforced and stimulated me even more to live authentically and more intensely the charism of unity, through daily options that become increasingly ethical. I will never forget the life experiences some of them shared. For one person to live the charism of unity meant to quit smoking, to stop taking alcohol or use more evangelical language. And even more, for one woman, the charism and spirituality

helped her to find inner freedom and have much more respect for herself and for others.

All of this was a great gift from God for me and a great opportunity of challenge for all of us. For many years, our Congregation has taken to heart journeying with the laity, in different ways in different countries. Perhaps the time has come to embrace one of the many challenges they brought to us: to organize, in the next few years, an international meeting of laymen and laywomen. My dream is that God continue to call many lay people to share the spirituality of Father Médaille's Little Design, so we might increasingly bring to reality God's great dream of being one family in God.



Mostardas - Brasil

Vietnamese Women Become Sisters of St. Joseph

S. Marit Brinkmann
Norway

September 28, 2013 was a day of great joy and celebration in the province of Norway. Six young women, all from Vietnam, pronounced their first vows in St. Joseph Church in Oslo. After the Mass around 130 persons gathered for a festive meal. All six of the newly professed shared the joy of the day with the sisters and parish members as well as with their parents and other family members who came from Vietnam for their religious profession. Their coming to Oslo to become Sisters of St. Joseph is part of a story that shows how God often works in unexpected ways.

Around 1980, Sister Jacqueline, a Sister of the Holy Cross, arrived in Norway with a group of refugees from Vietnam, where Catholics were suffering persecution. When she was able to leave the refugee camp where she was interred, S. Jacqueline came to live with our sisters while she ministered to the Vietnamese community in Oslo. After ten years, she returned to Vietnam.

In 2006 S. Jacqueline came to Oslo with her general councilor who, seeing the age of the sisters in our Norwegian province, spoke of the fact that in Vietnam, a country where Catholicism is deeply rooted, there are many vocations to religious life, but her community could not accept all those who wished to enter. The provincial council was open to the suggestion that the Norwegian province receive some young Vietnamese women who felt called to religious life. After prayer, reflection and discernment,

the council embraced this proposal. Desirous of knowing more about the culture, S. Marit and S. Marie-Kristin who speaks French, the European language of Vietnam, visited Vietnam to meet with potential candidates. They also met with a Holy Cross sister who would be the person to meet the young women, talk with them, visit their families, accompany them on a retreat and suggest them to Norway.

The Norwegian province agreed to accept several candidates, requiring that those who came knew some English so there could be communication from the beginning and that there be a large enough group so they would not feel lost. The Vietnamese candidates arrived in several small groups, first learning Norwegian and getting to know the congregation. After one year in Norway, the young women returned to Vietnam

for one month, to reflect on their call and discern if this is where God is calling them. Only then, when they returned to Norway, did they begin their postulancy and move into the novitiate. After completing the novitiate they returned to Vietnam once again for one month to discern if they would continue in the community – and make first vows. Not all who came stayed with the congregation but at this time there are six sisters who made first vows, one postulant and one candidate.

The province of Norway has experienced new life and energy with the presence of these young women who have brought great richness and blessings. The challenge of internationality is a lived every day as the two groups learn from each other, integrate the best of each culture and accept one another in their uniqueness as children of God.



Saint Joseph Gypsy Project in Pakistan

S. Shakila Miriam Bhatti

Pakistan



A group at the gypsy camp

We, Sisters of Saint Joseph, with our Saint Joseph Associates, in response to the appeals that came from our 2009 General Chapter, are reaching out to the marginalized people in our area, in particular to the gypsies. In Pakistan there are more than 10 million gypsies and in the city of Lahore alone, where we are ministering, there are an estimated 500,000 gypsies or more. They are nomads and have lived this way peacefully for centuries in Pakistan, but nowadays urban expansion is threatening their lifestyle. As nomads they travel the countryside, carrying their belongings and pitching tents wherever they stop, living on the fringes of society here like elsewhere in the world. These are a people who have their own culture, customs, superstitions and ways of healing and curing diseases. Marginalized, they struggle

to integrate and face deep prejudice, hostility and exploitation. We realized that the gypsies have no national identity cards and were not recognized as citizens. Children did not receive education and their families received no health care. Often children and women beg on the streets and are exploited. Their main occupation is collecting paper and recyclable material, begging, dancing and singing at shrines and festival places. In those circumstances, very often young boys and girls are misused and abused. Girls from singing and dancing groups are drawn into prostitution, either with promises of high pay, or with threats of violence. Being aware of all these realities, we came up with a Project which would consider protecting the rights of the Gypsy population and enable them to integrate into Pakistan's

society as full citizens. We decided to offer basic education to a group of children from a community of Gypsies in an area of the city known as "China Gypsy's Community". Also, we planned to introduce a program for girls in order to improve their skills so that they can find better employment. Gypsy parents, in general, do not consider the future nor value education and, as a consequence, are not willing to send their children to school. Step by step, in spite of difficulties to reach them due to their local conditions, places filled with trash, dirt, impacted by floods, etc., we were able to visit the population of that area and dreamed about the possibility to have a piece of land among the gypsy families where we could develop our Project. Initially

we built a tent there and it was good but the wind blew it down. In 2011 with the financial support of CSJMissione (Italian Province) and the congregation's Missionary Fund, we bought a plot of land and built a building that has three rooms. In this place, every day around 100 children attend classes on hygiene, English and stitching. In 2012, eight girls, ages 15 to 20, completed their basic education. This year they are attending stitching lessons given by one of our temporary professed sisters. On the completion of the sewing course, each girl will receive a sewing machine as a gift so they can work at home and have some income. A project to make girls' uniforms also has begun in our Saint Joseph Gypsy Project. It is a hard mission but it is life-giving to all of us who are involved and committed to make a difference in peoples' lives.

To Live Is to Be Challenged

S. Rosalia Fávero
N/NE Region, Brazil

Life is the sum of one day after another, of season after season, of intuitions and changes. In 2013, the Enlarged Council in Garibaldi in southern Brazil saw a dream come true. In 1998 in N/NE Brazil, when I started training people who were interested in knowing our charism and spirituality more deeply in order to commit themselves as lay Associates, I had a dream that one day the Congregation could open a space, so that the initial intuition of Father Médaille would regain its vigor among lay persons. And this happened October 25 to 27, 2013, with the participation of six women in the assembly, representing all 600 lay men and women who walk with us in Brazil.

I think this was once more a breath of the spirit, thanks to the great sensitivity of the General Council, which gave the women this opportunity to share their own experience of the charism. The sharing was of a magnitude that enchanted all and touched us deeply. We experienced these days in deep harmony, listening and exchange of experiences, like a great family of Saint Joseph. The women were able to express what they desire from the Congregation for their own growth in order to develop their sense of belonging more and more, and at the same time, their wish to share more and be integrated into the mission. Another important aspect, very much appreciated by them, was their experience with the leadership group of the Congregation. To hear other languages, and to see all living like sisters, aroused in them the desire for increased participation in projects and



Laywomen and General Council during the Enlarged Council

for following the life and events of the Congregation. They stressed the need for more training and accompaniment to build the capacity for the responsibility they feel as women. On this journey they really want the help of the Sisters, and at the same time, they feel the need to move towards greater autonomy and organization of the group

in Brazil. They were thrilled when Sister Sally, Superior General, pointed out that, for the future, it would be very good to think of a possible international meeting of lay persons. They welcomed this possibility that strengthened them in their commitment to be authentic laywomen of the Little Design.



Participants of the Enlarged Council blessing and sending forth the laywomen

Revisoning Our Constitution

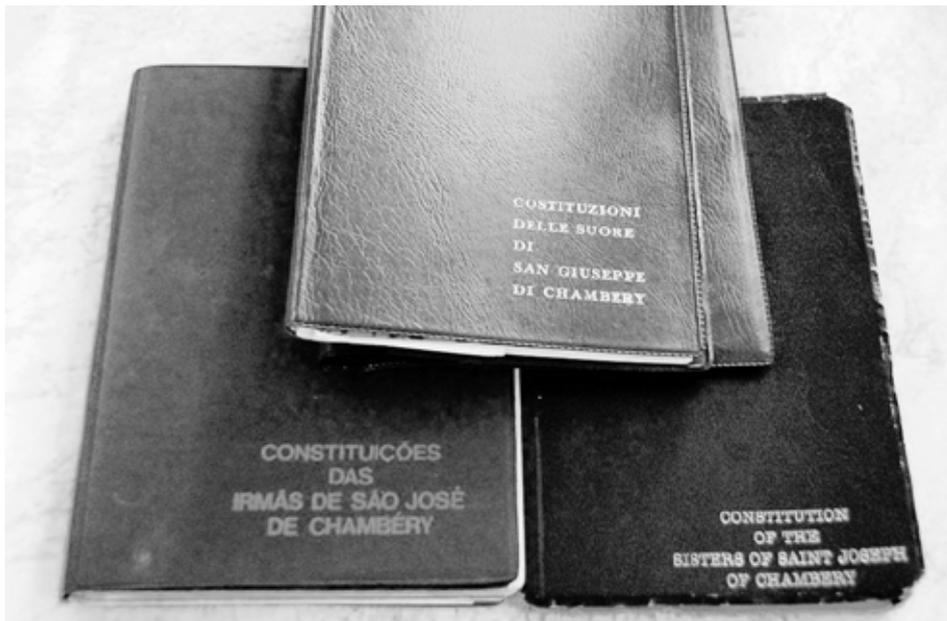
S. Mary Jane Garry

USA

In the summer of 2012 Sister Carol Cifatte and I were asked by Sister Sally Hodgdon, our general superior, to re-vision the Constitution composed by Sisters Marie Pierre Ruche, Helena Maria Bianchi, Maris Stella Hickey, Emma Martenson and Camille Gayet in the years 1974 and following. This Constitution, which we now use, was approved by the Congregation for Religious in 1984, several months after the new Code became effective in November of 1983. Now, twenty-nine years later, it is the hope that a re-visioned constitution will help move us forward in the changing times of this 21st century.

Sister Carol is an experienced Canon Lawyer and her expertise served us very well as we studied each article in the 1984 Constitution and Complementary Text in view of our life as Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry in the present time, and in respect to the spirit of the Law, which states that Constitutions should reflect a suitable blending of both their spiritual and juridical elements.

As we re-visioned, we expressed the



nature and purpose of the Congregation, our spirituality, community life, prayer and ministry in a briefer way than in the text of 1984, thus eliminating repetition, and in the new format, facilitating ease in accessing various articles. We also included articles on the vows, formation, government and the administration of temporal goods in compliance with the Canons. We then expanded these articles in accord with our Congregation's charism.

Re-visioning again, we saw the importance of editing our first version, so we rearranged the texts in a more concise manner; for example, we put

all the texts on Spirituality on one page and did the same for other texts, insofar as possible. We also emphasized the wholeness of each topic by not using numbers.

In their recent meeting members of the Extended Council reviewed and in general accepted the revised Constitution (in one sense it is not really new), a first step in the process of presenting the document to the next General Chapter for approval. Sister Carol and I are grateful to Sister Sally for the opportunity to prepare this text and to all the members of our Congregation for the time they might take to review our work.

CSJ Missioni: Working for Solidarity

Michela Maffei

Italy

What is CSJ Missioni, a non-profit entity? It is an organization devoted to volunteer activity working for the common good.

Specifically, it is an organization for international cooperation founded in Rome in 2008. The acronym means, "Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph,"



CSJ
MISSIONI
ONLUS

since the group aims to support the missions of the Congregation by promoting solidarity, human and spiritual growth, and solutions to social problems. During these first five years, CSJ Missioni funded educational and health projects, empowerment of women and environmental improvement in Tanzania, Mozambique, Pakistan, Brazil and Bolivia. This was made possible through contributions by hundreds of Italian supporters who feel a responsibility to assist in the development of communities in the global south, in a context of solidarity and human brotherhood.

CSJ Missioni is active in Fisciano, in southern Italy, where the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chambéry are instrumental in initiatives ranging from recycling to fundraising to support disadvantaged populations. Although it began in Fisciano and is headquartered there, in other cities where communities of the Sisters of Saint Joseph are present, new groups of volunteers are organizing and supporting the campaigns and projects of the Committee. It is thanks to this network of collaborators, made up of laity and Sisters, of youth and adults together, extending this year to the French Province of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, that in recent months, the organization engaged in the fourth Christmas fund-raising campaign for the missions. Thousands of panettone (a typical Italian Christmas cake) were sold in previous years to support projects of human promotion by the Congregation, as also this Christmas. This year, despite the economic crisis, volunteers plan to sell about a thousand to support the construction of a day care center for underprivileged children in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. This is the most recent project presented to CSJ Missioni by the General Council of the Congregation, with which the Committee works in close collaboration. Projects in education or health funded by CSJ Missioni are submitted to the General Council on a special form. The Committee prefers projects where both economic

support and the involvement of local partners are expected.

“We work in Italy to change habits and mentality, developing responsible attitudes and solidarity, and in the global south to promote human dignity and development, alongside our missionary sisters,” explains Sister Mariaelena Aceti, President of the Organization.

A more recent initiative is collaboration with the MAGIS Foundation (Italian Jesuit Action for Development), with which CSJ Missioni has shared a commitment to Haiti and the Horn of Africa and, today, Syria. With MAGIS, CSJ Missioni is also

committed to training volunteers. There are about twenty people, mainly young persons, who have already offered their service in missions of the Sisters of Saint Joseph through CSJ Missioni. These volunteers take part in a training program that prepares them for their service and also helps them translate their lived experiences into lifestyle changes and vocational choices.

To learn about the actions of the non-profit CSJ Missioni, the profiles and the group on Facebook as well as the website www.csjmissioni.it are useful.



Volunteers in Tanzania



Visit to Songea

Children Offered a New Platform for Life

S. Navya Neelamvilail
Pachmarhi, India

On 15th November 2013, I had a chance to visit and spend some time at Jeevodaya - a centre dedicated to the rehabilitation of platform children. The centre is located in Itarsi, in the state of Madhya Pradesh in central India. The visit was as a part of the training programme of the ICC, which was conducted in Bhopal, India by the International Communication Commission team of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry.

In the afternoon of that day the group I was with was given the mission of visiting the railway platform to get an idea about the real situation at the platform. There, we interviewed several persons to get a clear picture of Jeevodaya from their perspective.

The Divisional Superintendent of Police was very positive in his assessment of Jeevodaya, noting how it has brought positive change to the lives of many children. He noted that in the 13 years of its existence, Jeevodaya has reached out to hundreds of children and given them the opportunity for an education and for becoming better citizens. "It's a great work S. Clara and her staff are doing," he said, adding "they also take care of the women at the platform and give them timely assistance."

The manager of the restaurant at the platform considered how many of the children had changed due to their involvement with Jeevodaya. After admitting that many platform children are involved with drugs, robbery and other petty crimes, he noted the importance of the work when he said: "Jeevodaya has really helped many children get out of their addictions and helped them to get a good education and find their families."

When asked whether the fact that it is a Christian mission was a problem or not, the restaurant manager stated very simply: "We are all very happy with their mission to humanity." And then added: "I wish there were this type of rehabilitation centre in all the major railway junctions of our country!"

A vendor on the platform confirmed the positive impact of Jeevodaya when he spoke of the fact that over the past several years, the number of platform children has been greatly reduced. His engagement with the project was clear in his admission that he tries to influence these children to participate in what Jeevodaya offers.

A brief interview with a platform boy confirmed the reality that some children are not willing to go to Jeevodaya, for they want their absolute freedom. Even though some children do not accept it as the way for them, Jeevodaya provides a dignified life for the platform children who do. They offer a new PLATFORM for these children, uncared for by the society. These become the children of the Jeevodaya family and stay there until they are 18 years of age. Then if they have not yet found their families,

Jeevodaya leaves them free to find their way ahead in life. None of them ever go back to the railway platform since they have found a new platform for themselves. They become responsible, contributing citizens of the world.



Platform children collecting waste along the tracks



Children playing at Jeevodaya

Communication Workshop in India

S. Fabiyola Morris

Nirmala Province, India

An ICC workshop was held in St. Joseph's Convent Senior Secondary School, Bhopal, India from 13th Nov 2013 to 17th Nov. 2013. The purpose of the workshop was to refine the communication skills of the ICC contact persons and JPIC members of the Indian Provinces as well as to create interest in communication.

The five day programme was aimed at giving participants an intense training in some aspects of communication, including writing of articles, photography and the critical use of social networks. All participants were equipped with the essential tools: a laptop computer and a camera. Learning to write an article was a crucial need of all the participants. They began this exercise, under the guidance of S. Barbara Bozak (USA) with critiquing three articles that had been sent in for the CSJournal in the past, in an attempt to have them develop a critical eye in regard to their own writing. Training in photography was done by S. Mariaelena Aceti (Italy) who created a keen interest in the mind of participants as she guided them in an activity to understand how to frame a picture. Using several photos projected on a screen, she led the participants to articulate what should be included and what should be avoided in a photograph. All present joined in this exercise of critiquing photos. Developing a critical eye towards photography is important as it guides one's own decisions while taking photographs.

A field visit was organized to get hands on experience in writing and photography. The group travelled to Jeevodaya Society, Itarsi, where



From the extreme Right Srs.Sneha, Harshita and other sisters, trying their hand at photography.

there is a Centre for the rehabilitation of platform children. This gave the workshop participants an opportunity to meet and interview different persons involved with this project, vibrant with various activities which could give the visiting group information for articles and photographs. On the next day the group together critiqued three of the articles written by the participants, as well as the photographs taken.

The whole had been introduced by input on our Charism as the Foundation for communication and communication as essential to living our Charism. This light upon the spiritual aspects of communication, offered by S. Flavia Pullokarana (Tanmaya) and S, leda Tomazzini (General Council), was a useful foundation. A retired Indian Journalist spoke about communication from an

Indian perspective.

Fear and anxiety turned into joyful participation and a learning experience for many. Some felt the time was too short to learn writing and photography, as both demand keeping in mind many important ideas and techniques. It was agreed that learning can continue by keeping in contact with the team that facilitated the workshop, as well as by taking available courses on the subject.. It is hoped that the ICC Workshop in India has caused a ripple effect to improve communication. After the participants reached home, they began using dropbox (software to share heavy folders with a chosen group), Skype, and social networks. Learning the tools for communication has only begun, but the beginning was important and the learning continues.



Sr.leda speaking on Charism and communication to the participants.

LAC Presence in the Czech Republic

S. Mamta Fidelis and S. Sushila Xalxo
Czech Republic

The LAC community in Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic, is finally complete. It took months of paperwork, but at the end of July we, Sisters Mamta and Sushila, of the Chambéry congregation, finally joined Jasleen and Rathy, of the Lyon congregation. Their welcome with flowers and cards touched us deeply. It was clear that Jasleen and Rathy had done much to prepare for our arrival in their community, including a meaningful welcome prayer.

The day following our arrival, the feast of St. Ignatius, the bishop traveled from Plzen to welcome us, bringing with him a large bouquet of flowers and a bottle of wine. We were struck by his simplicity, his openness in receiving us and his acknowledgment of the compassionate presence of the Sisters of St. Joseph in his diocese.

In the first weeks there were many details to deal with. There was the need to register our identity number with the police, get a bus pass to make travel possible, learn mobile phone numbers



Community of Karlovy Vary (L - R front: Rathy, Jasleen, Mamta, Sushila [last two, Chambéry]) with the community of Plzen (L - R back: Jaya, Celine, Gisela)

and make arrangements for an intensive course in the Czech language. Jasleen and Rathy gave all the time needed, even taking time off from work, to help us make the necessary connections. As a LAC community, we live as one Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, living together, praying, sharing the state of the heart and order of the house. On weekends we are often together visiting some historical places and learning the history of the country. At other moments we enjoy nature, going into the forest collecting fruits and mushrooms, or having prayer and recollection.

On 24th of August we had the opportunity to visit the sisters in the Plzen community. After having tea together, we had our monthly recollection in the Meditation garden. We were privileged to spend time there in the garden where twelve sandstone sculptures commemorate the sufferings of those who confronted totalitarian regimes. Now, having been here a few months, we feel very happy to be in the Czech Republic. We are learning many things as we are living our daily life in the midst of a new culture, a new language, a very different climate, food and people.

NEW SAINTS

S. Maria das Dores Paula Leite (100)	São Paulo	20/09/2013
S. Mary Grace Bean (98)	USA	25/09/2013
S. Mary Bonaventure Kanakunnel (76)	Tanmaya	27/09/2013
S. Maria Gonzaga Muraro (93)	Caxias do Sul	02/10/2013
S. Marie-Eustelle Lechat (91)	France	03/10/2013
S. Elsa Maria Marasca (79)	Lagoa Vermelha	11/10/2013
S. Marie Henriette Chatelain (93)	France	23/10/2013
S. Melania Marcozzi (101)	Italy	27/10/2013
S. Celina Trombi (102)	Italy	05/11/2013
S. Rosalina Dagourt (73)	Lagoa Vermelha	10/11/2013
S. Geni Lurdes Benetti (69)	Lagoa Vermelha	11/11/2013
S. Mary Mathew Kachapilly (77)	Pachmarhi	03/12/2013
S. Marie Louise D'Mello (90)	Nirmala	04/12/2013
S. Bernardina Dos Santos (100)	São Paulo	05/12/2013
S. Anne-Victorine Tourt (96)	France	06/12/2013
S. Cecília Amélia do Amaral (94)	São Paulo	07/12/2013

Living the Mission of Religious Diversity

S. Zelia Camatti
Sweden

We Sisters of Saint Joseph in Sweden do our social and pastoral work in the parish of Sundsvall in the northern part of the country. In an extensive area of 76,300 sq. km, 17% of the country, there are only 923 people registered as Catholics. These Catholics include many Latino immigrants, Asians and Africans. Among the Europeans, there are Polish and the Swedes themselves. This data does not include those who do not have residency permits nor those who are not aware of the existence of the Catholic Church.

The workload is great. There is close collaboration with the laity, which makes the completion of the mission possible, with celebrations, catechesis, visits to families, the sick and contact with the people most in need. The call of God for mission is still alive in this reality. One of the deepest needs is that of the immigrant who feels the absence of God in society and, as a consequence, the loss of meaning of life.

In Sweden, the majority of the population frequents the Swedish Lutheran Church, which resembles the Catholic Church in many ways. The celebrations are similar in their rites, the gathering, the readings, the offertory, and communion. Even the song books are the same. In the Catholic Church, we have the Eucharist as the center of the celebration, but in the Swedish Church, it is not given the same importance. Another difference is that the Swedish church accepts and even performs marriages for homosexuals. Regarding the formation of its ministers and clergy, women may be ordained and the marriage of priests is accepted. The importance of Mary, the mother



A group of parishoners assisting at a talk by Charles Camara, the person responsible for Caritas in Sweden (2012)



Elizabeth, a Swedish volunteer, helping at the bazaar.

of Jesus, and devotion to her is being introduced gradually in the Lutheran Church, which is very positive. There are icons in many churches.

The Catholic Church, because it is a minority in some localities, lacks facilities to conduct meetings, catechesis and celebrations. Ecumenical work consists in contacts with the Swedish Church. In our pastoral and social activities, we are engaged by the local Caritas group, through which we provide aid to the needy. A bazaar is organized every year, with the goal of raising funds to assist in

projects and to meet needs that arise. Working with immigrants and exiles is done in conjunction with a group of refugees. We live in a very complex context where our action for human rights is urgent and necessary. Meetings are held with people from other churches to meet foreigners arriving at all times. Often, these are people who do not have all the necessary documentation and who do not know the Swedish language. They are people who need help to organize themselves in order to integrate into the country, which is part of our mission.

It Was God Who Chose Me



S. Isoleide Furlanetto
Lagoa Vermelha, Brasil

Look at my life and my religious vocation of 52 years, and I realize that, “it was God who chose me.” God called me to be a presence of joy, justice, peace and light to the people with whom I live. In my professional life, I devoted myself to formal education in our schools. As an educator, I worked in the area of humanities, more specifically in history, where I could learn and teach

the real story and not the one transcribed in books. I can say that, with this view, I was able to help in the important formation of many young people and adults. Also, I worked and advised for 15 years in pastoral work with youth. The work was developed from the perspective that all are created in the image and likeness of God, with

duties and personal and community rights, encouraging organization and participation of youth.

The Church in Brazil has a concern with the mission of being agents and builders of political and social consciousness, cooperating so as to engage in social struggles and developing the role of each person. With youth, we encourage them to take over the mission to create a society of justice and peace where all can feel as one family. So, I try to be a presence

of communion and participation. I worked in the coordination of small groups in the various parishes of the diocese, coordinating and forming coordinators, advising in formation with the coordination team for youth ministry, important in the formation of young people. Today, many of these young people and leaders are protagonists in evangelization, engaged in social and religious movements with the new face of the Church and society, being a leaven of transformation.

The experience I have of God the Trinity who lives in community, and the guidelines of the Church of Brazil and Latin America are definitive elements that motivate me in acting together with young people. I highlight the importance of the Puebla document for me: “The Church relies on the young, they are its hope. The Church sees in the youth of Latin America a real potential for the present and the future of its evangelization,” (1186 and 1187). And the same document says, “It is necessary, it is necessary to act, to be with youth, to help them be agents. [...] Youth go out to meet the Messiah, Christ, who walks towards them.”

I am currently Secretary for pastoral work in the diocese, and I am part of the Diocesan Pastoral Coordination team. With this function, I keep betting on and believing in youth and adults who help us live the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chambéry.

EDITING

Barbara Bozak
Andréia Pires

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Andréia Pires

TRANSLATIONS

Agnès Moussière
Cristina Gavazzi
Joyce Baker
Margherita Corsino
Maria Elisabete Reis
Marie-Kristin Riosianu
Marie-Pierre Ruche

CIRCULATION

Rosalia Armillotta
www.csjchambery.org

E-MAIL

icc@csjchambery.org