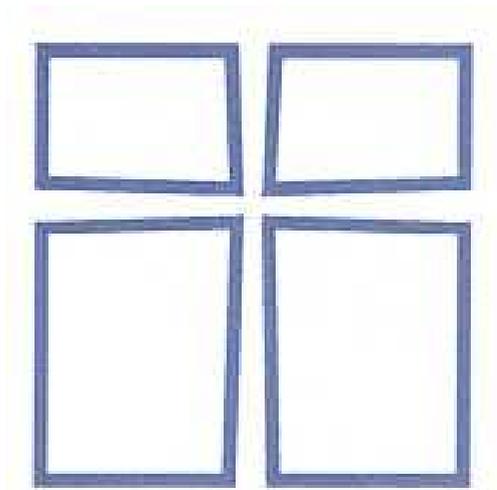


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# *Theodosia*

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Quarterly  
of the Sisters of Mercy  
of the Holy Cross  
Institute Ingenbohl  
CH-6440 Brunnen

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Praise and thanks to the God of life for all that blossoms and bears fruit  
in creation and in the community

## Editorial

In our part of the world it is autumn. Time to thank for everything, that has grown this year. It's also time to look forward to the spring, because when the leaves fall off the branches, buds are already there filled with new life. These processes in nature weave a tapestry for me, much like I felt while collecting contributions for the present "Theodosia".

The sisters of the Province of Croatia look back gratefully on the past 150 years in which the sisters work "as teachers and mothers" of their people. This is inscribed in their hearts and found many expressions in the Jubilee Year.

Celebrations also took place in the Vicariate of Uganda: 25 years ago, four Indian sisters sowed the seed that today bears abundant fruits.

The former "Ulrika Girls", who were the first African women to profess as Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, also had reason to rejoice.

Thanksgiving for the vocation and religious life is another topic. We get to peek into the search process of a young woman who is in novitiate formation presently in Hegne as Sr. Marie-Salome.

Sisters of all generations and regions are grateful for their vocation, be it at the first profession, final profession, or jubilees at 25 to 70 years of profession. We join Hilde Domin in recognition with her: "It Blooms After You". On behalf of many others, the sisters answered to the questions. "What does it mean for me to be a Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross?"

With the buds that are full of life, we can compare the tasks of sisters that are partly new or extraordinary:

A community of sisters from the province Slovakia with almost 40 men, who are all on the margins of society, creates a meaningful and dignified everyday life and this for many years.

The sisters of Taiwan see the new day-care centre for young and old, with which they respond to a real need.

Some of the sisters of the Vicariate Brazil are permanent collaborators in the "Love that Heals" campaign, where women and men provide vital

services to the people who live there in difficult circumstances on the outskirts of the largest rubbish dump.

In February 2018, two sisters of the Vicariate Brazil left for the Amazon region to help the inhabitants in their hard life. The sisters are gradually adapting to the various situations.

The Vicariate Uganda has work enhancement at one station: Sisters are committed to ensuring that the health centre with its versatile services reaches people even in remote places.

Sisters of the South India Province have discerned the need for an institution for disabled children and youth in the area of Bijapur, Karnataka, where they see their new mission in the footsteps of our Founders.

In the province Baden-Württemberg, sisters and experts worked intensively for four years on perspectives for the future. With the "Convent Hegne Foundation", the charism of our community is to be continued - even under changed circumstances.

As usual, the "Theodosia" closes with the "Information of the General Leadership".

Another word on our own behalf: After many years of collaboration in the editorial team of "Theodosia", Sr. Anna Affolter handed over the task to Sr. Verena Maria Oberhauser. Our thanks and good wishes accompany Sr. Anna in her other responsibilities, and we wish Sr. Verena Maria all the best to carry on the task.

Sr. Christiane Jungo

## 150 Years, Holy Cross Sisters in Croatia

Sr. Finka Tomas, akovo. Province Croatia

The call of the sisters to Croatia came through Bishop Jusip Juraj Strossmeyer (1815-1905). The sisters ought to be "mothers and teachers of his people". A lot of reasons to look back after 150 years and to be grateful!

### The beginnings

This year we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross from Ingenbohl to akovo, Croatia. In 1868, Bishop J. J. Strossmeyer wrote a letter to Mother M. Theresa requesting her to send him sisters to educate the youth and promote the culture of the people. They ought to be "mothers and teachers of his people".

On 7th June, 1868, the first six sisters came to akovo, and a

little later four more came. After two years they mastered the Croatian language and took over the work at the four-class girls' primary school, the so-called Preparandie (i.e. teachers' school for women) as well as the management of the boarding for school girls.

From the beginning, the sisters were also involved in the care of the sick in the small diocesan hospital located in the inner courtyard of the convent.



Procession to the church

The following year, on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1869, Sr. Maximiliane Schellheimer, a young music teacher, died of tuberculosis. Mother M. Theresia came very quickly after this news to akovo and encouraged the young community. During this visit the Province Croatia was officially founded and Sr. Adelheida Dilenz was appointed as Superior of the Province. Mother M. Theresa carefully observed the life and growth of the province and visited akovo four times.



Sr. Marija Brizar and Sr. Amalija with offertory gifts

## Focus in the jubilee year

The celebration of this important event, the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first Holy Cross Sisters in Croatia, had as its goal, a return to the sources, a review of the past, the present and the future to live more authentically. This expressed our motto: Mystery of the cross lights up. The cross - self-sacrifice, determination, courage, a travel into the unknown should also re-emerge before our eyes, and be for us a source of inspiration and power to work in the spirit of our Vision 2020.

The Jubilee Year was inaugurated by Monsignor Dr. uro Hrani , the Archbishop of akovo on June 7, 2017 in the convent church. He emphasized in his address the contribution of the sisters in the local church through their educational, charitable and pastoral work.

Throughout the year, all communities read from the chronicle of the province right from the beginning, and every seventh day of the month - the day of the first sisters' arrival - was the day of adoration in the Provincial House and in larger communities. The small communities have participated according to their possibilities. The Adoration was conducted



Convent jakovo

in the spirit of gratitude to the loving God and the sisters for all the good that they had done for our people in the spirit of the Founders.

The program, which includes all our communities and the places where our sisters work, has been prepared by a team for jubilee celebration at the direction of the Provincial Leadership. The program included a presentation of the work of the sisters and the jubilee celebration at the level of the community and the parish, where the sisters are engaged in pastoral work.

The members of the team organized a visit to all communities across the province that met according to region,

where the team organised the program for them. At this meeting each community briefly introduced their story and also all the sisters, who worked there from the beginning. The foreseen challenges in the communities had also been mentioned. These visits to the communities were like a hidden treasure that one now discovered, which shone afresh, but which also united and inspired us even more; the insight into the circumstances in which the sisters once worked in the same place, their zeal and enthusiasm that continue to inspire us with courage and admiration.

The team members organized the programs in some parishes where sisters are no longer active. The parish communities appreciated



Solemn Holy Mass

the arrival of the sisters, as it presented the history of the province and the work of the sisters in the particular parish. These visits left a positive impression on the parishioners; our candidates and young sisters took part in the program, especially in the animation of the liturgy. They also wanted to raise awareness about the beauty of selfless work and service among young people. A contribution to the vocational pastoral was also

one of the goals of the jubilee celebration.

In the Provincial House in akovo, adoration was conducted on the seventh day of every month, and the faithful were allowed to join. So a three-month preparation was offered. Their goal was to illustrate the different spheres of activity of the sisters and to highlight their contribution in these different spheres.

## Special occasions

There was also a **book-evening**. This was intended to show the commitment of the sisters in promoting the written word, and in so doing the books, printed matter, and various editions that our sisters have developed as teachers and educators, helped children and youth to become friends of the good book. This concern that was also important to our Founder Fr. Theodosius, was dear to them, all the more because Bishop Strossmayer also gave them the task of being the teachers of his people.

A second evening was a **musical-evening**, where many of our sisters were introduced, who spent over 150 years in the province engaged in music, contributing to cultural and pastoral life through the children's music education and composing music. There were collections of poetry, note materials and the newer recordings with memorial songs and chanted Divine Office issued for various holidays of the liturgical year.

The third evening in the three-month preparation was a **prayer-evening**. It became an evening of celebration and thanksgiving to God for all that He has done through our sisters. In the process



A book-evening

our Provincial Superiors were named one after another, who played a vital role in the life and work of the province. The inspiration for this prayer-evening, we found in the Liturgy of our founders. In the end, we thanked God for all the beautiful, and hard times too, that had helped to form our communities and develop our trust in God.

Other events also marked our Jubilee, where the contribution of the sisters in our country was highlighted:

At the State Symposium - the **Strossmayer days** that are organized every year - this year's theme was entitled: Strossmayer and Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross. Five talks were held, with two of the speakers being our sisters.

In the rooms of the city museum we have prepared and opened an **exhibition** about the 150 years of the life and work of the sisters.

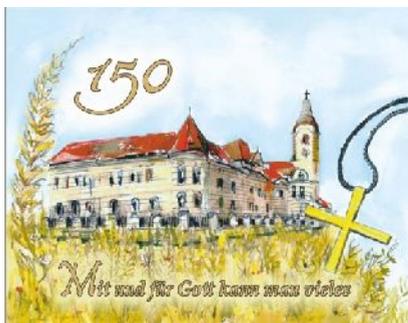
The **diocesan monthly periodical** "Vjesnik / June 2018" was dedicated to the sisters, especially their work and their contribution in the pastoral field in the diocese of akovo. Our sisters themselves have written most of the periodical articles.

At the closing ceremony all invited guests were presented with a **commemorative publication** on the history of the province.

The well-known Croatian film production company: Croatia Film from Zagreb made and presented us with a **documentary film** about the life of the province.

In the jubilee year, the **translation of the book** into Croatian: "Driven by the need of the time - writings of the Founders" was produced. All sisters were happy about the Croatian translation. At the same time, there is also a booklet on the present life of the Province entitled: Much can be done with and for God. The booklet was printed in Croatian and German.

## **Conclusion and culmination**



Brochure on life in the province

The closing of the jubilee celebration on June 9, 2018, can be seen as the Jubilee Crown. On that day, a solemn academy took place, run by sisters and candidates under the motto: "Mystery of the Cross illuminates." It featured significant events in history of our Province, with emphasis on the many sacrifices, dedication and love built into their foundations.

The aim of this performance was to point out the very events in which the charism of the Cross had attained its splendour, and which still illumines all today.

At the Eucharistic celebration, which was attended by many Bishops, priests, religious and invited guests, the Province once again thanked God, who, in His immense fatherly love, has guided its history and continues to guide today.

After the Eucharistic Celebration, there was a fellowship meal, where the guests and invitees could meet personally and share their impressions. We were extremely pleased that the entire General Leadership had graced the jubilee celebration with their presence. As the sisters of our European Provinces were also present, our experience here was that of a big international family.

### **Thanks again**

The Jubilee event was strongly accompanied by many media, already during the preparation time, during the celebration itself and also after the celebration, and the contributions have left a positive echo in the wider public. We regard them as a bright point of encouragement and hope in the social circumstances in which we live.

In the Jubilee year, Sr. Marija Karla Ivanovi pronounced her first vows on 31<sup>st</sup> June in the convent church of akovo. On 14<sup>th</sup> July, 15 sisters celebrated their golden jubilee, among them Sr. Beatrica Krsta i , a missionary in Brazil. Sr. Marija Brizar, the Superior General, was present at both the celebrations and received the vows formula and witnessed the events.

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, three young women entered the candidacy, which we consider to be a special jubilee grace, all the more because we expect two more in November. This shows us that even today young people are able to find in the Cross of Christ the inspiration and meaning of life for selfless service to others.

## 25 Years Sisters of Mercy of Holy Cross in Uganda

Contributed by Sr. Genevieve, Vicariate Superior

Compiled and edited by Sr. Sheeja Kolacherril, General Councillor

History and stories, memories and experiences of people, who were and are important for the Vicariate, bind a bouquet with retrospect and thanks



Jubilee Mass

### The Beginning

“The Lord has done marvels for us, Holy is His name”, we say with the psalmist.

On 6<sup>th</sup> October, 1993 the seed of Ugandan Mission was sown in Kiziba Parish. On 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2018 Vicariate Uganda officially

declared the Silver Jubilee year of the presence of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross in Uganda. On this occasion we gratefully remembered Cardinal Emmanuel Wamala of Kampala diocese who accepted the request of Monsignor Expedito Magembe and officially invited the sisters of

our congregation. With the spirit of our founders, the then General team with Sr. Gertrud Furger as the General Superior responded positively and invited sisters from India to work in Uganda Mission. The celebration of the 100 years of mission in India (1994), which was pioneered by European missionaries then became a coincidence to mark the missioning of 4 Indian sisters in turn to spread the love of Christ far and wide in African soil. These pioneers were Sr. Amala Kunnath, Sr. Claudia Kerketta, Sr. Louisa Thuluvananicall and Sr. Veera Bara.

**Sr. Gertrud Furger (General Superior, 1978 - 1996)**

She writes from her vivid memory, "They (Indian sisters) put their luggage in front of the door not being aware that somehow some seeds of Ladyfinger plant had travelled with them. It fell to the ground and after some time it began to sprout and to yield some fruits. Ladyfinger vegetable is well known in India, however so far it was never grown in Africa. To me this incidence has always been like a symbol for our



Four Indian pioneers, from left: Sr. Louisa, Sr. Amala, Sr. Claudia, Sr. Veera

mission in Uganda. It reminds me of the words of Pope Francis to the young people in Dakar, (western most point of Africa) encouraging them to tend carefully the seed that God entrusts in our hands and help them to spread the good news of God's merciful love among their brothers and sisters in Africa".

On 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1999, the mission was erected to the status of a Vicariate in the presence of Sr. Louise -Henri Kolly, the then General Superior and one of her Councilors, late Sr. Shalini Kozhuppakalam.



Jubilee and First Profession

**Sr. Louise Henri (General Superior 1996 – 2009)**

To remember the founding of the mission of our congregation in Uganda means to go on a pilgrimage to former times and to other places as well as to a very specific people. In my heart, there remain engraved impressions, images, deep spiritual and human experiences. I choose to give room to what has fortifies my trust and my hope: the working of God's providence in implanting the charism of our congregation in the Ugandan soil.

Even before the arrival of our sisters from Indian provinces the seed of our charism had been

sown, had unfolded in Uganda, in a corner of the wilderness named Kiziba. Bl. Ulrika was the one to be at work to this purpose. Her life and spirituality were made known in this country by the affection of sisters of a local community, who studied in Germany. A local priest, Fr. Expedito Magembe was deeply touched by the humble life, the service and prayer life of Sr. Ulrika and fervently prayed to her. He wished to have Ulrika sisters who might respond to the immense needs of a population that had just came out of two successive civil wars. Even before an answer was given to him, he established a group of young women which he named, "Ulrika girls". He made them aware



Arrival of sisters in 1992

of the spirituality of Sr. Ulrika and engaged them in the care for numerous orphans from the wars. On 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1999 among these girls 4 of them became Holy Cross Sisters. They are Sr. Mary Margaret Nnassuuna Sr. Sarah Nabaggala, Sr. Gertrud Nambeera and Sr. Mariedita Kabajungu who pioneered from the Ugandan soil. There is still another coincidence, the secret of which lies with God: The opening of our mission in Uganda happened and the profession of our first Ugandan sisters took place when our 25 years activity in Burundi had to be closed down. It had been the first mission of our congregation on the African Continent.

### **Sr. Amala Kunnath (1999 in charge, later Vicariate Superior)**

In the words of Sr. Amala the first Vicariate superior: "We reached the country at a time of great need, as many parts of the country was in ruin and the families were scattered through civil war in order to overthrow Idi Amin's government. Violence and theft were common phenomenon. Poverty as well as dreadful disease spread all through the land. Many people died with HIV-AIDS. After the death of their parents the children were running away not knowing where to go. They hid in jungles. The villages were abandoned and neglected and looked like 'deserts growing thick bushes'.

Initially our sisters concentrated on the social welfare especially caring for the widowed and old people, over thousand abandoned and illiterate children. Starting an orphanage would bring its drawback as they would gradually lose their inheritance. So, we decided to open schools for them while they stayed with their relatives.

Helpless as we were, the Motherhouse in Ingenbohl and different provinces supported us in all the ways in our difficult times. Fr. Magembe was very generous and provided us all that we needed and never allowed us to feel the scarcity of anything. We are grateful to him for his fatherly care”.

**Monsignor Expedito Magembe  
(The initiator of the Uganda  
Mission)**

“Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generation; you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance,” (Ex: 12:14).

And to you all the sisters who have labored in the vineyard of the Lord in Uganda since the beginning upto now, your abiding devotion and faithful service to the Lord in no doubt has touched countless hearts and inspired so many souls to live a changed life by the grace of God.

**Sr. Debora Maria Ueckert  
(General Councilor in charge,  
until 2002)**

In the nineties (of the last century) political circumstances forced our sisters in Burundi to leave their mission work of 25 years. They paved the way in the African soil. They had to go. Sisters, you came in 1997. I was fortunate to share the life of the pioneer sisters from India for a few months. Thank you, dear sisters! You faced the initial challenges of the younger foundation with openness, courage and great faith. I shall never forget what the old wise Kiziba widow said upon being asked what she expects from the sisters: ‘To carry on what you have begun and learn from us how to help the poor.’ A message you understood.

**Sr. Lisa Mudoor (Vicariate  
Superior 2009 - 2017)**

As I turn the pages of life, I see the hand of God at work in every step in a tangible way. I believe in life, the life that is alive and not comatose. When life is alive, it keeps growing, multiplying and becoming fruitful. Today Vicariate Uganda has opened itself to North and South, East and west of Uganda and in Kenya. Through our life witness and the service

rendered we have touched the poor, the less privileged. Our presence has made a difference among whom we live and serve. We have grown in faith, hope, love and trust. What I cherish in our vicariate is the focus each one has for a deeper spiritual life. There is a hunger which impels one to go beyond the hurdles and arrive at where the heart settles.

**Sr. Selma Nalloor, (General Councilor in charge, 2003 - 2008)**

At the outset let me congratulate all of you in the vicariate on your success in achieving this landmark. Days followed weeks and weeks in turn embraced months. Months later approached years and the years gave into decades. Finally, the first decade was added to one more decade and a half and thus the vicariate Uganda completed an arduous journey and now I am glad to celebrate this jubilee with all of you dear sisters. The pleasant memories of my visit to your Vicariate a few times, are still fresh in my mind. I vividly remember the enthusiasm of the young ones, the dedication of the

Vicariate Superiors and the zeal of the formators and those in formation and all the sisters in different communities. It is therefore with great joy that I congratulate all of you and join the felicitation. I pray that the Lord may continue to guide and bless you and make your apostolate abundantly fruitful also in the days to come.

**Sr. Tessy Churanadu (General Councilor in charge, 2003 – 2014)**

From the very inception, our Generalate, Indian provinces and sisters from other provinces were keenly interested in the growth of the vicariate and have been supported spiritually and financially. As a member of the General administration, I had the privilege of accompanying the Vicariate closely. I cherish the memories of my visit to Uganda. The warm welcome, kind hospitality and the enriching encounter with our sisters and people around. I was deeply impressed by the commitment of the sisters, the sacrificing spirit, missionary zeal, simple life style, loyalty to the congregation,

prayerfulness and deep trust in the providence of God. When our sisters were desperately looking for financial support, God in His providential care directed someone with a generous heart to support the project. God knows our desires more than we know them and he fulfils them in his time and manner.

**Sr. Marija Brizar (General Superior since 2008)**

It is a joy to see a considerable number of young women from

Uganda and Kenya who recognized God's call and responded to it and became Holy Cross Sisters. We are grateful to God for this gift given to our Congregation. Through a good number of sisters from India and through these young sisters our charism is alive and takes roots in this country of Martyrs. Over the years many children and youth got good education in our schools. They grow in human and Christian values. Countless sick people experienced the healing touch through you, dear sisters and



Group of sisters

through your co-workers in the health centers. You reach out to the people, by visiting them, bringing them the Good News and helping them to have a better life. Thank you, dear sisters, for your commitment and dedication in your mission. Thank you for being Holy Cross Sisters in Uganda and Kenya. God's blessings may strengthen each one of you to "bear more fruit" (Jn. 15:2). Be open to the future like our founder, Fr. Theodosius, who says to us "let us do what is good with courage and enthusiasm."

**Sr. Genevieve (Vicariate Superior since 2017)**

My option and journey to Uganda was actualized in July 2004. Having arrived here I was open to respond to the needs of the time and give myself generously for any call. But Malaria, which is common in Uganda caught hold of me within a few months of my being here and I was down with sickness and treatment. The sickness repeated after every three weeks and continued for more than six months. I was disappointed, and I was planning

to ask permission to return to India. But God's grace took care of me and kept me faithful to him. Today I feel good that I could avail myself to be of service to the people and the Vicariate as a teacher, in formation, supervising the building work and helping in putting the accounts of our institution in order.

The vicariate Uganda has grown into a young tree spreading its branches in different areas producing fruits. The vocations to life as Holy Cross Sisters grew steadily over these years.

At present we are 57 sisters, 9 Indians 49 Africans working in seven communities and parishes, one of them being in Kenya. We have 21 novices both in first and second year, 3 postulants, 7 candidates on community experience and 7 candidates who are having their initial formation. In our communities and parishes, sisters are engaged in different apostolates such as Education, Health care and Socio- pastoral works. We are opening our doors to other places wherever God calls us to be.

**Sieglinda, Jettenhausen,  
Germany (a benefactor)**

Dear Holy Cross Sisters, 25 years have already passed since your beginning in Uganda. Since I had the opportunity to visit Uganda for many times, I was able to pursue your intense work, the building up of your convents and schools, your aim to inspire young people to be part of the religious order with great joy, you did a really great and impressive work! Despite a predetermined daily routine, discipline and hardworking, you live an open and cordial community life. Your church services with singing and drums, your deep prayers are soothing. Although the circumstances of life and the cultures are so different the mutual connectedness is stronger. Over the years I have learned to love the problems and adversities of the beginning. Your hospitality is a feeling of coming home to me.

**Highlight of the Jubilee Year**

The remarkable experience of our Silver Jubilee celebration began on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in Vicariate House, Namugongo on the soil of

Ugandan Martyrs. We inaugurated the Silver Jubilee in the presence of Sr. Marija Brizar, our General Superior and Sr. Sheeja Kolacherril, our General Councilor. We were inspired anew by their presence and they re-enforced our sense of belonging to an International congregation. On that day we also celebrated the final profession of two of our African Sisters – Sr. Angeline Tumwesigye and Sr. Prossy Nansereko. The occasion was blessed by His Grace the Archbishop of Kampala Archdiocese, Rt. Rev. Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga. The Archbishop recognized the arrival of the first four missionary sisters from India and all the other sisters who followed them in continuing the mission. After the celebration of the mass, Sr. Marija Brizar gave a message to the congregation present and she released the Jubilee magazine. Then 25 sisters were called forward to light the candles prepared to remember our Mission in Uganda.

We like to acknowledge our gratitude to the present and former General teams, the provinces, vicariates, well-wishers



25 years – 25 lights

and collaborators for walking with us and sensing our needs and supporting us financially to make our mission successful and to take us to a bright future. It was a deep experience of our interconnectedness with our larger family. When we look back, we realize that any sign of interest and help is something very valuable.

### **Other memorable occasions**

In this Jubilee year all the four Provincials of our Indian Provinces Sr. Valsa Thottiyil, Sr. Rosily Kolencherry, Sr. Georgina Nadukudiyil and Sr. Flory D'Souza made a short visit to each of our communities. It was the first

occasion our Vicariate was accorded with such an extraordinary visit. It was a unique experience for our vicariate, an experience of togetherness across all borders. We are grateful for the personal help from our Indian provinces, our heartfelt thanks to the families who have given their daughters to our Congregation so that they may continue the work of the Holy Cross Sisters. If we look back, we can only proclaim gratefully: "The Lord has done great things for us!"

During the course of the Jubilee Year, four retreats have been arranged for all the sisters in the Vicariate House, Namugongo based on the theme, "In the Cross

we triumph". These retreats are preached by our own sisters namely Sr. Marianne Maduckayil and Sr. Mary Margaret Nnassuuna. The retreats were intended not only to take us back to our Franciscan roots, but also to ground us in the spirit of our Congregation. These retreats were followed by three days' workshop for the local Superiors and two days' workshop for the sisters involved in education ministry.

25 years of witnessing to God's mercy is not something ordinary. It is a remarkable accomplishment in the very sense of the word. It shows strength and consistency of character, resilience and perseverance amidst adversity and the ability to co-operate with God's grace and push ahead despite the forces that seek to pull us back.

### **Closing of the Jubilee Year**

To crown it all, the closure of the Jubilee year is planned to take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 at Kiziba in the bedrock of our beginnings. We look forward to this occasion to gather together the people who have journeyed with us, who have been there for us and among whom we have served. Our appreciation is also to the many people who have stood by us during these years.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you." (Psalm 32:8). With this confidence we strive forward to serve many more people in need. We shall render our unified thanks to the Almighty God for His blessings that have accompanied us. We trust and believe in the words of our Foundress who said: "With God and for God we can do many things!" It is not our ability that has enabled us to reach this far, but it is God's work in us.

## **“Ulrika Girls” to Holy Cross Sisters**

Sr. Maria Sarah Nabaggala, Sr. Mary Margaret Nnassuuna, Sr. Gertrud Nampeera, Sr. Mariadita Kabajungu, Vicariate Uganda

Before our sisters from India came to Uganda, there were already "Ulrika Girls": Young women prayed with each other in the spirit of Blessed Sister Ulrika and were socially committed. In 1999, the first four pronounced their vows as Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross. Now they gratefully look back on their path.

When we open the pages of our life in these past 25 years of our Jubilee, the words of our Blessed Mother Maria Theresa Scherer, the Co-foundress of our congregation, summarizes what fills our hearts; “God’s kindness has no bounds”.

We remember with grateful hearts the hand of God in our life. The journey began as a small seed, through the intercession of Blessed Sr. Ulrika and the frequent dreams of Msgr. Expedito Magembe through whom we owe the coming of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross on the land of Africa. May you be blessed forever! We thank so much cardinal Wamala who received us, our Arch Bishop of Kampala Dr. Cyprian Kizito Lwanga and all the Bishops who have welcomed us in the different dioceses where “The need of the time...” called us into service.

There has been an abundance of graces that have made this journey materialize. We

acknowledge the tremendous work done by our Mother Generals right from Mother Gertrud Furger and her Team, Mother Louise-Henri Kolly and her Team and Mother Marija Brizar and her Team. Thank you so much dear sisters. We extend our thanks to all our sisters in different Provinces, Vicariates and Communities all over the world. Your love and concern for the growth of our mission here in Africa is highly appreciated.

We are indebted to our sisters who have journeyed so closely with us especially Sr. Debora Becket, Sr. Selma Nalloor, Sr. Tessa Churanadu and Sr. Sheeja Kolacheril. Your companionship is great! And those who have left this earthly life, Sr. Shalini Kozhuppakalam and Sr. Fidelis, thank you very much and may you enjoy a blissful rest in God’s kingdom. Dear sisters, you have seen our mission as a tiny seed and you have nurtured it to see its growth.

The long cherished dream of Fr. Magembe was realized on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1993 when the first four sisters arrived in Uganda; Sr. Amala Kunath, Sr. Claudia Kerketta, Sr. Louisa Thomas and Sr. Veera Bara. They were accommodated by the sisters of Mary Reparatrix in Entebbe and on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October arrived in Kiziba. Thanks to our Sisters in Entebbe. It was a great day in the history of our Congregation in Africa. This was after a successful survey that was carried out by Sr. Amala, Sr. Lekha and Sr. Crescencia in 1992. And for this we are celebrating this Jubilee. Congratulations! Thank you our sisters for venturing into the unknown.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1994, the day of our Blessed Mother Maria Theresa Scherer, the formation began in Kiziba. As the young women answered the call of God, more sisters came in to meet the needs of the time. The following years brought with them Sr. Annuntiata Muhongayire and Sr. Asha Gidh. In 1996, Sr. Marianne came to begin the Novitiate. Thereafter came Sr. Susan and Sr. Winny Lopez.

Before the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there was a blessing of the new indigenous sisters confirming their Yes to remain as

Sisters of Mercy the Holy Cross. These are Sr. Maria Sarah Nabaggala, Sr. Mary Margret Nnassuuna, Sr. Gertrud Nampeera and Sr. Mariedita Kabajungu. And this happened on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 1999 in the presence of Mother Louise- Henri and the Late Sr. Shalini. Since then, many young ladies have responded to God's call and we now have many African sisters from Uganda and Kenya. Thanks be to God!

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century brought with it more abundance of blessings through the persons of Sr. Deepa Mathew, Sr. Genevieve D'Silva, Sr. Lisa Mudoor, Sr. Claris Thekumpurath, Sr. Gracy Thadathil, Sr. Mary Thomas, Sr. Anne Thomas and Sr. Jessy Mathew all from India.

The joy of our Jubilee would be incomplete without recognizing the generosity of our Provincial Superiors from all our four Provinces of India and all the individual sisters in India each by name. Dear Sisters, you have been very supportive and encouraging the growth of our mission here in Africa. We recognize the noble work you put in. Thank you very much. May the Lord bless you abundantly!

We render thanks to God for the charismatic leadership of our



Profession 1999

Vicariate Superiors who have led us all through these past years with enthusiasm and zeal. Dear sisters, your services have borne for us joy and jubilation. We appreciate you very much and congratulate you upon this Silver Jubilee.

We thank Mother Rose Angela and the Daughters of Mary, Bwanda in a special way who taught the local language to our sisters and made them feel at home. We also remember all our religious Brothers and Sisters who have supported us physically and spiritually. We thank the families who parented our sisters and initiated in them in our African culture. Each of our sisters above

has an African name. They really feel accepted by our people here in Africa.

“The need of the time is the will of God.” 25 years of Jubilee have led to many developments in our Vicariate. In 1999, we were raised to the status of a Vicariate, health centers, more communities and above all the number of formees to our different formation stages, leading to an increase of sisters, to mention but a few. As we write these, we are celebrating the Jubilee gift of 18 Novices, 13 postulants, 14 candidates and 53 sisters from whom 9 are from India and 44 are Africans. Indeed “God’s kindness has no bounds!”

We thank the parents who have generously given their daughters to this congregation. We also thank the spiritual companions who have guided us all through. May the Lord reward all our benefactors and well-wishers! We fail to mention each by name but your names are well written on our hearts.

Our founder Fr. Theodosius says; "I wanted to organize this congregation in such a way that it

fits in everywhere, finds acceptance everywhere, and is able to integrate itself into any condition and situation."

These words are being fulfilled as we celebrate 25 years in Africa. With all this we want to appreciate the Lord who has journeyed with us and brought us to this Jubilee year. "Indeed how good is the Lord! Bless his Holy name." (Ps: 99) and "Love knows no measure", Blessed Ulrika Nisch.

## Called to Be a Religious Sister!

Michaela Schwert, now Sr. Marie-Salome

This article appeared in "Kontakte", the annual magazine of the Freiburg seminary, after Michaela had entered the convent Hegne. As Sr. Marie-Salome, she has been in novitiate formation since July 2018 and is immersed in the mystery of the Cross and the Resurrection. It will shape her way of life.

### **"Speak, Lord, your servant hears" (1Sam 3:9)**

This verse from the Book of Samuel accompanied my first steps in the search for my way into the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross. The words sounded clear



Sr. Marie-Salome Schwert

enough, but didn't strike a chord within me. How often would I have wished that God would find clearer words, or how often did I not want to hear his words at all. The beginning of my search path was a long time ago, and it was more a quiet whisper from God at the beginning, softer, but clear voice. Even during my school days I was fascinated by the convent way of life. A visit from the school to a convent made me curious. The rhythm of prayer and work as well as the life in the community attracted me. And suddenly the question arose in me: "Wouldn't that be a life for you too? Soon the answer became clear to me: " No, because I'm totally out of the grid here because of my age!"

Everyday life took its course again and only a few years later the question arose again in Taizé: "Why not? Wouldn't that be your way?" I was quick to answer: No,

because these are all men here, and with that I am out!

But this time I couldn't get out of the whole thing that easily. The more time passed by, the more often and the louder this one question kept coming up in me: "What is stopping you? Wouldn't that be your way?" At some point, I ran out of answers, and I couldn't keep my "no" anymore. So I set off and visited some communities. I came to know different spiritualities, experienced the most different forms of community life and the most varied areas of responsibilities. But the more communities and orders I got to know, the more I realized that the restlessness was growing within me: Somehow I didn't fit in anywhere. During this intense time of searching, the verse from the book of Samuel became my prayer. Again and again I asked God to tell me where our common path should lead. And the more I searched, and the more I experienced, the more I was drawn back again and again to one place: the convent Hegne on Lake Constance. Here my questions were answered and my restlessness disappeared

completely. The search for the place and the community found the goal for me here with the Sisters Mercy of the Holy Cross. Since October 2017, as a postulant, I have been able to grow ever deeper into the community and the history of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, into spirituality and prayer, but also very concretely into various tasks.

**"The need of the time is the will of God" (Fr. Theodosius Florentini)**

The Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross - here perhaps better known as the Hegne Holy Cross Sisters - was founded by Father Theodosius Florentini and Mother Maria Theresa Scherer in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Switzerland. The life motto of the Capuchin Fr. Theodosius was: "The need of the time is the will of God". For him at that time, this meant first of all perceiving all the plight of his time and then taking concrete actions to resolve these grievances. Thus he became involved in many areas of social life. For example, he was committed to ensuring that

the children not only worked in the factories, but also received school education. So it was also his concern to train young women and sisters as teachers who could take over these tasks. But not only in the education system had he noticed a great need of his time, but also in the charitable area, especially in the care of the poor and sick people. He also responded to this need of the time and sent, for example, sisters to the poorhouses and to the nursing of the sick.

In this way, the sisters of the cross responded to the needs of the time and new tasks arose which were taken over by the sisters. Even today, this attitude to life continues to shape the lives of the Holy Cross Sisters throughout the world. It is about going through the world with open eyes and not closing one's eyes to the many needs of the people who meet us.

For me personally this means asking again and again and letting myself be touched by the needs and worries of the people who meet me. To get involved with them and to ask God again and again: "Lord, what do you want

me to do?" - very concretely extending a helping hand or also in silent prayer.

**"The common prayer has great power!" (Mother Maria Theresa Scherer)**

This is something that our co-founder Mother Maria Theresa gave to the sisters: The strength that lies in common prayer should not be underestimated. For me, the common times of prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, adoration and above all the celebration of the Eucharist are very important times. In them I can bring before God everything that moves me. I can thank him for what gave me joy, but I can also give him all that is difficult. To interrupt the daily routine again and again in order to pray together and for each other is something special for me - and I am never alone before God. On the one hand, I can experience myself very concretely as part of a large community and on the other hand everything that moves people and the world right now comes before God in common prayer. Thus the concrete action and the silent prayer go hand in hand: Again and again what we

experience in the world, the good, but also the bad, all the needs and worries that people who come to Hegne or entrust themselves to the intercession of Blessed Sr. Ulrika bring with them before God.

**"I would like to proclaim Christ as the Crucified and Risen One".**

For me, this can also be experienced very graphically every time I make my way to a time of prayer in our convent church. If you enter the church and look up to the ceiling directly behind the door, you can see the maltreated face of Christ crucified. If one continues and turns one's gaze forward, one discovers the

resurrected and returning Christ in the sanctuary. For me, these two images are a sign of faith and of the spirituality that I want to live. On the one hand, seeing the cross and proclaiming Christ as the Crucified One. For me, this means not closing my eyes to misery and suffering. On the other hand, for me it also means not stopping at the cross, but going on to the empty tomb to proclaim the risen Christ. So not only to share the suffering with people, but to be a witness of the hope that came into the world through the resurrection of Christ. This is what characterizes our community and what I want to live: to carry into the world the message of Jesus as the Crucified and Risen One.

## "It Blooms After You." Hilde Domin

### From first profession to jubilee

On behalf of all the sisters who were able to celebrate their First Profession, Final Profession or Jubilee during this year, sisters of different generations and regions answered the question: **"What does it mean to me to be a sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross?"**

#### First Profession

Sr. Dorothy Nokolanda, Vicariate Uganda

A sister of the Holy Cross is blessed because in the Cross is the origin and source of our salvation and of our Christian faith.

For me, being a sister of the Holy Cross means living in a profound communion with the crucified Lord and being involved in the concrete situations of daily life in the service of our neighbour, especially the poor. It is an attempt to unite prayer and loving service to one's neighbour, to take the daily cross upon me and thus to follow Christ, to follow in his footsteps and thus to collaborate in the work of salvation. It is also an invitation to pay attention to the instructions of my Superiors, fully aware that God speaks to me through them. That is why I want to be willing and ready. For me, it means the willingness to seek the will of God and to take upon myself without hesitation any work assigned to me, to put aside my



Sr. Dorothy

own plans and ideas. It also means firmly believing that I am loved, called and sent to share in the mystery of the cross, death and resurrection of Christ.

As a Holy Cross Sister, I am called to build a strong, trustworthy relationship with my fellow sisters in the community. I live from forgiveness, from constant conversion, from the willingness to cooperate, to be satisfied in the spirit of St. Francis with the things that are at our

disposal and to have a deep joy in serving the poorest people. In other words, a Holy Cross sister has many possibilities to strive for holiness.

For me, being a Holy Cross sister also means being tirelessly on the paths that our founders have preceded us. They had open eyes and hearts for the need that surrounded them.

It is a gift and a challenge to belong to the family of the Holy Cross, a call that finds its origin and its goal in God alone.

### **Final Profession**

Sr. Mary Murmu, India North East Province

Looking back on the past years of my life as a sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross, I am overwhelmed by a feeling of gratitude and joy. Like the Apostle Thomas, the words "My Lord and my God" (Jn 20:28), rise from the bottom of my heart.

Full of joy I consecrated my life to the merciful Lord on the day of my final profession. I longed for this day to celebrate the deep love of God in my life. I feel that taking Final Vows as a Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross is the culmination of a long journey of prayer, insight and sacrifice. I have the feeling of total belonging and love for my Congregation and I want to let the

compassionate face of God shine in my mission. My total devotion to the Lord is the result of my constant conversation with God, who calls me again and again. I have to renew my vows every day of my life, in mission, in community and when I face adversity and suffering. Now I experience HIM deep within me, to whom I have given my life. He gives me the strength to accept and face the challenges of life in freedom, with hope and courage. The Crucified Lord is the source of my love, and the Holy Cross gives me the strength and energy to serve our neighbour and those,



Sr. Mary

who are unloved and unwanted. To be able to do this, I must at every moment of my life recognize the will of God by listening to others through the signs and events of the times. I believe that my community will support, encourage and inspire me to live my life in a committed and meaningful way. I am also sure that my family and friends will be my companions on my journey.

## 25 Years of Profession

Sr. Augustína Hanišáková, Province Slovakia

These days I am celebrating 25 years of my profession, first of all I want to thank God for my life, faith and especially my call to the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross. During these years I became



Jubilarians Slovakia, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left Sr. Augustína

aware of how God surprised me again and again with his love in my everyday life. He himself taught me to know him, to love him, and also to accept his cross in different situations. The sisters with whom I can share life in joy and suffering are a great support for me on this path of discipleship. 25 years have passed and I have experienced much mercy. Therefore, I want to learn more and more to accept mercy and show mercy.

## **50 Years of Profession**

Sr. Miljenka Schnetzer, Vicariate Taiwan

Looking back on my life, I can see that my mother laid the first seeds of mercy in me. When someone needed help in the village, she was often called. Sometimes I was allowed to accompany her. I got the first deep impression when an elderly neighbour died. Her husband called us for help. We went there, washed them, embedded them and provided a peaceful atmosphere. Nothing was ever too much for my mother.

At the age of 19, I joined the sisters of Ingenbohl. I became a nurse and took my first vows at the age of 25. The name "Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross" did not become meaningful to me until

later. Before that I was simply an Ingenbohl sister!

My first wish was to help people in need. I realized ever more deeply that this was only possible with the help of God. So the question "What does the Cross mean to me" became more and more urgent.

For Christ, the person was at the centre, especially the sick, the hungry, the marginalized, and even more especially the women and children. He lived for them and for all to the last, until death on the cross.

I wanted to follow in his footsteps. Sometimes they were much too big for me. The stretched arms of Jesus on the cross became my home. He invites me when everything becomes too much for me, when everything seems meaningless to me, when I feel sad and discouraged, and also when I am joyful and happy.

But the people whom I help also give me joy. I remember a cancer patient in the mountains of Taiwan. When I wanted to go to church at Christmas he called me: "Sister, please come! He had pain and great fear. I went to him three more times that night, changed

the bandages and gave him painkillers. Then I laid my hands on him and prayed with him. He became calmer and could accept the situation. Then it was Christmas for him and for me.

On 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2018, I could celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> year of my religious profession together with 14 other sisters - a celebration that left a deep impression, a celebration of joy and gratitude. Thank you, God that I continue to be a Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross.



Sr. Miljenka's jubilee

## 60 Years of Profession

Sr. Maria Andrea Rendl, Province Europa Mitte

60 years on the way as a Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross! A few splinters of thoughts!

**Friday afternoon 3:00 p.m.:** A church bell rings and reminds the Christians of the hour of Jesus' death on the cross! Since my childhood this time of prayer has been important and dear to me, because according to my grandmother I can reach every dying person with this remembrance and accompany Jesus on the cross through death into eternal life. The thought of my own dying and the request for a good home for so many dear people has become stronger over the years. Today I regard this as my first mission as a Holy Cross Sister.

**"Cross, you are my sign of glory,"** we loved to sing in the first years of our religious life. The cross, clear and strong in the "firm name" of our community, symbol of salvation at the intersection of world history and the history of salvation, strengthened in us the program for our future. The deep theological dimension was probably still too unclear to us at that time.



Sr. Maria Andrea

**"Let us then follow the Lord with our cross."** We sang this verse somewhat more cautiously at the celebration of our final profession. We took the content seriously, because after a time of experience we felt that following the cross was a challenge, but we wanted to remain honest in this track.

**"Understanding the Cross":** What a guideline from Father Theodosius! He deeply believed in the transforming and healing

power of living together, when people see the need of others, selflessly and lovingly help others as far as possible; do not give up, and believe in God's faithfulness even in case of failure and futile effort and put everything into His hands. This is still the core of our religious life today, the focus of our ministry, in communion with Jesus on the cross and in solidarity with all suffering people, to believe in this redeeming power and to work with it.

**"Understanding"** in this sense is not a matter of understanding; it does not require a rational explanation. For the agonizing questions: "Why? Why have you forsaken me?", to this day remain unanswered and lead us to our limits into the mystery of our salvation. This demands the heart, the surrender, the faith that the way with the crucified one will come to a good end.

**"Where you there when they crucified my Lord?"**

I love this spiritual, even though the question is aimed directly at my conscience and always pushes me to define my position. Where do I stand? Where is my place?



Jubilarians USA: front: Sr. Mary Thomas, Sr. Jeanne Marie, Sr. Mary Angela, behind: Sr. Mary Michael

But these questions are also appropriate after so many years of religious life.

### **70 Years of Profession, Province USA**

Sr. Mary Angela Sackmann

For the past 70 years - I believe and trust - I have been able to make a difference in the lives of many people simply by sharing the love of God with them.

Today I am happy about it. I feel content and blessed by all that my retired life offers me every day.

Sr. Mary Michael Smits

When I look back on the past seventy years of my life as a Holy Cross sister, I feel blessed

because I was able to come into contact with so many people, young and old, small and big. For 47 years I was a primary school teacher. It was my task to teach, but also to participate in many aspects of parish life. In all these years we have worked together, prayed together, laughed and cried together, united in HIS love. There were some things I naturally would not have wanted to do, but God was generous with His blessing, and I always felt Him when I needed Him most. Thank you, my God!

Sr. Mary Thomas Reichl

Today it is important for me - and for this I feel really deep gratitude - that I was able to experience life in community with its rhythm of

prayer, work and relaxation. I was at the service of my fellow people in education, pastoral care and community leadership. I had the opportunity to work with other organizations. I still do this today in retirement if possible: community actions, Salvation Army, Vincent Club, commitment to the Spanish speaking community.

Sr. Jeanne Marie Braun

Serving the people of God as a Sister of Mercy of the Holy Cross

has given me much joys over the past 70 years. In the past years, marked by the process of aging and health problems, it has often not been possible to experience this joy. The greatest challenge for me as a Holy Cross Sister today is to be grateful for what I was able to do in the past and to connect with the ministry of my sisters who are still active. I now find joy more in being than in doing. And I try to unite my pains and limitations with the Passion of Jesus, and to pray that this attitude can also be beneficial to other lives.

## Have Home in Bojková

Sr. Arkádia Dreveňáková, Sr. Marcela Fašianková, Sr. Andrea Suchanovská, Sr. Jana Pavla Dvoršáková, Bojková, Province Slovakia

In a remote home, ten sisters with almost 40 men live under one roof and shape their lives with them. Many have never had a real home, lived on the fringes of society and bear the heavy burden of their lives. They experience a home with the sisters and dignity they have never known. Four sisters share their experiences.

### Bojková

In 1948 a home was established in Bojková, where sisters have been working since 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1950, i.e. for 68 years.

At present the social welfare home belongs to the office of self – management in Trnava. The

buildings of the institution are situated in a beautiful environment between mountains. At the moment the home has 37 residents with various health and psychological problems. The mission of the sisters is to care for these mentally and physically



handicapped men. Through their ministry, they try to provide them with a home for a dignified life, to be close to them, to share the joys and sufferings with them. The sisters also participate in various activities of the parish and province. They also visit parishes and the prison with the relics of Blessed Sr. Zdenka. They are also active in the pastoral ministry.

By serving these poor men, the sisters try to live and develop the richness of our charism. They draw their strength from the

Eucharist, from prayer and also from the mutual love and help of the sisters. The people also have the daily opportunity to participate in the divine service, which has a positive effect on them.

The relatives and acquaintances of the home residents thank the sisters for their care, because they see how the health of these men is improving and many of them have come alive since they have been with us. They are aware that much has been lacking in their way of life so far.



## **My first and present impressions**

At the end of a narrow, bumpy way up, a few buildings suddenly appear in a forest clearing, in front of them cars, tools and a tractor. This should be my new home?



Behind a big iron gate I discovered smiling sisters, waving and happy about my arrival, and then a group of men -the home residents. I was impressed by the cheerful atmosphere emanating from the sisters, but it took me a long time to feel comfortable until I was settled in. Before that I worked at the Bishop's house in Spišské Podhradie. Two so very different places and also completely different people! Now I can say that I feel at home in Bojkova, even if it is sometimes

difficult and demanding, since we live with men 24 hours a day under one roof, far away from civilization. Here I can serve people in silence and fulfil our mission as sister of Mercy.

Our yard is full of flowers and we have a Marian grotto in the park. I can go there often and ask Mary for help and also thank her.

I also have a good relationship with the home residents. It is not always easy with them, but they are my brothers. Many of them had no family. They do not know what it means to be loved. They are always looking for our closeness; they need the feeling of being accepted.

We are happy when someone visits us. Once a year we go on a trip with these men, go to a restaurant and eat something good. The therapist rehearses theatre and other performances with them. This is always an experience for the residents, and we all enjoy it. The way they play theatre is unforgettable.

Jesus says to me every day: "Come and follow me". Every day

I try to give an answer of love to this call, an answer of giving my whole life.

Sr. Arkádia Dreve áková

### **Cook in Bojková**

I work as a cook in the welfare institution Bojková. Together with our employees Ani ka and Marta we make a good team. The work in the kitchen is demanding, but at the same time beautiful and creative. It is said that love goes through the stomach, and so we

always have joy when the food tastes good to all and all plates are empty. Then I always tell myself that I want to do everything out of love and for the good of all.

Sr. Marcela Fašianková

### **In nursing care in Bojková**

How am I doing in this welfare institution? In the beginning, my sisters helped me a lot. They accepted me lovingly. It was a great help for me to get used





to the seclusion of the house and its residents, and I gradually realized that here was a place where I could live my relationship with Jesus intensely. I am happy that I can use my life in the service of the sick, lonely and marginalized. I try to make them feel the love of God every day so that together we can form a family in which no one feels abandoned or lonely.

I draw my strength from prayer and from the Eucharist. The residents also have the possibility to participate in the Holy Mass

every day. From experience I can say that without HIS presence I would not be able to do it, and without my sisters too, who are a great support for me.

I often ask our founders for help, who are a great example for me. I often remember the words: "Discover the grain of gold!" I am also happy when different people come to visit us. They like to come because they feel the peaceful atmosphere here. Humour helps us, and it is so necessary in many difficult situations.

Sr. Andrea Suchanovská



A big family

### **My Time in Bojková**

I came to Bojková more than six years ago. On the first morning I had a nice surprise from the home residents: they all wished me a good morning, they asked me if I slept well, where I came from, where I worked before, that was my first contact with them. I

immediately felt at home because I have five brothers. In the community I felt accepted and loved, and so I had no problem to settle in. Slowly I got to know the residents. And then I decided that I would invest all my energy to help these people.

Sr. Jana Pavla Dvorš áková

## Old and Young Living Together

Sr. Jermia Thoma, Chulu, Vicariate Taiwan

With the opening of a day care centre, the sisters of Taiwan are responding to a great need. On the one hand 20 elderly people find a piece of home during the day, on the other hand pupils experience a protected environment until their parents return home from work.

On June 16, this year, the day care centre "Himmelsjade für Betagte (heavenly abode for the elderly)" was inaugurated in the district of Taitung, in Shangwu, in the district of Dawu.

The celebration began with the Eucharist in the small, beautifully decorated church. The diocesan bishop Philipp Huang presided over the Eucharist and then blessed the renovated, newly furnished rooms for the elderly.

Representatives of the government also took part in the celebration, such as the President of the Canton, the President of the District, the President of the Municipality, representatives of other branches of government. The cantonal president expressed his gratitude that this day care centre had been set up. He also sees the great need for such day-care centres for the elderly. In the Taitung district, this is above all very, very important.





This "Day Care Centre for the Elderly" is already the eleventh one here in Taitung. This is really "a need of our time". In the district of Dawu, economic progress is very limited. The young people, young couples, leave the district, move to the west of the island, where there is industry, and work there. Very old people live lonely lives.

The foundation "Holy Cross Mother M. Theresa" takes over responsibility for the day care centre. It takes care of 20 people. In the morning the people are picked up at home and in the evening they are brought back to their familiar home. During the day they can paint, do handicrafts, sing, do appropriate gymnastics, use various musical instruments together with CD music and beat the rhythm. This is how the elderly discover their talents.



The common lunch is very much appreciated by all, because finally they can share their worries and joys with others. In very comfortable upholstered chairs (which can be transformed into beds), they spend their midday rest.

Every day, students also come





after the school to write their homework assignments. This is a great help for the school-age children, because the parents work in the industrial areas and nobody cares for them.

Old and young learn to trust each other, to respect each other, to be considerate of each other. The older people learn that they can still give something to the children. They become more alive, their

feelings more stable, their minds stimulated.

The encounter with old people is very important for the education of the children. They learn to respect elderly people, to support them, to take care of them, to perceive the goodness and beauty of elderly people. Respect for the elderly is important for the education of today's young people.

Four of our sisters (Sr. Miljenka Schnetzer, Sr. Agathe Li, Sr. Martha Sue, Sr. Maria Huang) and many secular collaborators work in the foundation.

Even if not all elderly people are Christian for a long time, in this environment they get something from the Christian spirit, from the mercy and love of Jesus.

## Serving Life on the Edge of Landfill Site

Sr. Alcenia Barreto da Paz, Rio de Janeiro, Vicariate Brazil

Under the motto "Love that heals", women and men from a hospital in Rio de Janeiro serve in the Jardim Gramacho, which thus becomes a place of encounter with God. Our sisters are permanent collaborators in this special apostolate.

The mission "Love that Heals" is an action carried out by the hospital "Francis of Assisi (HSF)" under the direction of Fr. Paulo Batista, member of the "Brotherhood of St. Francis of Assisi of Divine Providence". The hospital is located in the north of the city of Rio de Janeiro, in the district of Tijuca.

Jardim Gramacho is a suburb of the municipality of Caxias in the district of Rio de Janeiro. In the years 1976-2012 it was the largest landfill in Latin America, where about 5000 garbage collectors worked. When the garbage dump was closed and the collectors lost their livelihood, the authorities



On the way to the landfill – right at the front Sr. Maria Quirino

promised further education courses, improvement in the supply of energy and water. Unfortunately empty promises! Today, about 20000 people live there in deplorable conditions.

### **How it all started**

When Sr. Maria Quirino met a youth in front of the hospital who asked for a job, the "mission"



Surrounding area

began. Carlos was employed in the cleaning and hygiene team of the hospital. One day he invited Sr. Maria Quirino and Fr. Paulo to visit him in his apartment in Jardim Gramacho. They asked him to describe the circumstances of his place of residence. After a few days, Sr. M. Quirino and Fr. Paulo set off. They took milk, baby clothes, diapers, food, etc. with them.

They went there and saw! They saw, heard and felt the pain of these people. Many live here because they cannot pay rent. They came from other areas hoping to find work and were disappointed. Day after day they experience violence, fear and loneliness. Here live oppressed women, exploited children, children of adolescents, and people with little education. They know no religion and are forgotten by the church. They have no address and their culture is marked by oppression.

Since this visit, Sr. Maria Quirino and Fr. Paulo have asked themselves again and again: "What can we do? It was planned to carry out a mission. This happened in a place full of mud, dirt, churumes – the black, oily liquid that comes from the garbage. In the small group that carried out the mission was a

doctor, some nurses and religious sisters. They brought used clothes, food, medicine, and snacks for everyone. When they said goodbye in the evening, everyone was already infected by the virus "Love that heals" with the small gesture "Effectiveness". Since then this mission happens once a month.

We and the sisters of the community of St. Isabel / Tijuca are also infected by the virus "Love that heals" and are permanent collaborators. On the day of the mission everyone who wants a doctor, a dentist, a nurse, a religious orientation or a social consultation is cared for. The whole mission is financially supported by benefactors who donate the expenses for lunch



In good hands of Sr. Alcenia

and snacks together. The mission received a bus from the ONG (Organisation Não Governmental) = "Better Health". The bus accommodates three practice rooms and a pharmacy. This ONG also supplies the mission with medicines.

### How to continue

The mission "Love that Heals" grew like a river that spreads from its source. An extension of this mission is the visit to prisons, where we can offer medical examinations, treatment with nurses, and religious care.

Another mission concerns the homeless. We bring them used clothing and food, pray and sing with them and take time to be with them.



Play with children: Sr. Maria Quirino and Sr. Lédineia



#### Consultation

For us sisters the mission "Love that heals" is very important. We have experiences that are in the spirit of Fr. Theodosius and Mother Maria Theresa. Each time we participate in the mission, we feel more motivated to serve with

zeal and good will. By "touching" these people holistically, we feel that God is with us. The experience becomes an experience of God in prayer and worship.

## New in the Amazon Region

Sr. Geralda Kunz, Itapeaçu /Amazon, Vicariate Brazil

Sisters of the Vicariate Brazil search for new ways to be, and with the people. They take, as they themselves say, small steps, and want to learn from the people there. With this they have decided to work "building from below".

The term "communities" appears several times in the text. In this area these are small groups of Catholic Christians who walk together along the way. Because a priest rarely passes by, they hold celebrations comparable to our liturgy of the Word of God.

### Motivations

Trusting in God's grace, the Vicariate Brazil dares to enter a new field of activity in the state of Amazon. Pope Francis repeatedly calls the Church of Brazil to missionary work in the Amazon region.

In August 2017, our vicariate leadership received a missionary petition from Bishop José Ionilton Lisboa de Oliveira, SDV, in which the Bishop wrote: "I began the Bishop's ministry on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2017 in Itacoatiara - Amazon. Our prelateure includes six political communities (municípios) with 13 parishes and about 250 communities. The Prelature has seven diocesan priests, seven priests from two missionary institutes and one priest from the diocese of Ribeirão Preto and one married deacon. There is also a convent of Benedictine nuns. Through this letter to the various congregations, especially those

who live a missionary charism, I urge you to consider the possibility of a presence in the Prelature of Itacoatiara... I conclude with one of the priorities of the Brazilian Religious Conference on the Integration of Mysticism and Prophecy: 'Strengthen the integration of mysticism and prophecy with a loving heart and pilgrim feet, in order to perceive with open eyes and ears the new missionary zeal that are impulses of the Spirit in the discipleship of Jesus".

Our Vicariate Leadership reflected and prayed over this appeal, and in November of the same year Sr. Claudia Regina dos Santos and Sr. Beatriz Kristacic visited the prelateure Itacoatiara and some communities along the rivers. At our annual meeting this appeal was made to all the sisters. With great joy, the sisters agreed to the possibility of the presence of the Holy Cross Sisters in the Amazon region.

## Sent

On 21<sup>st</sup> February, Sr. Beatriz Corina dos Santos and I, Sr. Geralda Kunz, arrived in Manaus. Bishop José Ionilton was waiting for us at the airport to welcome us to the Amazon region. After a long drive we reached Itacoatiara, the seat of the prelature. We stayed a month in the Bishop's house and got to know our new surroundings. Everything was new! We admired the natural beauties, especially the huge river Amazon and the forests. We got to know the people and their food, especially fish, mandiok flour (Portuguese for manioc), many different fruits. It called for and continues to require great adaptability.

On the feast of St. Joseph we picked up Sr. Claudia Regina in Manaus. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, on the International Day of Water, we went by boat on the Amazon to our area of mission. A special grace! The group consisted of Bishop José Ionilton, two Mexican missionaries from the Guadalupe Institute, Fr. José Raimundo, missionary of Minas Gerais, Sr. Claudia Regina, Sr. Angela Maria dos Santos Lima, (from a Belgian Congregation that also responded positively to the Bishop's appeal and had three sisters in Itacoatiara) and two of us. We enjoyed the wonderful trip. At 5



In the boat on the mission journey

p.m., the boat arrived in Itapeaçu (big stone). Many children, teenagers and adults awaited us on the shore. It was a very warm welcome. Together we went up to the church of St. Sebastian. We were welcomed in a covered hall. Greetings followed, expressing the joy of our coming. An emotional moment followed by a solemn divine service with Bishop Ionilton, and all the prize-winners present. The Bishop expressed his joy that the people of Itapeaçu were experiencing the presence of religious sisters for the first time and asked the people: "Treat the sisters well and share with them what you have! At the end of the service, Bishop Ionilton and Sr. Claudia Regina signed a contract between the prelature of Itacoatiara, Amazon, and the Community of Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross. All the people applauded. Afterwards, everyone was invited to dinner together in

the hall. A group of young people sang and danced.

The following day the whole group went to Urucurituba. This city was founded 42 years ago and has about 20000 inhabitants. The parish includes six villages with a total of 49 communities. Itapeaçú, where we live, is the largest village and has about 2000 inhabitants. Some communities can be reached on foot, others only by boat. In the evening service, the Bishop appointed the new pastor, Fr. José Maria Luna, missionary of Guadalupe, and Fr. José Raimundo as Vicar of the parish of Urucurituba. Together with them we will fulfil our missionary task.

### **First experiences**

From Palm Sunday we celebrated Holy Week together with the people. I admired the people, how they know how to celebrate. The people are open and kind, longing for God. We met with the community leaders for an exchange: What expectations do they have of us and what can we do concretely? The people expect from us a deeper religious formation, cooperation with the different groups already existing for liturgy, catechesis, youth work.



The home of the sisters

The priests of the parish come to Itapeaçú from time to time. The priest and a catechist come twice a year to the small communities far away. The distances are very great. For both of us it is clear that our first aim is to get to know the environment, to understand the way of thinking and acting of the Amazonian people. We want to be present among the people, especially through visits to the families, and we can offer help in youth work and in the formation of catechists. In the near future we

want to form a group for the health care and for the accompaniment of elderly and sick people. We take small steps and want to learn from the people, we decide on a "reconstruction work from below".

In the first months we took part in three missionary trips to the most distant communities of our parish. It took us almost three hours by boat to reach the first place, Urucurozinho, which still belongs to the parish Urucurituba. The next day we went on to Igarapé do

Mato and Sumaúma. The smallest of these visited communities consists of six families and the people are of African origin (Quilombolas).

Edna, a ninety-year-old woman, is the matriarch of the family and lives with her son Fernando, who was attacked some time ago by a crocodile and almost lost a leg. She tells us a lot about the culture and the families who live here. They live in a small space. It is admirable that there is also a



Houses of Quilombo

classroom and that we could talk to the teacher. These families have to evacuate almost every year during the rainy season.

When they come back in August, the wooden houses (similar to pile dwellings) are often destroyed and everything has to start again. 15, 12 or six families make up the basic communities. Normally people are related to each other. They live from fishing, fruits, mandiok and other root plants. Some families breed small animals or cows. The main course consists of fish, rice, pasta and farinha (mandiok flour). The people are very hospitable.

The Church of Brazil is deepening this year the theme "Laity in the Church". With the people who come together, this theme will be reflected upon. The Eucharistic celebration together is the conclusion of each visit. Until now parishioners have visited the communities twice a year in order to give a certain accompaniment. Each ecclesial community has a leadership team that organizes the life of the community. The feast of the patron saint of the



In the house of Edna

Church is especially celebrated and prepared with a novena or a triduum. The social feast is very important because it also serves to acquire financial means for the maintenance of the Church, etc. The communities on the rivers experience two periods a year: from January to June it is the rainy season. Then it rains very heavily and often for a long time. The rivers rise. There are floods. Some families are forced to

evacuate and spend the following months in a safe place. From July to December it rains very little and the heat increases. The tributaries of the Amazon are drying up and it is difficult to get to the settlements by boat. We are experiencing this time now.

Trusting in God, we continue along the path we have begun, trying to understand the signs of the times as the will of God and to respond positively to them. We also count on the prayerful support of all sisters. In everyday life we feel this solidarity strongly. We thank you for your accompaniment.



Sr. GERALDA KUNZ und Sr. BEATRIZ CORINA

## The Health Centre in Mahyoro Expands

Sr. Lisa Mudoor and Sr. Sylvia Nabitaka, Mahyoro, Vicariate Uganda

Sisters of the Vicariate of Uganda have taken over a health centre in Western Uganda. In addition, they provide services throughout the region, whose people need support at all levels.

### Health centre in Mahyoro

The new community of Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross at Mahyoro, Kamwenge District, in Fort Portal diocese in the western Uganda at the shores of Lake George was born on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2018. We were invited by Fr. Frederick Tusingire, the native of this place and also a diocesan priest of Fort Portal diocese. He is

the Founder of an organization with the name RENA (Rwenzori East Neighbor's Association) to provide immediate relief and promotion of welfare to the needy families. Over the years RENA has grown and is a fully registered Non-Government Organization governed by Board of Directors with a vision to improve the socio-economic condition, promote



Health center Mahyoro

educational standards in all levels and to give health services. Therefore, in collaboration with the Good Hope foundation Fr. Frederik started a Health Unit under RENA Organization.

The “Good Hope” Foundation came into existence after Mieke Steen, the founder of Good Hope, visited her eldest daughter Ellen, who studied and is now married in Uganda. During her regular visits to her daughter in Uganda, Mieke met many people, among others Father Fredrick Tusingire, a Catholic priest. In 2006, Mieke’s daughter migrated to Uganda and soon after that her mother died. With the inheritance she received,



Sr. Jennifer, Sr. Mary Sylvia, Sr. Lisa, Sr. Mariedita, a candidate

the health unit was built in Mahyoro, Uganda and Mieke and her husband were honoured to officially open it on 15 April 2008, together with the family Jaksch from Germany, who also donated funds to the health unit. It was a great day. Later Good Hope Foundation was established in Netherlands on 14 July 2008.

The Good Hope Health Unit at Mahyoro under RENA in the past was functioning well but because of poor management it was deteriorating. Therefore we, the Holy Cross Sisters were requested to take charge of the Good Hope health unit. Fr. Frederick together with the Executives of RENA handed over the Good Hope Health Unit to us with the existing furniture and equipment including the ambulance.

We began our stay here with two members: Sr. Lisa Mudoor and Sr. Sylvia Nabitaka and later Justa a candidate joined. At present we are four sisters and one candidate. Sr. Mary Sylvia Nabitaka was appointed as the administrator cum nurse. Sr. Mariedita Kabajungu is the

Superior of the community and the accountant in the unit. Sr. Jennifer Nziabake is the Nursing Assistant and an experienced health worker who is in charge of Ozone Therapy. A new treatment for chronic ulcers has been started at the unit. Being near to the lake, few others had to leave the Unit. Gradually more staff as well as sisters joined the Health Unit.

### **Some developments**

Daily number of patients both out patients and inpatients are on the increase. The sisters and staff take turns and work round the clock. The ambulance is now in much use. The people feel secure when they see the sisters taking turns in accompanying the patients to the referral hospital at Ibanda which is, nearly 40 kilometers away. The road passes through hills and valleys, muddy and stony roads. In the rainy season it is difficult to travel because of the potholes and slippery road. The number of patients kept increasing as they built up trust and confidence in the sisters and in their genuine care. As per the statistics there were 235 out patients during the

congested and unhygienic way of living, the people are suffering from tropical diseases like Malaria, pneumonia, typhoid etc. and other sexually transmitted dreaded disease. Some staff members were retained, and a months of May and June besides other in patients.

### **Challenges:**

The physical assets like the building and other furniture are poorly maintained, the equipment such as scan machine, incubator, Microscope, stethoscope is non-functioning. The floor and other structures are worn out. The doors and windows all need repair. The bank balance is almost nil. The ambulance is rather new, but it requires often repair. There is a lot of debt in Pharmacy which was providing drugs on credit. Some of the staff are paid through RENA organization which supports the Health Centre through the funds from friends and benefactors from Netherlands.

### **Outreach Programme:**

The unit is surrounded by 7 villages where we render our services to the people who are sick and suffering. In the last two months we managed to carry out 5 outreaches for sensitization on the services offered at our Health Centre and health education awareness activities.

The furthest villages got an opportunity to get Immunization Programme once a month and the staff of the unit share the activities equally. This has brought us more patients and slowly making us more engaged both in the community and in the Ministry. We

get a lot of co-operation from the district officers and local leaders.

#### **Other activities:**

We cultivate food in the garden and so far we have managed to plant maize, beans and some vegetables.

In the afternoon we go for village visit and listen to the different experiences of people. We spend some time with them, share more on Jesus and pray with them.

We also help in the church like decorating during feast days, taking readings and joining the choir in singing.



Life by the sea

**We have observed:**

People are friendly, simple and hospitable. They live in simple grass thatched houses. Some of them are Muslims and some others are non believers but are in need of evangelization. Majority of people are peasants. They cultivate maize, millet, sorgum and cotton on small scale. Generally people are poor. Food in the garden is harvested and sold on low price. Early marriage takes place due to poverty. Parents are not educated and so they do not value education. Even if they are prepared to send their children to school, due to poverty they are unable to manage to raise money to educate their children. People around depend on fishing in the lake but now due to over fishing they are not allowed to do fishing. This has made fish mongers poorer. Some of the people have resorted to stealing, drinking and prostitution etc.

Witchcraft is rampant everywhere. The people take the sick ones first to the witch doctor and when they have finished all their money and they notice that no improvement has taken place then they bring them to our health center for medication. As the area is very far from the town and the road is not good the development of the area is a dream.

**Thanks**

All in all we are grateful to God who has journeyed with us for the last 7 Months of our stay here in Mahyoro. We're grateful to all sisters and well-wishers who come to visit us and support us with their prayers. We really feel grateful to God in Mahyoro because He always visits us especially at the moments we less expect Him. The way forward is to trust God in everything we do until his kingdom come in Mahyoro community.

## A new Mission in Bijapur, Karnataka

Sr. Valentine D'Souza, Sr. Shaila Rosario and Sr. Sharol Saldanha, India South Province

After exploring the area and the needs, the sisters see a meaningful opportunity to work for young people with disabilities. There are no such facilities in the area. Here will be their place.

### The beginning

“Thus, God leads us to various places to work for his honour and for the good of his people.”

These words of our founder Fr. Theodosius Florentini which marked our commissioning for Bijapur mission in the state of Karnataka, South India continue

to inspire us as we explore the possibilities of a new venture in this place.

We were officially initiated into Bijapur mission team on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 at St. Anne Church in Bijapur by Bishop Robert Miranda, the Bishop of Gulbarga. Bijapur Mission is taken care of by the Jesuits in collaboration with



Welcome by the Bishop

sisters of 9 different congregation engaged in mission across Education, social work and Health sectors. St. Anne's Church in Bijapur city is the only Catholic Church in the district of Bijapur with 50 catholic families and about 40 believers known as Christha Bhakthas. The presence of Christians belonging to other denominations, although a minority, is also felt in the district. Therefore, we religious are called to make Christ's presence felt in different talukas of Bijapur. We the

Holy Cross sisters are located at Chadchan, a growing town which is at a distance of 67Kms from Bijapur city.

### **The area and its people**

Bijapur, the Agra of South India is known for its finest specimens of the architectural splendor of Adil Shahi dynasty (16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century). It is officially known as Vijayapura and is the district headquarters. It is also known for its different cultures and five rivers that flow in and around it.



Visit to the family of a disabled child

The river Bhima is closest to Chadchan at a distance of 18 Kms and demarcates the boundaries of Karnataka from Maharastra. Chadchan is a thickly populated town of about 17,000 people who are culturally and traditionally bound. These include Hindus, Muslims, Maratas, Lammanis, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe and a nomadic tribe commonly known as Gowllaru. It is a farming community largely dependent on rain. On our visits to villages around Chadchan which is now declared a "taluka", we came across many social evils prevalent in the society. Child marriages even when less compared to earlier times continue to exist posing a threat to Girl children's' education and health. There is also the practice of marrying a close relative (Congenital Marriages) placing the children born to such couple at the risk of mental and physical deformity. Women are often subject to degradation and looked upon by the family as a workforce or object of pleasure, having no say in the family affairs. Presence of gender discrimination is evident in the families where boy child is

preferred to a girl child. There is a serious dearth of good English medium schools to impart quality and value based education. The elderly people are respected and well taken care of in the families.

## **Future**

Our interaction with the teachers of basic education, Health workers and the people of the villages have led us to realize that our mission is to cater to the needs of children with special needs through a special school. We learnt that Bijapur district stands 2nd in the highest number of physically and mentally challenged population in Karnataka. This gave us the impetus to begin a survey in the villages to identify the total number of mentally retarded and physically challenged children aged between 5 to 12 yrs.

We have been conducting the survey in collaboration with the 9 centres gives us more orientation to our target group. With many special children and no special schools in the entire district we stand a fair chance at starting a special school to cater to their

needs. Simultaneously, we are on the lookout for a suitable land site where the building can come up.

We are grateful to God for the people we have encountered during the course of our work in the villages who have been supportive and welcoming the plan to start a special school.

Many parents of the special children have expressed their joy and gratitude at such a venture in Bijapur since they won't have to treat their children at faraway places like Mysore or Dharwad. Please continue to join us in earnestly praying - May the Lord who began this good work among us bring it to completion.

## The Convent Hegne Foundation

Sr. Josefa Harter, Hegne, Province Baden -Württemberg

After several years of intensive work in various committees, the "Convent Hegne Foundation " was established on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. A review of the impressive celebration!

"No, we are not finished - but new life is dawning! These were the last words in the welcome address of Sr. Benedicta-Maria Kramer, the Provincial Superior, at the foundation feast on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2018 in the convent church in Hegne. "Let us get involved! - concluding words of the sermon of Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Michael Gerber during the solemn Mass.

All of us - sisters and co-workers - had involved in: from 2014 on an organizational development process, and further from 2016 on the foundation process. And now it is here, the deed of foundation! On 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2018, the feast of Blessed Sister Ulrika Nisch, the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of Baden-Württemberg signed this document and thus legally established the Convent Hegne Foundation. With a feast, in which the sisters of the General Leadership from the Motherhouse Ingenbohl took part, the sisters, co-workers and numerous guests celebrated this important and future-oriented event for the Convent Hegne on 15<sup>th</sup> June.



Sr. Marija Brizar hands the documents over to the foundation board

The day was opened by a solemn Mass in the convent church with Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Michael Gerber. In her welcome address, the Provincial Superior Sr. Benedicta-Maria Kramer evaluated the foundation formation as a decision which would guarantee the fulfilment of the mission of the sisters in the future as well: namely to recognize the call of God in the needs of the times and to give a concrete response to it for the good of the people.

In his sermon, Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Gerber spoke of Hegne convent as a "marked place" marked by the proximity to Lake Constance,



Sisters, guests and co-workers in the former convent building

the aesthetics of the landscape and the various facilities such as nursing homes for the elderly, schools and hotels. But there is a much deeper mark: "We believe that heaven touches the earth because God touches the hearts of people here".

Sr. Marija Brizar, the Superior General, in her welcome address, conveyed from the reading to the newly established foundation: "With your blessing, the "Convent Hegne Foundation" will be blessed forever. Through it, our charism will also be continued, as the Foundation by carefully reading the needs of the time will be seeking answers to them. Thus the legacy of our founders, Father Theodosius and Mother Maria Theresa, will be continued by the Foundation. Sr. Marija also

expressed her joy at the fact that the Board of Management and the external Board of Trustees have been able to gain competent personalities who understand the mission and spirituality of the convent and the newly established foundation. The members on the part of the sisters are Sr. Benedicta-Maria Kramer, Sr. Maria Paola Zinniel and Sr. Birgit-Maria Krietemeyer.

The establishment of the foundation had been preceded by a process of several years of organizational development with professional support, in which many different people were involved: the management and leadership, co-workers and sisters. The Provincial Superior Sr. Benedicta-Maria thanked all of them in a lively and very personal and creative way at the subsequent foundation feast and appreciated their commitment to good cooperation.

"New life is dawning". - These words of welcome address in the morning became a living experience at the foundation feast and shaped the mood throughout the day. We continue with gratitude and confidence!

## Information from the General Leadership

### Appointments

On 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, the General Leadership has appointed a new Provincial Leadership for the **Mid India Province** for the next three years:

Provincial Superior: Sr. Georgina Nadukudiyil  
Assistant: Sr. Vijaya Tirkey  
Councillors: Sr. Caroline T. Joseph  
Sr. Philomina Toppo  
Sr. Usha Anthony Madukkakuzhi  
Sr. Suchita Bara  
Official Start: 15.10.2018

The General Leadership has appointed the Vicariate Leadership for **Vicariate Taiwan** for the next three years:

Vicariate Superior: Sr. Theresia Gau  
Assistant: Sr. Michelle Huang  
Councillors: Sr. Jermia Thoma  
Sr. Cäcilia Lin  
Sr. Andy Gau  
Official Start: 15.08.2018

On 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, the General Leadership has appointed a new

Provincial Leadership for the **Province Croatia** for the next three years:

Provincial Superior: Sr. Valerija Široki  
Assistant: Sr. Helena Šajbl  
Councillors: Sr. Iva Davidovi  
Sr. Lucija Kopi  
Sr. Emanuela Kvesi  
Official Start: 08.09.2018

On 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2018, the General Leadership has appointed a new Provincial Leadership for **India Central Province** for the next three years:

Provincial Superior: Sr. Rosily Kolencherry  
Assistant: Sr. Veena Akkal  
Councillors: Sr. Sajita Kadanthodu  
Sr. Esther Xalxo  
Sr. Reema Mathew  
Sr. Anupam Minj  
Official Start: 31.10.2018

We sincerely thank the sisters who are newly or re-appointed for leadership in the provinces of Mid India, Croatia, India Central and the Vicariate Taiwan, for their readiness to accept this

demanding mission. We wish them strength, courage and confidence for their mission. May God's blessing be with them!

Our heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Provincial Superior Sr. Amalija Kup eri (Croatia) and the outgoing councillors Sr. Arpana Barwa (Mid India), Sr. Lata Lakra (Mid India), Sr. Finka Tomas

(Croatia), Sr. M. Augustina Dominkovi (Croatia), Sr. Betsy Madassery (India Central), Sr. Agnes Beck (India Central) and Sr. Magdalena Sue (Taiwan) for their committed, loyal and selfless service for the good of the sisters and the Province as well as the Vicariate. We wish them all the best and God's abundant blessing for their future mission.

Quarterly  
of the Sisters of Mercy  
of the Holy Cross  
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