

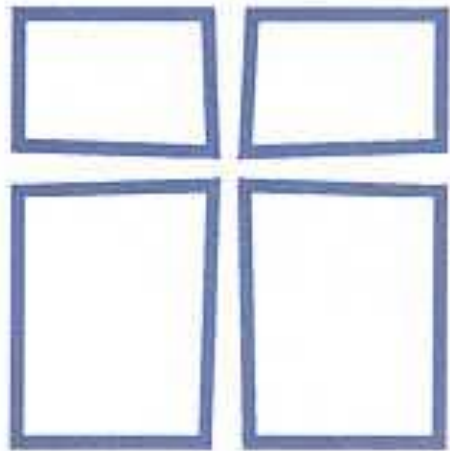
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# *Theodosia*

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of the Holy Cross  
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The Basel Münster crypt, 14th century, Photo: Erik Schmidt

## Editorial

The Jewish author Else Lasker Schöler described the human condition using an impressive image: "Man, the singular being: With his feet in the mud, his head in the stars." Our ordinary experiences and perceptions inexorably leads to the conclusion that we are in the mud today . That is only one thing. The poet however, does not leave it at that. She shows another dimension: "with our heads in the stars." An image of hope! We need that. It may also be that an angel with a star approaches us, as the cover picture shows. A star of confidence. A star with the message: "Through the merciful love of our God, the light that shines from on high will visit us", Luke 1:78. We wish all our readers such "great moments of hope", extending far into the new year.

In the next issues of Theodosia we will present holy places, churches and places of prayer of the sisters worldwide. These places carry the invisible power of prayers of generations of sisters. While art and architecture primarily aim to express beauty, the liturgy gives expression to sanctity and mystery.

This new series begins with a homily from the Motherhouse: "Holy Places are Special Places", on the occasion of the 50th year of consecration of the convent church in Ingenbohl.

The pages that follow take us to international meetings of sisters, report on experiences and encounters during visits to the motherhouse, give an insight into new tasks of sisters at the Vatican Radio, and at the reception of refugees in Lampedusa, an island between Tunisia and Sicily.

On World Teachers' Day on October 5, some teachers look back at their years at school and share with us the principles and experiences of this difficult and beautiful long-term task.

The title "You will be My Witnesses" continues with Sister M. Julia Erni, the last European Provincial Superior in India. With her outstanding human and spiritual qualities she has left such a lasting example.

We would like to thank everyone who has enriched us with contributions throughout the year. We hope that all our readers will continue to be amazed at what is possible in life despite our diminishing numbers.

Sister Christiane Jungo

## Holy Places are "Special Places"

Fr. Emmeram Stacheder OFM, Church Rector, Motherhouse Ingenbohl

50 years ago, Bishop Johannes Vonderach (+1994) consecrated the Convent Church in Ingenbohl. We remembered this in a solemn celebration on October 8, 2023. The church rector, Fr. Emmeram Stacheder OFM, did not refer directly to the convent church in his homily, but to places of worship in general. Below is the text of the homily.



Ceiling of the Ingenbohl convent church, designed by Paul Stöckli

### **Sisters and brothers in the Lord!**

Do places or spaces possess a soul? Can they influence people positively or negatively? The Romans spoke of the « spiritus loci », the resident spirit of a place. For them, every place was the habitat of a spirit. Every place

therefore has a certain resonance within us, and can influence our lives. Is this the reason why people visit old churches, for they sense the special atmosphere of these places and spaces? People long for an inner home, for places where they can find peace and find themselves. Places that stand out



from everyday life and its hectic pace. Places that attune us to the sacred and lead us to the sacred. Spaces of silence and prayer in an era, and a society in which there is hardly any prayer.

Holy places are "special places", and important for our lives. These are places where people uniquely sense the supernatural. Places where people experience an inner resonance, mostly indescribable in words.. Almost all medieval cathedrals and churches are built in such places. This is also what draws people to shrines of pilgrimage. Things happen there that still amaze people. These include healing springs, healings that are medically unexplainable. Places associated with the discovery of the holy cross or other sacred objects. An image of the Virgin Mary or a Saint.

No matter how secularized our society is, cities and towns are frequently defined by their cathedrals, churches and monasteries. They are obviously a source of identity. Such buildings reflect the longing for God as a basic human need. Holy places are therefore the answer to man's longing for a home for the soul, for identity and for closeness to the sublime that reaches beyond everyday life.

Churches that have been converted into museums, cultural spaces or a venue for exhibitions may make one marvel at the architecture of the building, and perhaps the remaining furnishings, but they are spiritless. The essence is missing here. The soul is gone. That which it was built and consecrated to be is missing!

The Bible tells us that Jesus also visited holy places: Sabbath after Sabbath he went to the synagogue to worship (Lk 4:16). At the age of twelve, he goes as a pilgrim to the temple in Jerusalem on the great Jewish festivals (Jn 2:13f). He paid the customary tax to maintain the great sanctuary (church contribution), although he did not necessarily agree with the priests working there. He is concerned about the holy place, for which he vigorously advocates that it be taken seriously as a house of God and of prayer, as today's Gospel says. It is also striking that Jesus, who otherwise lived simply, chose a large and festively decorated room for his Last Supper, which, it is said, was furnished with cushions (Mk 14:15)

Christians know that God is present in all places where people pray to him. At the same time, they build churches where they gather, listen to God's word and celebrate

the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. In these buildings, they express their faith through the beauty of art. The sense of art is also a gift of the Holy Spirit and should enrich what happens here. Architecture, visual art and church music tell of the greatness and beauty of God. They can make the heart wide and open. We know that God does not need these spaces, which we call God's houses. They are God's houses for us. They invite us to encounter this God. He is the soul of these places, these spaces, their very center.

In 2006, when the Convent Ingenbohl celebrated 150 years of foundation with the mystery play "House of the New Creation" by Sr. Silja Walter, an actress said the following, even though the sanctuary was covered with a stage: "You can feel the presence of the holiness in this place where we are playing now. You can feel that sacred things are being celebrated here, that holy things happen here." Sometimes we need outsiders to remind us of our lost sense and knowledge of these places, and see everything only in functional terms.

These holy places, the churches, the houses of God, are houses of the new creation. They remind us that as believers we are temples of

the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16) "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, the new has come." (2 Cor 5:17)

Over the centuries, churches have been built in different styles. To this day, their atmosphere helps many people to feel God's closeness, the closeness of the timeless, the eternal. Not only Christians appreciate these places in their daily grind but even people who claim to be atheists.

When the monastery church of St. Blasien was rebuilt and consecrated in 1783, after the great fire in 1768, many were against it in the age of enlightenment and secularization. Martin Gerbert, the abbot at the time, said: "The mighty of the world build magnificent castles and palaces for themselves - such a splendid house is more than appropriate for the majestic Lord and God." This domed church is probably the most beautiful church of classicism in Germany, which anticipates the communion idea of the church constitution of the last council. The visible church symbolizes the Father's house, to which we as the people of God are on our way. As a visible building, it is also the open house of all God's children. Amen.

# The European Junior Sisters' Meeting in Slovakia

Writers are various participants

## Introduction

"The reward for every struggle is only one thing: To be with Him, with Jesus." Blessed Sr. Zdenka.

This was the theme of the European Juniorate Meeting in Slovakia from August 21 to 26, 2023. 23 Juniorate Sisters from the provinces of Baden-Württemberg, the Czech Republic, Croatia and Slovakia took part in the meeting. Together with the leaders and the organizing team, we visited various

places and cities in the footsteps of Sr. Zdenka. Accompanied by the richness of her spiritual heritage, we experienced much joy in the encounters through the diversity of languages and cultures. We thank the sisters of the Slovakian Province for the rich, very well organized meeting and the great, warm hospitality they showed us. Some junior sisters tried to express what they experienced and gained from this beautiful get-together.

Sr. Rahela Lacković, General Councillor, responsible for the European formation



## **I think – I thank**

I was particularly touched by two experiences. Firstly, I had the opportunity to travel with many young sisters. Their vitality, joy and lightness touched me. On the other hand, I also listened to the stories of the older sisters from the communist era and about their courage, fears and difficulties. This made me experience the life of Sr. Zdenka in a completely different way: The joy she lived, but also the courage that her life's testimony demanded of her.

Sr. Marie-Salome Schwert, Province of Baden – Württemberg

I am very grateful that I could attend the meeting of the European Junior Sisters. We were able to get closer to Blessed Sister Zdenka. She encourages us to follow Jesus with all our hearts. During the whole week she reminded us what is most important for us - to be with Jesus, to be in Jesus. We could spend a really quality time with all the sisters from the different provinces. We had the opportunity to pray together, talk, sing, visit the places connected with the life of Blessed Sister Zdenka, play games, etc. I hope it will help us to follow Jesus faithfully and with love, as Sister Zdenka did. And finally, to feel that

we - young sisters - are also part of a big family of the Holy Cross Sisters.

Sr. Dorota Nechajová, Province Slovakia

Following Sister Zdenka's steps was a beautiful experience for me. The most beautiful thing that accompanied me during the entire meeting of the Junior Sisters was the presence of Sister Zdenka. Wherever we were, she was with us. The hospital where Sister Zdenka had worked left the greatest impression on me, but also the realization that sisters still work there. The cross before which the judge who had condemned Sister Zdenka repented was a great sign of forgiveness and love. This scene is very vivid in my mind. I am grateful to God for the grace of being in the path of Sister Zdenka, who certainly enriched me with the spiritual legacy she left us. Blessed Sister Zdenka, pray for us!

Sr. Franciska Ulrika Sajdl, Province of Croatia

For several years I have enjoyed listening to Sr. Zdenka's songs while doing my household work. After coming back from the Junior Sisters' Meeting, I like listening to them even more now. I have the following new memories connected with it: we have been traveling for three hours by bus,



on our way from Trnava to the area called Orava, to the village of Krivá. There are high, beautiful mountains all around us. It's lively on the bus. That's how we always feel when we start singing international songs, each in our own native language. When we were close to our destination, we started to sing the songs of Sr. Zdenka with the sisters from Slovakia, also playing the guitar. I find one of the songs that Sr. Zdenka sings about her childhood and her family is very touching. This song takes us to Sr. Zdenka's home town. It was as if time at that place has stopped and Sr. Zdenka was waiting for us. In fact, she was actually waiting for us. In the local church, where her vocation was awakened, we thought about our own vocations. It was important for

me. At the statue of Zdenka in this church, I was most deeply touched by this common song: "What shall I ask of you, my Father, I do not know..."

Sr. Sofie Koukalová, Czech Province

The Junior Sisters' Meeting in Slovakia was a very beautiful and enriching experience for me, a kind of tailwind. Among the many beautiful details and surprises of the last few days, I would like to emphasize the surprises with a coffin, gifts and letters prepared for the Juniors' Meeting by none other than Sister Zdenka herself. I think we all felt her presence and support. One of the special days for me was the visit to the birthplace of our Blessed Zdenka and the village Kriva. In the parish church, where Sr. Zdenka had

certainly spent a lot of time in prayer, I felt at home in a way; memories and feelings connected to my home and vocation flooded into my mind and heart. A gratitude for life welled up inside me. The example of Zdenka, who is my sister in spirit, touched me.

There were many sweet moments that I carry in my heart, all enveloped by the beauty of togetherness and the richness of diversity in which we find the same spirit and the charism of our Congregation that unites us on the path as followers of Christ.

Sr. Amadea Birovljević, Province Croatia

I am writing this report three days after my return from Slovakia, and I think it will take some time for all

the impressions to sink in. We visited many places and I can say that I felt the spirit of Sr. Zdenka. From her birthplace, the convent where she lived, the hospital where she worked, the church where she came to pray. I held her handwritten notebook from the novitiate in my hands, her prayer book and her personal diary. What impressed me the most was the visit to Podunajske Biskupice and the prayer in front of her relics. It was there that I felt her presence the most, when I saw her remains. I believe that this meeting of young sisters and being together contributed to an even greater bond and devotion to Blessed Sister Zdenka.

Sr. Marija Karla Ivanović, Province of Croatia



I am deeply grateful for this meeting together, this time in Slovakia - in the footsteps of our Blessed Sister Zdenka. I have been to all the places we visited many times, but together with the sisters I experienced them in a new way. It was precious for me to accompany them through these places and to show them the preciousness of these places and also the beauty of Slovakia, and at the same time to see the interest and joy in the faces of the sisters. We experienced many beautiful moments as we traveled by bus and on foot, a very strong

evangelization of Bratislava and Trnava and other places as we walked through the city together. It was a great witness to those who saw and met us. I really enjoyed the prayers, singing, eating and many other shared experiences that we now carry in our hearts. I am grateful that we were able to get to know each other - and now we pray for each other. We know each other by name and I also remember the beautiful young and happy faces of my fellow sisters. Thanks be to God.

Sr. Sara Foltinová, Province Slovakia

## Networking - a Need of Our Time

Sr. Susanne Bader, Hegne, Province Baden-Württemberg

The shrinking of our provinces also brings us closer together, and it brings about a common search and journey into the unknown future. Networking is the new word!

At the 2022 International General Chapter in Altötting, all provinces expressed a great desire to grow even closer together, i.e. to become more "networking". The delegates of the European provinces immediately put this into practice by deciding to hold regular meetings at management level, i.e.

meetings of the provincial superiors and assistants.

The first meeting took place in the Europa Mitte Province in March 2023. Due to the coronavirus, however, not all provinces were represented. The second meeting of this kind took place in the last





week of October. This time, the Slovakian province had invited participants to the Salvatorian House of Education in the capital Bratislava. The participants came from the provinces of Switzerland, Italy, Europa Mitte, Baden-Württemberg, Croatia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Sr. Maria Paola, Provincial Superior, and Sr. Susanne, Assistant, from our province.

Both the spiritual exchange and the discussions about the very specific circumstances in the individual provinces were very enriching for all those present. The atmosphere was characterized by openness, trust and the experience that we as Holy Cross Sisters are on the way together.

We experienced this in a special way during the visits to the provincial house in Trnava and to the community in Podunajské Biskupice, the place of pilgrimage of Blessed Sr. Zdenka Schellingova.

While most of the sisters left immediately after breakfast on the last day, the sisters from Switzerland and Hegne took the opportunity to go on a guided tour of the city together with the Slovakian sisters. An impressive city with a lot of history and culture!

Sr. Maria Paola and Sr. Susanne have extended an invitation to the next European provincial superiors/provincial assistants' meeting in Hegne in June 2024.

## **You will be My Witnesses, Acts 1:8**

### **Witness of Our Time – Sr. M. Julia Erni**

#### **1926-2006 (1966-1998 in India), passed away in Ingenbohl**

Sister Anicet K. Purayidam, first Provincial Superior of the Province India South

In a series of articles, we present sisters who have lived our charism in an impressive way. Today we get to know M. Julia Erni and her multifaceted and unforgettable work in India. This she began at the age of 40. As the last European provincial superior, she not only passed on the office to Indian sisters, but also her testimony as a Sister of Mercy. Like Fr. Theodosius, she lived by the principle: "Under the sun, all are my brothers and sisters."

#### **Remembering with love and gratitude**

Sr. Julia Erni, a person who lived vibrantly and fruitfully, is in our vivid memories. For many senior sisters, the experience of Sr. Julia as superior or provincial superior, or as a lively, happy, noble fellow sister was always edifying. Her life, presence, and interactions in communities, in different capacities, brought a lot of liveliness, joy, and enthusiasm into the lives of others who lived with her.

After some years of waiting at the same time but teaching in Theresianum (Mother House) her desire and longing to go to the mission was fulfilled in the year 1966. It was joyful news that a person of her caliber was sent to the Indian mission though earlier her name was assigned to Brazil.

As a provincial at Hazaribag, because of her courage, she ventured into new missions and played a great role in developing and establishing the apostolate started by her predecessor Sr. Sigrid Vogel. While doing construction of houses she avoided any expensive structures. Later as Regional Superior of the Southern Region of the Indian Province, she learned about the southern communities in great detail, their activities, and the mission of each sister of the region. She went to unknown areas like tribal areas in Kerala.

At the time of branching out of Indian Province into three provinces, in obedience to the superiors, she accepted generously the responsibility as Asst. Provincial of the South province. Her simplicity, loyalty, and love for the congregation, and

the church, prompted her to be in the new team that was taking over the leadership in 1991. As my assistant, I had the opportunity to work with her very closely. With a benevolent attitude, in freedom and detachment, she shared her wide knowledge gained through reading, interactions, and experiences. This helped the new team to pick up soon the matters of importance. With all her strength, abilities, and goodness she helped and inspired us for the growth and progress of the mission in the new province.

Once the province started functioning, she remained for 3 years in the team, and then for the following 4 years she helped in the office work till 1998.

The differences in the languages, culture, food habits etc. were of less importance but 'insertion' into the life of the people was her priority. She was interested in spreading the mission to as many as possible and joined us wholeheartedly. Sr. Julia was a person accepted by all the sisters from different cultures, She was instrumental in determining and finding suitable mission fields at different areas. She was known for setting priority in the South Province as we were spread in four states, Karnataka, Kerala,

Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. All the sisters, though less in number were eager and enthusiastic about reaching out to as many as possible and getting suitable vocations from all the states.

Sister Julia was very dear to us. She herself said, "I took the country and people to my heart and the different needs helped me to forget my own desires."

Sister Regis Kocherry the ex-provincial of the south Province says, "I had the opportunity to be with Sr. Julia for a few years as local superior and as principal of the college in Ambikapur which was started on account of her qualification and experience. I found her as a very happy, open, and straightforward person. She enjoyed the beauty of nature, very innocently. She was very sociable, and she easily believed people. She loved people, especially the suffering and needy persons, and helped them generously. Though she came to India rather late, soon she adjusted to the lifestyle of the country. She had some favorite Indian dishes; she was a very practical type of person, specially designed dresses as she was an experienced dress designing teacher in Switzerland. Language was not a problem to communicate even in class."



Sr. M. Julia with Sr. Joseline, the first Indian Provincial Superior

Sr. Gracy Thadathil who was in the first provincial team of the province, was her student candidate at Ambikapur College, has much to say about her. "Sr. Julia was the superior who treated everyone with much respect, and friendly and treated each one as important and with great potential. So, she was able to share her problems with the young candidates to seek solutions. Sunday meditation for candidates was a golden opportunity, which the giver and receiver looked forward to the Sundays. Like Sermon on the Mount, it was profound teaching, simple and

practical, all directed toward setting oneself free. It went to the depth and all felt happy. Learning to face difficulties was her main theme. Her hearty laughter kept everyone happy and at ease and no one could remain moody. Sr. Julia was an effective and, born teacher. While teaching she had eye contact with everyone. The weak students were attended with great care."

Sister Julia was very sensitive to the needs of others, especially the poor, generous help was extended wherever it was needed. She was very sympathetic and full of

compassion. A person who embraced North and South, East and West, knowing very clearly the strength and limitations and coupled with a sense of justice and no partiality. Openness and spontaneity together with hearty laughter which was contagious, was the beauty of her personality.

Sr. Julia was not a pious person in appearance; however, she was a person of deep spirituality. She had strong trust in God and handed over her difficulties to the Lord. Lighting candles and praying in the room was very important to her and she wouldn't like to be disturbed at that time. It was like going to the mountain.

Empathy is a virtue one wishes to cultivate, but Sr. Julia, is born with empathy. She feels the pain of every suffering person, especially women. Injustice, and maltreatment, were really matters of great concern to her, it could even disturb her sleep. As she participated in their suffering, she too joined them to ask God, "Don't

you see this suffering and injustice, ultimately taking them to God."

With her simple lifestyle, and her ability to adjust and adapt to any situation she could be comfortable in a small country house eating whatever is set before her by the people. This situation arose at the beginning of the south province when we had no convent in places where we were to pioneer. This made us feel at home with her wherever we went, and we all enjoyed her presence and company. Even now we speak about her fears of going through long river bridges by train or while traveling on winding roads on our jeep to the mountainous areas.

With a heart for every sister of the congregation, she remained, connected with us while in India and after she returned to the Motherhouse for proper treatment and care. We the sisters of the South Province will always remain indebted to her and we trust in her intercession for she is able to shake heavenly powers with her charm.

## October 5, the World Teachers' Day

### Various contributions from the teachers

Recognizing and thanking the work of teachers is a central focus of World Teachers' Day, which has been celebrated regularly around the world on October 5 since 1994 as World Teachers' Day or International Teachers' Day.

We invited the teachers with many years of dedicated service in the school to share their experiences and memories for the Theodosia.

#### **A journey of learning and growth**

Sr. Usha Kiran Toppo, India Central Province

“Happy Teachers’ Day sister. Thanks for your guidance and support. Thanks for making learning a joy. Happy Teachers’ Day.” I received this WhatsApp message from one of the students of Class IX after two years of leaving the school on 5th September. This message of appreciation and acknowledgement left me overwhelmed and was carried down the memory lane of my journey as teacher to the children in Hindi medium schools and in English medium schools as well and as professor in a B.Ed. College. I could touch and feel my vocation as a teacher extremely rewarding since it gave me the opportunity of becoming part of persons’ life and imprint in their

minds the knowledge that will allow them achieve greater goals.

I began my teaching journey in Holy Cross School, Kalyan, Bombay after graduation but without training. It was a valuable experience, but not without struggles and challenges, teaching me patience, confidence and communication skills. After the B.Ed. Training my initial teaching days were marked by a blend of enthusiasm and anxiety. Over time, I learned to enhance my ability to engage students. I discovered that teaching is not merely about disseminating information, it’s a process of fostering curiosity, instilling critical thinking skills, and inspiring lifelong learning. Every day while working with students I realized that teaching is my vocation and I wanted to make everything possible to become a good and worthy teacher.



Sr. Usha Kiran

It was very rewarding to see twinkle in the eyes of students when they understood a concept taught them or figured out for themselves how to solve a problem based on the guidance. I consider it the greatest compliment when students, (some of whom I have taught long ago), approach me on the road or in the bus or in the crowded place and tell me something like, "You really helped me learn..." It is a vocation that

demands a deep sense of commitment and a passion for learning and sharing knowledge.

Apart from gathering experience directly relevant to the classroom/lecture hall I also got experience in tasks such as supervision, Staff meetings, departmental meetings, attended professional development workshops and was involved in organizing and helping with

educational tours, class picnics, religion classes/Catechism classes, Christmas gatherings, Christian Life Community (C.L.C.), faith formation of the parishioners, meeting with parents, progress meetings and progress report writing. These various non-academic activities were the mission fields for me to instill in the young minds the values for life. Writing new syllabi, practical manuals, evaluation of the home work and class work copies were the tasks to be carried out regularly. Teaching was not devoid of challenges. There were also students who did not want to listen to me, understand and trust me though no matter how hard I tried interacting personally and with parents.

The best part of teaching was to notice that my efforts did matter. I enjoyed the communication with them and the parents, the emotions of happiness, worthiness and the excitement they gave me.

Moreover, not only did I teach them but also learnt from them because students showed me the infinite imagination and impetuous admiration for the simple things that surround them. Children reminded me that it is crucial to live and enjoy life fully, every minute and with all your heart and this I

feel is one of the main advantages of teaching profession.

My teaching experience has been a journey of learning, growth and satisfaction. Teaching is a commitment to lifelong education, patience and creativity. Therefore my retirement as a teacher is a divine providence to continue to nurture the seed planted in me to inspire, create, explore, and to share knowledge with others.

**Not only successful, but valuable too**

Sr. Prafulla Panna, India North East Province

Learning never stops. Knowledge shared and values taught goes on to generations. Experiences enrich life. Teaching connects with people, society and nations. I started my journey as a teacher in the year 1984. I have enjoyed being with the students, teachers, and parents. Every student in the classroom is an individual. Having different feelings, emotions, desires, motivations, needs, dreams, goals etc. To understand each individual with her/his unique character and personality is a great challenge. Teacher's affection and guidance give them directions and motivation. When I trust in the talents and abilities of the students, they trust in themselves and





Sr. Prafulla

perform well and cordial relationship is built. In the process of teaching, I have made them feel that they are more important than the curriculum this experience had a great impact on their life.

Interactions with the students helped me to know them individually, when they are given nurturance and attention their performance is greater. They become responsible, honest and actively participate in their studies and other activities. I give importance to character formation and acquiring moral values. I try to inculcate in them love and respect for humanity. I teach them that human values are greater than gathering bookish knowledge and

academic excellence. Many of the ex-students are connected via email, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. and share their experiences, seek guidance, and express their love and gratitude. When walking on the road or on travel or in the marketplaces, students approach me and tell me “you really helped me learn” “you inspired me”, “you taught me values and I teach my children what I learned”, they tell their success stories. These are the great compliments to me and they bring happiness and satisfaction.

Guidance, suggestions and ideas given to the students in preparing science projects, models and other activities boost them to become

more creative and innovative. I enjoy accompanying them. Our students excel in various fields and are toppers in academics and other activities.

The charism of our congregation is kept alive in our schools and colleges. Christ's values are imparted in our teaching and learning process, in dealing with people. Students are taught to be connected with God and be blessed.

I had a few opportunities to visit the prison with other sisters and with a group of lawyers who take cases of the prisoners and help them. I also got an opportunity to deliver the message to the prisoners. The scene and the condition of the prisoners disturbed me much for long days.

Students units of YCS, LTS, Tarumitra, and Guide are active in the school, students take part in various activities organized at school, district, state and national levels. They learn to take leadership and learn to work in groups. Teachers and parents play a vital role in the holistic development of students.

By exchanging views, ideas and knowledge with other teachers I have gained new insights and experiences. Working together is a

joyful experience for me. As a teacher and principal, I have received love support and cooperation from my colleagues, students and parents. I cherish all those experiences.

At present, I am in St. Teresa's Primary Teachers Education College, Bettiah. I experience that we are preparing professional teachers who will shape the young mind and heart. It is a privilege at the same time a great responsibility to carry on the mission which started in the year 1926. Over the years this institution has trained thousands of skilled professional teachers who got employment and their economic condition improved, their families got educated. We are grateful to our pioneer sisters and to the congregation for their vision and farsightedness.

### **From my 35 years of experiences**

Sr. Lucina Thuluvananickal

I started my teaching apostolate in 1982 at Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh, India. I continued to be in the school as a teacher or Principal till I retired in 2016. At present, I am teaching in Tamesra, Rajasthan. I am filled with unspeakable Gratitude as I

look back to these 35 years. It was indeed my second School life with Children under my care.

#### My Daily Life – Principles

- Begin the day with Meditation
- Never cut down prayer time
- Trust in the Providence of God
- Disciplined and available
- Honesty and integrity in my personal life
- Approach everyone with a smile
- Friendly Atmosphere in the School
- Firm and demanding with Staff
- Delegate what others can do
- No Fear, No Favour
- Do not keep back today's work for tomorrow
- Student –Centred School
- More lenient with students

My life was one of total dependency on God. I believe that in every situation God knows what is best. He never let me down. So, there were only ups, not downs! I have worked only in two Schools, at Ambikapur and Gholeng. Both Schools are government-aided schools. The work with Government officers was challenging and testing one's patience. Time spent waiting outside their offices was for rosary and silent prayers. By God's Grace, I often experienced a soft corner in their hearts for me though



Sr. Lucina

the under officers were annoyed and angry as I always went to the top one.

In the School, I was completely at home with children. In the evening I used to be as fresh as in the morning. Children are God's favoured ones. I felt compassionate towards them. I must have punished 4-5 students for cheating in the Exam or stealing money. My greatest handicap was my inability to remember their names.

I insisted that all activities besides academics should be for the benefit of students. Visiting a student's family has great effect but I failed to do it except when a tragedy or death took place in the family.

I am not a good teacher but enjoy teaching Mathematics. Whichever class it may be, I always started with the basics of Mathematics explaining it at their level. I made an effort to remove the phobia about Mathematics, by starting with easy problems and explaining many times in the beginning. I preferred more class work and evaluation than homework and punishment. Students were appreciated when they made a little progress.

I always enjoyed the support and cooperation of the Staff. They were the strong pillars of the school. I did not tax them with unnecessary tasks. They had to be up to the mark in their teaching, evaluation, and keeping records. Periodically their performance was checked. Extra-curricular activities were shared by all. I could delegate work according to their ability.

Parents were called to School thrice a year besides their personal visits. I was friendly and available for parents who came to School. Two parents had some grievances

against me but the staff intervened and put them in their place.

After retirement, I am not left with a feeling that I have established something great. But like the Psalmist I humbly acknowledge, "Goodness and Mercy followed me all the days of my School life..."(Ps.23:6)

### **Teacher in a village school**

Sr. Sujata D'Sa, India South Province

"We must have our hands at work and our hearts close to God." Bl. M.M. Theresa Scherer

I was not sure of myself that I could be a teacher until I plunged into the teaching profession in the year 1982. I had my Diploma in Education in the year 1970 – 1972. Then I was placed in different schools for short periods to replace the sisters according to the needs of the time.

After I did my bachelor's course in education in 1982, I was entrusted with the task of starting a high school in Neermarga, Mangalore. I had to accept the challenge as it would be the future mission for our presence there. So, placing my faith and trust in the Lord I looked forward. My teaching profession was not confined to the classroom, but to be available for office work

and administrative work as head of the institution.

Adyar Padav village in Neermarga was only 14 km away from Mangalore city but there was no approach road to the city. To go to the town, one had to climb down the hill to Adyar and get public transport. Because of these inconveniences, the people would be in their houses before dusk and their day would begin early morning around 4 a.m. Unable to send the children to school they were also deprived of their education. Our convent is on a hilltop and the children come from surrounding villages and valleys.

When I began teaching, I went to the classrooms with a lot of expectations. As I interacted with them, I came to know that most of the students lacked the basics. So, I took time and with patience tried to know their level of understanding. I had to slow down and reorganize my method of teaching. Then I realized there were a few slow learners. So I gradually selected a few clever students to guide those who needed more time to grasp the subject matter. Unfortunately, most of these students come from such families where they do not get any encouragement for their studies. The parents entrust the total responsibility to the teachers.



Sr. Sujata

Since the Institution was in its infancy, I had to look for qualified subject teachers. No teachers wanted to come to us because of the distance, lack of transport, away from town, and due to various other inconveniences. There were times when a teacher would come for a day and then not turn up, so after the class hours I would go in search of qualified subject teachers. So, there were days when I took classes for the whole day without a break.

I loved to teach English, Grammar, guided reading, and correct pronunciation. I enjoyed teaching

and I wanted to give them the maximum, knowing that they had no one to guide them in their studies. Whenever students of higher classes were absent for long, I would go to their homes and bring them to school and motivate them.

There was a kind of passion in me to do something new and different. I would encourage my staff to be creative and different. Since most of our children came from poor economic backgrounds, a lot of encouragement was given to them.

Instilling moral values among the students was another priority of my teaching. Through various examples, I would motivate them on the importance of inculcating moral values in their life. With great pride, I used to make known the life and dedicated service of our founders, especially the job opportunities provided by Fr. Theodosius. Since the students were unable to pay their school fees, I used to encourage class 9 and 10 students to work during the vacation and earn for their school fees, books, and uniforms. In this way, the importance of dignity of labour was taught to them.

As I glance at my teaching life, my heart is overwhelmed with gratitude to God for making me an effective instrument. My gratitude

to all my superiors and sisters of the congregation, for helping me to light the lamp of knowledge and share it wide and far.

## **Seeing the good**

Sr. Sherin Jose Kalathiparambil, Province  
Indien Ost

“Discover the Grain of Gold that lies hidden in every person’s heart” (Mother Maria Theresa Scherer.) My experience as a teacher for 33 years of which 25 years as the headmistress of the school, was an experience of the close accompaniment of Jesus in my life. Teaching as a mission to empower the powerless was my dream and vision of my life. My life as teacher for the long 33 years has been a journey with the less privileged.

Accepting my students as they are and creating an immensely positive influence on their lives was the way I could bring a change in their lives and create a perspective for their lives. I could teach my students to believe that they are inherently worthy. I could help my students learn that their limits are endless. I have seen and experienced that by words of encouragement and affirmation, students are more empowered. I learned that there is much more than the eyes can see. I had ample opportunities to practice our charism, “compassionate love to

all especially to the underprivileged.”

An incident took place some 25 years ago, which changed my entire perspective. A man came for his daughter's admission. Seeing his appearance, I asked him if he had the required amount of money (Rs 450/-) for admission. He replied in the affirmative. As he moved towards the fees counter I happened to glance at his shoes which had no sole and the torn socks could fully be seen. I followed him to the fees counter and saw that he had pulled out few coins and notes which amounted to 69 rupees. When I asked him

why he did not tell me the truth, he told me that he feared that admission might be denied for insufficient money. This was a turning point in my life as a teacher and leader of the school. I began to reach out to the last and the least. In my mission as a teacher, I had countless opportunities to be compassionate and kind. Every day was a learning experience. I began to firmly believe that Jesus comes to me in the poor and they in turn bring blessings to the institution. I saw beyond what the eyes could see. I saw positive changes happening in me. I began to look for goodness in every student and the parents who



Sr. Sherin

came in contact with me. I placed myself in the place of the people who came to me, trying to be in their shoes. That made me a compassionate listener. As a leader, I tried to believe consciously in the goodness of the students and teachers, and I was taken by surprise. I felt as though I was blind and I got a new set of spectacles. I saw persons are basically good. My conscious appreciation and acknowledgement of the good done brought tremendous positive changes in the school. The Word of God which always has been a driving force for me is “unless a grain of wheat falls in the ground and dies it remains alone. But if it dies it brings abundant fruit.” Jn12:24. My entire mission as a teacher was a letting go off the self and moving ahead trusting the goodness and power of Jesus and the people around me. My journey was a journey of inclusiveness. For me no one was insignificant. I always reflected on how I am showing up for my students, teachers and parents. I travelled with my students as a co-passenger, listening attentively through my heart and being compassionate and kind. Today as I look back to my life as a teacher I am immensely thankful to the Lord for His guidance and light.

## Let roots and wings grow in teaching

Sr. Edith Maria Senn, Hegne, Province Baden- Württemberg



Sr. Edith M.

For more than 32 years I was allowed to accompany young people into life as a teacher in the technical school for social pedagogy and as a pedagogue for internal students (boarding school). It was not an easy start for me, because it was my deep desire to be able to work in youth welfare institutions after my studies in social pedagogy in Freiburg. But a teacher of rhythm was needed for all classes in the educator training. Since I was able to experience



Prof. Mimi Scheiblaue, Zurich, Curative Education Institute, in teaching rhythmic lessons in Freiburg, I took this as a challenge and was able to say YES. These rhythmic lessons with the young women became my favorite subject over time. It enabled me to build relationships with children in the pedagogical institutions and a lot of creative potential in movement, music and social learning could be developed in the students.

My first class as a classroom teacher in class were child care takers who, through a special arrangement by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of Baden-Württemberg, were able to complete a 15-month training program to become educators. As former working child care workers, they brought a lot of practical experience with them. This made it easier for me to design the lessons in a very practical way and so I grew more and more into teaching. Many mentor trainings and courses at the Professional Academy of the German Association, Freiburg enabled me to improve my qualifications for teaching young adults. The final colloquia qualified for the recognition of teaching activities.

The teaching content from elementary education changed

rapidly in these 32 years. The reason resulted partly from research results of the Pisa study. I learned a lot through very good teamwork with fellow sisters and colleagues from the surrounding area. This teamwork was very reflective, very innovative and working and developing new learning methods gave a strong sense of appreciation and solidarity. This joint development of learning units was a permanent giving and receiving.

In the long years of my work as a teacher in the subjects, practical and method teaching, in the resulting practical implementation in the socio-pedagogical institutions: e.g. kindergarten, children's house, inclusive institutions, day center, training institutions and more in subjects such as rhythmic-musical education, play studies, movement education, crystallized more and more, what it is about in the pedagogical work.

The CHILD is the CENTER. In the Gospel, Mk 9, we read: "Jesus placed a child in the center and says: If you do not become like children". This question always woke me up anew: What does this mean for me as a teacher, for our team and for the future educators? For me personally, the Polish Jewish physician and educator

Janusz Korczak was one of the most important sources of inspiration. He formulated the rights of the child in the face of the threat of National Socialism and the resulting holocaust. I will quote some of them, e.g. "The child has the right to have his pain respected, the child has a right to secrets, the child has a right to make mistakes, the child has a right to converse with God, the child has a right to live in the present".

I cannot go into all pedagogical approaches in this report. There were a variety of concepts. The Orientation Plan, published by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of Baden-Württemberg, was the common thread running through all the planning concepts of the Marianum as a private school in monastic sponsorship. Derived from this, new learning and teaching always developed, e.g. learning landscapes for the students, which should enable practical learning. In this offer for all educators in the educational institutions that our students visited and were accompanied by us, we also initiated a new offer for internships.

The HEGNER -FORUM EDUCATION developed from regular further education and training courses. The aim was to

pass on our knowledge and experience to our staff in the practice centers. A colleague and I got down to business, so that for several years, scientifically active speakers known throughout Germany and Europe organized a day in Hegne to answer questions from practice. Every year this offer reached several hundred pedagogical professionals.

In addition to good schooling, the image of the human being of the students and the child was always the focus. This was sensitized in the weekly student services in the in-house chapel. In dealing with the students, politeness, esteem and respect for the dignity of the human being, had priority. It was always a challenge to be guided by these values, because school always has to do with grades. Justice and learning from mistakes were important principles.

An even more essential task for me was accompanying young people in the boarding school, who had to cope with everyday school life for the first time away from their parents, make their first friendships and abide by rules in a group. Nevertheless, these were the most valuable tasks for me in my many years of accompanying internal students. We celebrated all the church festivals, especially Advent, birthdays with invitations from the

students' friends, cottage stays on extended weekends, days of reflection in Haus Franziskus, group evenings, which were mostly based on the students' wishes, e.g. movie nights, discussions about current issues and problems. In summer, swimming in the lake or barbecues at the lake were the "big hit". In winter, the indoor swimming pool of the convent was used in the afternoons, or small groups went to the camping site of the community

Allensbach-Hegne to chill out.

Being able to accompany young people in their lives for 32 years in school and boarding school was a great blessing for me. I was able to learn a lot from the young people and many of them have returned to their everyday lives enriched. These years gave me, besides all the risks and all the responsibility, a lot of joy and fulfillment. I can only be grateful for that.

## Motherhouse Visits

Different writers

As a holidaymaker, Sr. Renate Spittler has spontaneously thought about her home leave in order to share them with all Theodosia readers. Thank you.

It is a decade-old custom for the sisters who have been professed for 25 years to spend several days to visit the motherhouse and important places. Sr Viktorija Šimić shares with us her impressions and experiences.

Three groups of sisters from India visited us this year. Sr. Roseline Kujur had a look back with them and summarized their contributions for us.

### Home leave

Sr. Renate Spittler, Vicariate Brasilien

Home leave - it's a compound word that means the following to me: I come for a longer vacation to the country where I was born and to the motherhouse where I joined and was then sent out to Brazil as a Holy Cross Sister. But the real home for me was and is Brazil, where I have lived for 52 years.

I always feel at home when I arrive at the Motherhouse. It has never been foreign to me. The encounters with my fellow sisters are enriching and make me happy. As we generally come to Ingenbohl from Brazil every four years, this time I felt more than usual how we have all grown older and the physical and psychological signs of age are becoming apparent.

The warm welcome in the general community, the interest of the provincial leadership and the sisters living in different communities help us to feel part of our congregation. Despite the great distance, we walk the next route together.

The uniquely beautiful natural surroundings with forests, mountains and lakes help to pump pure air into lungs. The peace and quietness in the convent and on the footpaths are a blessing for body and soul. I can relax here and resume my work in the vicariate Brazil with renewed energy.

My thanks go to every sister who lives on the hill and in paradise. Home leave is a great gift for me, for which I can only be grateful.

God with us - the rainbow, the sign in the sky that unites us.



View from the convent to Brunnen. Photo Sr. Zita Wildhaber

### **Visit to the Motherhouse – Ingenbohl after 25 years of the religious profession**

Sr. Viktorija Šimić, Ptovince Croatia

Five Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, the Croatian Province, stayed in the Mother House from June 26 to July 2, 2023. On the initiative of Sr. Marie-Martha Schönenberger, the General Superior, and at the invitation of Sr. Rahela Lacković, a member of the General Leadership., such a beautiful custom of the international congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross has been renewed, so that on the 25<sup>th</sup> year of religious life, the sisters visit their roots. It was truly a gracious opportunity to spend a

few days near the mortal remains of the late Founder of the Congregation, Father Theodosius Florentini, OFM Cap, and the Blessed Foundress Maria Theresa Scherer.

The program was very beautiful, meaningful and rich: getting to know the important parts of the Mother House, reverence to the Foundress, activities of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross on the Ingenbol hill from the very beginnings that go back to 1856, until our days, when there are almost no new vocations, but there are new ways of being open to people for their needs. There is a strong prayerful presence and attentive listening to the Spirit of God while discovering the new



First group with the General Team

paths through which God wants to lead us today.

We spent one day in the Province of Baden Württemberg, in Hegne. We are grateful to the Sisters for the warm welcome in the Province of our first beatified Sister, Blessed Sister Ulrika Nisch, who constantly encourages us to what is most important in religious life - a living relationship with the Spouse of our souls, Jesus the Savior. This is achieved through persistent and deepened prayer, as Blessed Sr. Ulrika also said: "Without prayer there is no grace, without grace there is no joy or peace." True mysticism is born by complete surrender to God in love, from which then comes love for man in need, love that knows no

measure. This is exactly what Blessed Sr. Ulrika Nisch witnessed more with actions than with words. It was also possible to experience intense reflection on the future of the Province and living the charism of the congregation in new circumstances, in cooperation with the laity and openness to all people who seek God. As part of that visit, it was a special joy to go to the island of Reichenau, near the town of Konstanz, and renew memories of Father Herman, a cripple from that island in southern Germany, a scholar, German chronicler, mathematician and poet, and patron of Church music, who is also known for the song "Salve Regina", which he sang in the monastery on the island of Reichenau.

The stay in the Mother House included, to the joy of the pilgrim sisters, a visit to Meggen, the birthplace of the Foundress, as well as to Einsiedeln, one of the main places where Blessed Mother Maria Theresa Scherer made a pilgrimage as a girl in order to pray, consult and learn more clearly about her vocation.

One afternoon we had the opportunity to get to know the members of the General Leadership. The meeting took place in a very cheerful atmosphere, to the joy of all present.

Towards the end of their stay in the Mother House, the Sisters also visited the place of worship of St. Nicholas of Flüe, where he lived in the 15th century. He is known by the name Bruder Klaus, a Swiss hermit and ascetic. He is the protector of Switzerland. Besides being a farmer, military leader, councilor and judge, at a mature age he responded to God's call to solitude and left his large family behind. He is known as a mystic who fasted for twenty years, and for most of his ascetic life he lived only on the sacred host.

Grateful to God and to all who made this time of grace possible and organized, especially Sr.

Rahela Lacković, and Sr. Mirjam Jerković, the sisters returned full of impressions to their communities, willing to witness with new zeal and love their fidelity to God, to the Church and to his religious Community.

## **It was your first time at the motherhouse**

Sr. Roseline Kujur, General Councillor, summarizes

### **1. What surprised you here?**

The whole of Motherhouse has a beauty and prayerful atmosphere everywhere. The way we were welcomed and were taken care by all the sisters, we felt so much of belongingness as Holy Cross Sisters. We see our senior sisters very active and cheerfully doing their work. We are also inspired to see the sisters in the convent church and crypt praying even in the early hours of the day. Our founders' spirituality is seen in this buildings, objects and sisters' life here. The value of silence, prayerfulness, depthness, disciplined life, and connectedness of each other is seen. Mother Maria Theresa's spirit, power and blessing we feel very much here.

While we were in Hegne, we were taken around by the sisters and explained to us about Blessed Sr. Ulrika and the surroundings. We



Second group with the General Team

can say indeed “Love knows no measure”. The sisters were very accommodative of us and sat with us, eagerly listened our sharings. As a whole it was a very homily atmosphere and we felt one as Holy Cross Sisters.

## **2. What made you particularly happy during these days ?**

We really felt happy that we got this golden opportunity to see the origin of our congregation which was our long awaited dream. We really felt happy to sit and pray at crypt also in the big convent church where the presence of our Blessed

Mother Maria Theresa is felt. This experience will take us a long way and gratitude is the innermost feeling we have.

We felt delighted to be in the origin of our foundress, her birth place, Meggen, church where she was baptized, her uncle's house where she grew up spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Now she is present with us in spirit and blessing us from above.

It is a joy to see in Generalate Community sisters working from





Third group in front of the house in Meggen where M. M. Th. grew up

different nationalities and cultures.

### **3. Has something touched you ?**

We are touched by our sisters and their availability. Even our minute need was taken care and we felt cared, loved and followed on our every step. Thus we felt confident and at home to move around. We were clear about our programme. The explanations we received and the input we got at every important step lead us to a deeper experience of the Charism of our founders.

Everywhere welcoming spirit that

shows joy and togetherness because we all belong to the Holy Cross family. Welcoming gestures like – physical expression, chocolates, appreciation and the General Team working together.

Hand out given to us before we landed here that helped us to read again and get inner feeling.

### **4. What else would you have wished for?**

We would have wished to have a favourable weather in the beginning but we know that it is not in our control. At the same time we

felt the accompaniment of our Blessed Mother Maria Theresa and Blessed Sr. Ulrika whenever we moved out of the vehicle and went around seeing different places of importance. We keep up the spirit of our Congregation.

**5. What spontaneously comes to your mind when you think of Ingenbohl?**

The first thing comes to us is the Crypt and the big Convent Church. The sisters praying at the crypt, the convent church and the prayerful atmosphere all around is very inspiring. The foresightedness of Fr. Theodosius to buy this beautiful hill – the most suitable place for our

Motherhouse is very much appreciated.

We are also very glad to see the beautiful lakes, mountains and meadows which are very captivating. So far it was the sharing of others and a bookish knowledge but now it is very vivid in our memory. This will be a source of energy which will take us a long way and gratitude is the innermost feeling we have. Above all we remain grateful to the good Lord for the graces asked and unasked that is bestowed on us at every moment of our life.

“God's kindness has no bound”.

## Communication Ministry in the Vatican Radio

Sr. Anugrah Minj SCSC, Province India Central, at present in Rome

There are probably few sisters who know that a fellow sister of ours is a voice of Vatican Radio, in Hindi. Here she shares with us:

“The need of the time is the will of God.” Consciously aware of the charism of our Congregation and constantly discerning the will of God, I started my new ministry in the Vatican Radio from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016. I still remember, it was the month of October 2015, in one fine morning, I got a phone call from the Vatican office, Hindi section, asking me to visit them urgently. In the office, I was told that Miss Juliet Cristofer, a staff from the Hindi section, was soon retiring and they wanted me to take up the job. I submitted my application and the resume immediately. Next day, I came to know that I was selected. Having received a nod from Sr. Rosily Kolencherry, my Provincial, I made a request to Sr. Marija Brizar, the then Mother General to grant me her permission to render my service at the Vatican Radio. She accepted my request and sent me the permission letter to submit it to the office.

The Vatican Radio was designed and constructed by Guglielmo Marconi on the commission of Pope Pius XI and started its transmission on 12 February 1931. At present, the Vatican Radio broadcasts every day in 39 languages, including Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam, three regional languages of India. It seeks not only to inform, but to bring faith and hope all over the world and offer a key to interpret facts through the light of the Gospel. Its guiding criteria is “apostolic, missionary”, with a special attention to situations of hardship, poverty, difficulty. The Vatican News is the news portal of the Holy See. Together with the Vatican Radio, L'Osservatore Romano and Vatican Media, it seeks to respond to “the demands of the Church’s mission” in contemporary culture. The Vatican News Adventure, began on 27 June 2015, with the ‘Motu Proprio’ of Pope Francis, established a Secretariat for



Sr. Anugrah

Communication, which today is one of the Dicasteries in the Roman Curia.

Surpassing the concept of being a simple digital platform, the Vatican News seeks to respond and, in a certain sense, anticipates the continual changes taking place in communication, with the objective of “communicating the Gospel of mercy to all people” in various cultures in the globe. It communicates and interacts through audio, video, text and images on a multi-lingual, multi-culture, multi-channel, multi-media and multi-device plain.

I am privileged to give my contribution to the universal Church. Since I have done 4 years of catechetical studies in Rome

and living in Rome since 2010, in an international community, I speak and understand Italian well and can translate Pope’s messages and other news in Hindi efficiently. In the course of time, I honed other technical skills in communication. The major work in the office is to translate Pope’s message of Angelus, Wednesdays Audience Messages, Homilies, Synods and other activities taking place in the Church and societies. Every day we broadcast 20 minutes programme in Hindi and put all the news articles in the internet, making use of social media platform effectively. Working in the Vatican Radio, I learned much about the Catholic Church and many other Churches of the world, Pope’s activities, Church documents, Church in India etc.

Coming in contact with people of different countries and cultures itself has broadened my vision and knowledge. This service demands a lot of concentration and time, but I am happy to give my service here and make use of all my talents. I thank God for this beautiful opportunity to serve the universal Church, representing the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross in the Vatican. There is a joy in working together as a team. I get support and co-operation from Fr. Sanjay Dilip Ekka S.J., the Head of the Hindi section, Sr. Usha Manorama Tirkey DSA and Miss Juliet Cristofer (who gives her service as part time). I am grateful to them

and also to all the sisters of our Congregation who support by their prayers and encourage me by reading my articles and or listen to the Hindi news and send comments time and again.

In 2017, our International Community in Rome was closed; since then, I stay with the sisters of St. Joseph of Cuneo, via Crescenzo-90, Rome. As our Mother Maria Theresa Scherer says, "Simply go the way of the Lord and seek nothing extraordinary," keeping this in mind, I am moving on with the best of my abilities in the service of the Church and people.

## A Glance at Lampedusa

Sr. Danila Antunović, introduced and translated by Sr. Rahela Lackovic, General Councilor

On September 2, Sr. Danila Antunović from the Province of Croatia and Sr. Rufina Pinto from the Province India South were welcomed by Sr. Florence, the UISG project coordinator. (UISG = Unione Internazionale delle Superiore Generali = International Union of Superiors General). The following day, after a prayer there was a meeting with Sr. Florence. The two sisters then began their mission at Lampedusa. Together with another sister, they form a small community. Sr. Ines belongs to the Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and comes from the USA. The sisters are now involved in the parish of San Gerlando, visiting families and various groups on the street. They are present at the port of Lampedusa when a ship arrives with migrants.



Sr. Danila and Sr. Rufina (on the right)

## **First experiences**

Several thousand immigrants usually arrive every day. Unfortunately we usually don't have enough water to supply them immediately. Sometimes they have to wait three hours until they are registered and then transported to the center where they are provided with water, food, etc. They often are brought to the coast of Italy by ship and then transported by train and bus to other European countries.

The people come from Tunisia,

Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Guinea, Somalia, Liberia, Mali, Syria, Sudan, Gambia and Sierra Leone. Among them are many mothers with children and teenagers, all around 10-15 years old. Today it was terrible. We have temperature of around 37° C. The people have been at sea for more than three days in the harshest conditions. The firemen poured water over them as if there was a fire. Simply humiliating! The situation has been very critical over the last few days. God have mercy on us!

## Information from the General Leadership

On August 4, Sr. Gita Klobučar traveled from the Province Croatia to Brazil for the realization of her missionary experience in the Amazon region, Vicariate Brazil.

On September 3, Sr. Rufina Pinto and Sr. Danila-Marta Antunović began working in the migrant project of the UISG in Lampedusa. Sr. Rufina comes from the India South Province and Sr. Danila-

Marta from the province Croatia. They are involved in the parish, visit families and various groups on the street and are present in the port of Lampedusa as soon as a ship with migrants arrives.

### **Visit to the Vicariate Uganda**

Sr. Pratima Minj visited the vicariate Uganda from 15th to 29th September 2023.



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