

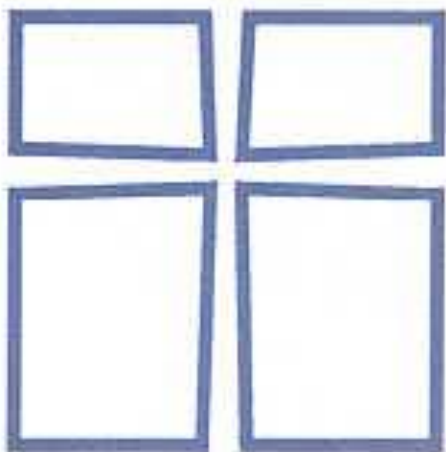
---

---

# *Theodosia*

---

---



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

Editorial Team:

Sister Christiane Jungo  
Sister Sheeja Kolacherril  
Sister Dorothee Halbach  
Sister Roseline Kujur

English version:

Sr. Roseline Kujur, India

## Contents

## Theodosia 2024 / 2

<b>Picture</b>	4	<b>25 Years of Existence as Vicariate Uganda</b>	26
<b>Editorial</b> Christiane Jungo, Ingenbohl	5	Sr. Immaculate Birwanya Vicariate Uganda	
<b>Sacred Places</b> <b>The Convent Church in Podunajské Biskupice, Slovakia</b> Sr. Mojmira Hauptvoglová and Sr. Jaroslava, Province Slovakia	7	<b>The "Amadea" Center in Đakovo</b> Sr. Amadea Birovljević, Đakovo Province Croatia	31
<b>Novitiate Chapel, Hazaribag, Central Province India</b> Sr. Veena Akkal, Central Province India	10	<b>International Nurses Day The 'burning bush' of my life</b> Sr. Laisa Kokkatt, Tarwa Central Province, India	35
<b>The Holy Cross Convent Chapel in Thrikkakara, India</b> Sr. Mercy Jose Parayanilam South Province India	12	<b>Formation Program for Junior Sisters of Indian Provinces</b> Sr. Arpana Barwa, Directress of Junior Sisters, Mid India Province	39
<b>You will be My Witnesses, Acts 1:8, Witness of our time - Sister Illuminata Hart</b> Sr. Hildburg Baumgartner, Gemünden	15	<b>Information from the General Leadership</b>	43



Rainbow between the Motherhouse and Mythen

## Editorial

This summer's changeable weather has had the positive side effect of lighting up many rainbows. So I would like to greet all readers with a rainbow in the vicinity of the Motherhouse. According to legend, after the flood, God gave mankind colour to counteract all the black-and-white thinking of the past. And in its most beautiful form! The rainbow is a symbol of peace. It reminds us not to see only black and white or good and evil, but to see it in colour, in different colours, a beautiful thought for our time too!

When Mother M. Theresa brought out the first Theodosia in January 1886, she herself asked the question 'Why a Theodosia?' Her answer was: 'It has no other purpose than to inform the sisters from time to time of what new things have been created and good things have been accomplished in the Congregation, what important events have taken place in the Church of God ...' . What are the good and new things taking place in our worldwide community today?

In this edition, we once again come to know 'Sacred Places', churches and chapels that have been filled and sanctified by the prayers and multiple needs of the sisters over the decades. These include the Convent Church in Podunajské Biskupice, Slovakia, the Novitiate Chapel in Hazaribag, Central Province, India, and the Holy Cross Chapel in Thrikkakara, South Province, India.

We get to know Sister Illuminate Hart from Gemünden, who saw herself as an 'instrument of God' when she was tirelessly planning and building. Today she is honoured as a 'Witness of Our Time'.

The first Indian sisters came to Uganda 30 years ago. The mission in Uganda was given the status of a vicariate 25 years ago and since then has enjoyed blessed growth and work.

For 14 years, the foundation and the 'Amadea' Centre in Đakovo have been a source of inspiration and help. They fill us with wonder and gratitude.

On the occasion of the 'World Nurses Day', Sr. Laisa Kukkatt from India takes us into her everyday life as a Holy Cross nurse and doctor. She also shares with us the lessons she learnt in her life and her dealings with the sick.

We gain an insight into today's 'Formation of the Junior Sisters in India', which is an outcome of the needs of the times and is a great help to the sisters on their journey.

As usual, we conclude with the various information from the General Leadership.

We wish all our readers a blessed time - and a rainbow always!

Sister Christiane Jungo

## Sacred Places

### The Convent Church in Podunajské Biskupice, Province Slovakia

Sr Mojmíra Hauptvoglová and Sr Jaroslava, Province Slovakia

For the sisters, the convent church with its chequered history is something sacred and precious. The church is dedicated to the Holy Cross. Its history and the life of the sisters is also marked by the cross, especially during the time of the communist government. Remarkably, the communists did not succeed in completely destroying religious life in Slovakia, but the suffering caused by the communist regime was immense.

**“One thing I ask of the LORD, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.” (Ps 27:4).**

The Province Slovakia of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross was erected in Podunajské Biskupice on the feast of St. Elisabeth, 19 November 1927. Therefore, St Elisabeth is also the patron saint of our province. The first Provincial Superior was Sister Theodósia Hossová.

After the Second World War in particular, the number of sisters and young religious in the provincial house increased steadily. In 1947, the Leadership of the Congregation decided to build a new church and a new pavilion for the sick sisters in Podunajské Biskupice. Already in 1950, the tower of the newly built church rose into the sky like a lighthouse. Now all that was missing was the interior furnishings.

Due to the increasingly deteriorating political and, above all, religious situation in Slovakia, the sisters in the Provincial House experienced a great trial of faith ( around 160 sisters). They lived in fear and uncertainty and under a lot of pressure as to what would happen to them. It was a time of the totalitarian regime. On the fateful day of 27 September 1950, the sisters were taken away from the Provincial House in three groups:



Convent church Podunajské Biskupice



The bedridden and sick sisters were deported by ambulance and bus to Ladce (65 sisters), the mainly tubercular sisters ( approx. 50) to Belušké Slatiny, and the third group of healthy and capable sisters (43) were sent to "Havkáč", an abandoned old dairy farm near Budmerice. They were placed on this farm and assigned to work in the fields. The Provincial House and the church were officially sealed.

In 1952, the state set up the Tuberculosis Institute on the premises of the Provincial House. During the years of the Totalitarian regime, the church served as a warehouse for the medical equipment for the tuberculosis institute and for the hospital that was later built here.

**“I will not give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.” (Ps 132:4-5)**

After the ‘Gentle Revolution’, at the beginning of January 1990, the Provincial Leadership of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross initially demanded the return of the church in Podunajské Biskupice and initiated the necessary steps for its restoration. The management of the hospital came to the sisters' aid, and

already in May 1990, the cleaning and restoration of the church, which is located on the hospital grounds, could begin.

**“I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the LORD.” (Ps 122:1)**

After the sophisticated interior decoration, the installation of stained glass windows and the finishing work, Mons. Vladimír Filo, the then Auxiliary Bishop of Trnava, consecrated the church dedicated to the Holy Cross on Saturday, 13 June 1992. For 42 years, the church and we had been waiting for this event. Since then it has been open to the nurses, patients, hospital staff and the faithful from the neighbourhood.

**“Even the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young at thy altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.” (Ps 84:4)**

After the beatification of Sister Zdenka Schelingová on 14 September 2003, this church in Podunajské Biskupice became the most important place of pilgrimage with a statue of Blessed Sister Zdenka and a stone reliquary. This contains part of her mortal remains: her skull, the bones of her shoulders and thighs, part of her pelvis and spine. Near the reliquary, there is a

pilgrim's book in which pilgrims can write their petitions seeking Blessed Zdenka's help. Sometimes it also contains thanksgiving for answered prayers.

Every last Saturday of the month, pilgrim masses are celebrated in this church in honour of Blessed Zdenka,



Main reliquary of Blessed Zdenka



Triduum Mass for the feast of Blessed Zdenka

attended by pilgrims from the surrounding area. There is always a different preacher. He is often accompanied by the faithful from his parish. Many pilgrims from all over Slovakia, but also from abroad and overseas, find help, comfort, strength and spiritual refreshment here at the relics of Blessed Zdenka. Blessed Zdenka, pray for us!

**“Blessed are the men whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the highway to Zion.” (Ps 84:6)**

## Sacred Places

### Novitiate Chapel, Hazaribag, Central Province India

Sr. Veena Akkal, Central Province India

A novitiate chapel could fill books with the memories and experiences of young women who sought clarity here with regard to their path of discipleship, with their doubts and questions, with their enthusiasm and determination to follow this path. So much has taken place in this chapel, that only God and the novice alone know about it. Truly a sacred place!

#### A glimpse at the history

“Every sister shall make it her first concern to live a life hidden with Christ in God.” Excerpts from the constitutions of 1860.

The Novitiate Chapel of Hazaribag, India, is an outstanding spiritual place, where hundreds of young women have been touched, have tangible experience of Christ and learned to live a life hidden with Christ in God. It has its own historical importance as it was the first novitiate chapel for the Indian provinces.

The foundation of the new novitiate was laid in February 1953. On 14 September 1954, His Grace Archbishop Nicholas Kujur SJ of Ranchi Diocese, inaugurated and blessed the new Holy Cross Novitiate and Chapel, and celebrated the Holy Mass.

The first batch of seven novices began their novitiate formation in the

same year. The novices grew in wisdom and spiritual depth day by day, praying at the foot of the Cross and drawing strength from their Divine Master present in the Blessed Sacrament. On 3rd December 1955, the seven novices made their First Profession as Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross during a solemn high Mass in the Novitiate Chapel. A great day in the history of Holy Cross in India.

62 batches of Novices committed their lives to the Lord in this Holy



Ready for the solemn mass

Chapel. Besides the celebrations of the First and Final professions, Silver Jubilees, Golden Jubilees, Dimond Jubilees and retreats were held here. From here we farewelled many sisters to heaven too.

On 28th May 1984, an unexpected event took place. While the novitiate chapel roof was being renovated, it collapsed. Though the workers were at work, none of them were harmed. A miraculous escape! The sisters experienced the power of His presence tangibly on that day. That year, the First Profession ceremony was held under a tent put up in the courtyard of Training Centre. Mother Gertrud Furger and Sr. Debora Maria Ueckert were present for the profession.



Profession Mass

On 21st January 1985, the concrete roof of the chapel was casted and on 26th May 1985, the day of Pentecost the sisters celebrated Eucharist in the newly renovated Novitiate Chapel with a concrete roof.

When the novitiate was shifted to the new novitiate building in Sitagarha on 12th March 2022, the tabernacle from this chapel placed as a sacred gift and heritage in the adoration Chapel of the new novitiate house. Still every sister stepping into this familiar and memorable place feels that she is standing on a holy ground; a ground made holy by many hours of prayer and worship of the novices and sisters. There are some novices and sisters who followed other ways of life doing different services in the course of their journey but being ever grateful for the inspiration and strength they received from this sacred place. It continues to serve as a chapel for professions and other sacred ceremonies.

Till today this chapel remains as a powerhouse for the sisters who have imbibed the Charism of our Congregation and the spirit of our founders in this Training Center.

## Sacred Places

### The Holy Cross Convent Chapel in Thrikkakara, India

Sr. Mercy Jose Parayanilam, South Province India

It's not just people who change. Buildings can also change their appearance and purpose several times over the course of time. This is the case with the convent chapel in Thrikkakara described below. It is also a testimony to how the cultural characteristics of a region can be meaningfully combined with Christian elements, inculturation in church building as well!

#### Chapel and temple

The Holy Cross Convent Chapel in Thrikkakara, Kerala state, South India stands as a unique testament to the integration of different religious and cultural influences. Built in 1974, the chapel bears a striking resemblance to the nearby Thrikkakara Vamanamoorthy Temple, honoring the Hindu tradition while serving as a place of Christian worship for the Holy Cross Sisters.

The architectural similarities between the chapel and the temple reflect a spirit of inculturation, where aspects of local culture are embraced and incorporated into religious practices. The cylindrical shape of the chapel's main body and its pyramidal roof echo the design elements of the temple.

The chapel's significance goes beyond its architectural features. The tabernacle, shaped like a

cylindrical unit used for measuring rice, one of the staple foods of the people of the place symbolizes the blending of Indian art and culture with Christian worship. It housed the 'Bread of Life,' emphasizing the spiritual nourishment offered within the chapel's walls.

#### Changed needs of the time

As the chapel approaches its fiftieth anniversary, plans are underway to



Exterior of the chapel

reconstruct the infrastructure to accommodate the growing community and the needs of the nursing home residents, reflecting the evolving mission of the Holy Cross Sisters in the present day.

Though the physical form of the chapel may change, its legacy lives on in the hearts and minds of all who have been part of the community, leaving a lasting impact on both locals and visitors alike.

The convent of this place served as the first house of vocation promotion in Kerala, playing a vital role in nurturing vocations to religious life. Over the years, it has been a spiritual sanctuary for many, including those discerning their call to religious life and serving as a transit house for missionary sisters of Kerala in the North Indian mission belt.

This house has a rich history and transformation. From its origins as



Exterior of the temple



Altar and tabernacle

the house of a Judge to being acquired by the Holy Cross sisters and transformed into a place for discernment and prayer, it has seen quite a journey. The transition from a place of legal judgment to



Measuring cylinder for rice

one of spiritual discernment is quite symbolic, highlighting the shift from worldly concerns to matters of faith, and doing a specific mission. It's fascinating how the space has evolved to serve the needs of the community differently.

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

### **Witness of our time - Sister Illuminata Hart 1912-2008 Gemünden at the Main**

Appreciation by Sr. Hildburg Baumgartner, Gemünden, Province Europa Mitte

The series "Witnesses of our time" is extended with a tribute to Sister Illuminata Hart. The sisters from Bavaria, indeed the whole congregation, greatly owe her. Many things would not exist or would exist differently. As an "instrument in the hand of God", she became the real master builder of the Province of Bavaria. Generations of women stand marvelling at her life's work and thank her even after her death.

#### **Provincial house and education centre**

Anyone approaching the town of Gemünden in Lower Franconia from the west will see a large, modern

building complex from afar, rising above the last houses on the steep banks of the Main at the end of the town. Anyone seeing it for the first time is unlikely to think of a convent complex.



Convent and girls' education centre Gemünden



For the locals, it has been a familiar sight ever since the Holy Cross Sisters, who were expelled from Bohemia after the Second World War, built a new religious centre and an educational centre for girls in Gemünden between 1956 and 1961. The fact of choosing this location and having a school with a diverse educational programme for girls next to the convent is mainly the merit of Sister Illuminata Hart.

### **Historical background: Foundation of the Province Bavaria**

Founded in 1860, the oldest province in Bohemia developed very positively despite many difficulties. In 1938, it had 955 sisters, 31 novices and 120 candidates. The sisters worked in 60 establishments in the spirit of their founder, Fr. Theodosius Florentini - mainly in the areas of charity and education. The convent school in Eger's Gschierstraße with its various educational programmes was ranked as one of the most important schools in the Sudetenland.

Hitler's invasion on 1 October 1938 initiated a new, ominous development. As early as 2 March 1939, all public schools were deprived of their public status. This also sealed the fate of the schools run by the Holy Cross Sisters in Bohemia. What had been built up

over 70 years with much effort and care in the field of education was destroyed at the stroke of the pen.

After the end of the Second World War, the Sudetenland once again became part of the Republic of Czechoslovakia. The hatred that the National Socialists had sown among the Czechs had an unprecedented effect on the 3 ½ million Sudeten Germans in the following years. On 19 May 1945, Eduard Beneš, the Czech President, issued an expropriation decree. As a result, all Germans lost their property. At that time, the province Bohemia owned twelve houses, some of which were very large. In order to protect them from expropriation and thus from occupation by the Czechs, the Moravian province based in Kroměříž took over its administration.

Due to the unfavourable development, those responsible in the Bohemian province felt compelled to make contact with the Regensburg Ordinariate in Bavaria. After the initial difficulties, the first Holy Cross Sisters from Bohemia were able to gain a foothold in some parishes on the eastern edge of Bavaria. In the years that followed, more and more parishes in the border region of Bavaria in Eger asked for the Holy Cross Sisters for

kindergartens, outpatient nursing care and schools. By the end of 1946, 129 sisters were working in Bavaria and 11 candidates were preparing themselves for religious life. It was now time to think about founding a province in Bavaria. The General Leadership in Ingenbohl submitted a corresponding request to Pope Pius XII, who granted it according to the decree of 29 January 1947.

The administrative office was initially based at Tunzenberg Castle in Lower Bavaria (1945 - 1946), then at St Clare's Convent in Regensburg (1946 - 1949) and Spindlhof Castle near Regensburg (1949 - 1952). The sisters would have loved to settle down in the diocese of Regensburg and build their own provincial house there. However, this failed due to opposition from the Bishop, who was concerned that this would cause a loss to the existing religious communities. In January 1952, the government of Lower Franconia approached the Provincial Leadership and asked for nurses for Werneck Castle. Until then, wounded patients had been cared for here, and now it was to be continued as an orthopaedic hospital. At the same time, the government provided rooms for the Provincial Leadership. The Provincial

Leadership immediately approached Bishop Julius Döpfner in Würzburg, and with the approval of the Cathedral Chapter, he gladly accepted the sisters into his diocese. They moved to Werneck in March 1952.

Four weeks later, the municipality approached the Provincial Council with a request to establish a Secondary School for girls. The Provincial Leadership accepted the request, submitted an application to the State Ministry for Education and Culture and received approval. The Provincial Leadership then called sisters who had worked as teachers in Bavaria, Austria and Switzerland after leaving the Sudetenland to teach in Werneck. Sister Illuminata was given the assignment to take over the school management.

### **Who was Sr. Illuminata Hart?**

Sr. Illuminata was born on 22 February 1912 in Neukinsberg near Eger as the third of five children (four girls and one boy), the daughter of the pottery manufacturer Anton Hart and his wife Eva, surnamed Sommer. In her memoirs, she writes: "Our parents moulded us children into responsible human beings and Christians. We experienced a sense of togetherness between



Sr. Illuminata Hart

parents and children, between siblings and felt accepted and loved. That gave us the courage and self-confidence to tackle things and get through difficult situations in life. She characterises herself as follows: "I was a lively, temperamental, sociable and adventurous child. In this respect, I outperformed all my siblings."

At an early age, Sister Illuminata came into contact with the Holy Cross Sisters in Eger, six kilometres away. She attended kindergarten there and then completed the five classes of the primary school and three years of secondary school. In 1926, she had to decide what to do next in

terms of education. As she showed entrepreneurial skills, her father wanted her to join the family business and prepare herself by attending commercial school. But she said that she wanted to become a teacher and join a convent. With a heavy heart, her father allowed her to train as a teacher. However, he refused to allow her to enter the convent as it was too early.

Sr. Illuminata therefore completed her teachers' training in Eger run by the Holy Cross Sisters. In June 1930, at the age of 18, she passed her higher school certificate with distinction. In November 1930, she followed her inner call and joined the Holy Cross Sisters in Eger. In 1932, she began the novitiate at the Motherhouse in Ingenbohl and made her first profession on 6 April 1933. When she returned to Eger, she initially taught at the Holy Cross Sisters' Secondary School. From February 1934, she prepared for the Higher School Certificate at a Humanistic Grammar School. Sr Illuminata passed the examination with flying colours. The way was now clear for her to study Latin and History as well as Art Education as an additional subject at the University of Prague. Due to the political situation, she was able to write the academic examination only in 1942.

As all public schools were deprived of their public status in 1939, Sr. Illuminata no longer had the opportunity to teach at the Holy Cross Sisters' School in Eger. From 1942 to 1946, she therefore worked as a secretary at Brůx Hospital. There, the state tried several times to recruit her for the civil service, but Sr. Illuminata could not be persuaded.

The Provincial Council called her to Eger in 1946 to send her to Wiesau in the Northern Upper Palatinate, where they were looking for a teacher for the Primary School. There she had to teach the 7th and 8th grades. This was not an easy task after the young people had not been to school for a year and a half. Sr. Illuminata knew how to awaken the interest of the young people and lead them successfully to graduation. She also used the time to take the pedagogical examination for the teaching profession at Primary Schools. In 1948/49, she completed her traineeship at the state seminar for Higher Secondary Schools in Regensburg, qualifying her to teach at Grammar Schools. In 1950-51, she taught at the Salesian Girls' Secondary School in Pielenhofen. At the beginning of the school year in 1951, she moved to Ingenbohl to teach

German in the language course for Italian girls at Theresianum and Latin at the Grammar School. She was then transferred to Werneck.

### **Sr. Illuminata - Principal and foundress of further school departments**

With her appointment to Werneck, Sr. Illuminata began a new, responsible task in life: the establishment of schools under the auspices of the Holy Cross Sisters in Bavaria. The convent school in Eger was a model for her. It was important for her to take up the old school tradition of the sisters of Eger and continue it in a changing era.

The opening of the **Secondary School** (later Modern School) in Werneck began amid great poverty and an unimaginable lack of space. There was a lack of all teaching materials. Despite this, Sr. Illuminata managed to ensure that lessons were taught in an organised manner.

In the course of the first academic year, it became apparent that not all of the pupils in the starting class had the talent for this type of school. This prompted Sr. Illuminata to introduce a **basic course in Housekeeping** in 1953 in order to save the girls from going back to Primary School.

In **1956**, she founded a **new Grammar School** in Werneck. Bishop Julius Döpfner of Würzburg and those responsible at the Ministry of Culture encouraged her to do so on the grounds that Catholic circles of the population had not recognised the need for higher education for girls and were not promoting it accordingly, as a result there was a lack of educated Catholic women in the various professions and committees.

In the **1957/58** school year, Sr. Illuminata expanded the school programme by introducing a **basic course for social professions**. This was an obvious choice because the relevant work experience centres were available in Werneck.

In **1958**, the **grammar school and secondary school were relocated to Gemünden at the Main**, where the new convent and church of the Holy Cross Sisters had been built over a two-year construction period. At that time, there was no school or boarding school building. The school and boarding school were integrated into the convent building. This meant moving close together again. Despite having so little space, lessons went ahead as planned. The two basic training courses were continued in Werneck.

In **1958**, Sr. Illuminata began to set up a **training programme for kindergarten and after-school care takers** in Gemünden at the Main. Initially, there was a lack of training facilities for the prescribed accompanying internship. The students therefore initially had to travel to Aschaffenburg by bus every week to practise in various socio-educational work areas until suitable opportunities were available in their own home.

In **1961**, Sr. Illuminata realised an idea that she had been working on for a long time: the integration of craft training into the Grammar School and the Secondary School. The Würzburg Chamber of Industry and Commerce showed interest in the planned vocational training programme. The **training to become a dressmaker** was realised. After appropriate preparation for normal lessons from the 8th grade of the respective type of school, a year of intensive theoretical and practical training followed after the Intermediate School Certificate. The examination was taken at the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Würzburg.

In **1976/77**, another difficult phase awaited Sr. Illuminata when it came to the introduction of the college level at Grammar Schools in Bavaria. Beforehand, the

Provincial Leadership was faced with the question of whether it was advisable to take on this new challenge or not to run a senior grade in future. As Principal, Sr. Illuminata argued strongly in favour of retaining the senior grade at the Grammar School. In the end, the Provincial Council agreed. Under Sr. Illuminata's leadership, the changeover to the college level went well, as did the closer cooperation with the State Grammar School in Gemünden that had become necessary as a result of the reformed Grammar School.

### **Sr. Illuminata and the search for a building site for the Provincial House and school**

From 1946 onwards, the Provincial Leadership had been looking for a suitable location for a main house for the Sisters of the Cross in Bavaria, especially in the Upper Palatinate. As the Bishop of Regensburg was not in favour of an additional provincial house in his diocese, the Provincial Leadership made intensive efforts from 1954 to find a suitable building site in the town of Schweinfurt in Lower Franconia, but unfortunately in vain. Under the given circumstances, they decided to build a Provincial House and school in Werneck, despite some restrictions. There, the opportunity

arose to acquire a four hectare site near the castle. Mr. Beckers, an architect from Regensburg, was commissioned to design a suitable building plan. In a circular letter from the Provincial Superior in December 1955, the sisters were informed: "99.9 % of the building work will take place in Werneck."

Sr. Illuminata could not come to terms with this idea. She saw the establishment of a grammar school as an urgent need of the time to enable talented girls to train for higher qualified professions. From this point of view, Werneck did not seem suitable as a school location, mainly due to its poor transport connection. With the permission of the Provincial Superior, she approached the Ministerial Commissioner for Grammar Schools in Lower Franconia on 8 January 1956 to put forward her concerns. He was enthusiastic about her idea of opening an additional Grammar School in Lower Franconia. He also considered the Werneck location to be unsuitable. Instead, he suggested Gemünden, at that time a district town and first class railway junction. He immediately commissioned Dr. Büchner, a teacher who taught in his school and was also the mayor of Gemünden, to find a suitable site there as a building site.

When Sr. Illuminata enquired about the situation four days later, she received the answer: "Unfortunately, Mr. Büchner had not found a site of the desired size". Now she felt she had to sink into the ground. She implored the mayor to try again. If he couldn't find a building site within 24 hours, then it would have to be built in Werneck. What nobody - apart from Sr. Illuminata - had thought possible became reality. Thanks to a tip-off from his wife, Mr. Büchner was able to offer a suitable site on the outskirts of the town within this period of time, which was also approved by the Provincial Council. The die was cast. At the last minute, as it were, the approval from the General Leadership was obtained to erect the planned building in Gemünden. The approval came by telegram on 17 January.

In Gemünden, the convent building and the church were built within two years in a first construction phase. The sisters were able to move into the new building in 1958. The school year 1858/59 also began for the grammar school and secondary school in Gemünden, although there was still no school building. Rooms for the school and boarding school were temporarily made available in the so-called east wing of the convent.

### **Sr. Illuminata and the financing of the new buildings for the school and boarding school**

Already in 1957 it had become clear that with the construction of the convent building, the savings of the sisters and the money and loans that had otherwise been obtained would be exhausted. The construction of the school and boarding school was therefore questioned. The Provincial Leadership brought this situation to the attention of the Principal of the school. Sr. Illuminata looked for financial resources. Nothing was found for a long time. In November 1957, she was still working in the Principal's office late at night, as she did every day. A folded piece of paper fell from a pile of files onto the floor. She didn't know who had put it down. It was about promises that were connected to the veneration of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Among other things, it said: "Whoever prays in an intention on nine consecutive first Saturdays of the month in the spirit of Mary and offers communion will receive a hearing if it is in God's plan." Sr. Illuminata saw this as a call to hold a novena from January to September 1958 for the financing of the school building. The sisters working in the school joined in the prayers. In the weeks and months that followed, she

continued to work hard to raise funds. Little by little, she found supporters in this matter who showed her the way to the places that could help her financially. By the end of the novena, the financing of the school building was secured. The site was marked out on 9 September 1958 and the digging of the foundations began nine days later. The shell construction was completed in October 1959 and the new building was opened a week late for the 1960/61 school year.

Construction of the boarding school began in 1960. It was to provide space for around 200 pupils. Sr. Illuminata again searched tirelessly for funding resources and was successful. The building was completed within a year. Finally, the shortage of space and improvisation was over. The pupils and teaching staff had a modern and functional school building at their disposal, while the internal pupils were accommodated in the spacious boarding school, where they found a home in seven self-supporting 'families'.

At a meeting at the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, it was decided to summarise the entire educational programme at the Holy Cross Sisters' School in Gemünden under the name '**Girls**'

**Education Center**' in view of St Paul's words 'We are all God's workers'. Over the years, the educational institution of the Holy Cross Sisters gained importance far beyond Gemünden under this name. The catchment area was not limited to the immediate neighbourhood. As the boarding school was available, pupils from all over Bavaria, from other German states and occasionally even from abroad applied for admission.

### **Sr. Illuminata - an instrument in the hands of God**

Sr. Illuminata dedicated herself to her task as head of three schools with all her strength from the very first day. She spared no effort, was not discouraged by failures, but tried new ways to achieve her goals when she was convinced that the path she chose was the will of God. Her vision, professional qualities and leadership qualities earned her recognition and often approval from those responsible at the Ministry of Culture and beyond.

In addition to school administration and teaching, the establishment and expansion of the various types of school required all her energies. She worked on the school's spatial programme in order to create the conditions for practical, real life teaching. For the boarding school,



she developed a concept based on modern principles, namely the division into independent residential groups according to the family principle. As functional, aesthetically pleasing school and boarding school rooms were very important to her, she designed the interior largely by herself often down to the minutest detail. When it came to financing the buildings, she never tired of finding ways to raise the necessary funds, making representations to the various authorities and using her own powers of persuasion to secure the approval of grants.

She was even more concerned about the internal development and expansion of the girls' education work than its external structure. The aim was to create a school with a Christian character that would promote the holistic moulding of the human personality in its intellectual, emotional and creative abilities and help young people to live a life of faith.

For her, it was very important that everyone involved in school life formed a school family in which educational work could flourish. She therefore attached great importance to good co-operation with the pupils, teaching staff and parents. Even though she came across more as a person of

respect, in front of whom one would have preferred to stand at attention, at the core of her being she was very close to people, open to their problems and - if the situation required it - completely committed to them.

Her accomplishments were also recognised by the public. The town of Gemünden awarded her the Medal of Honour and the Diocese of Würzburg the Bruno Medal. She was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit on Ribbon by Mr. Maier, the then Minister of Culture, and the Bavarian Order of Merit by Minister President Strauß.

Where did Sr. Illuminata find the strength for her multifaceted commitment?

She always saw herself as an instrument in the hands of God. She had surrendered herself to him unreservedly in her profession. In the course of her life, she never relinquished this commitment to him. From her deep conviction that God would walk with her in all situations in life, guide her along the right path and make everything good, she drew the strength to put her own interests aside without sparing herself, to master many tasks and not to give up in the face of resistance but to be convinced of a good outcome.

### **Sr. Illuminata and her activities in her 'retirement'**

In 1990, Sr. Illuminata handed over the responsibility of school management to younger hands. However, her commitment to the school did not come to an abrupt end. Firstly, the construction of the extension to the school building was imminent. Due to her relevant experience, she was entrusted with the supervision of the construction by the Provincial Leadership. Under her direction, a new wing was built for the specialised academy and for information technology and science lessons, which met current requirements and fitted harmoniously into the whole complex.

In 1991, the Provincial Leadership entrusted her with the supervision of the remodelling work in the east wing of the Provincial House. Here, too, she worked tirelessly to optimise the building to meet

current needs and achieve the best possible result.

Sr. Illuminata's commitment in her so called 'retirement' was not limited to the Gemünden convent. She supported her brother in word and deed, who had founded a support organisation to rebuild the 'Maria Loreto' pilgrimage site in her original home parish of Altkinsberg, which had been completely destroyed by the communists in 1949. It was a special honour for them to be allowed to create the designs for the sanctuary of the Church of the Holy Spirit. Thanks to the joint commitment of the Hart family and the Friends' Association, the entire pilgrimage site now shines in new splendour.

After living a fulfilled life and after a short, serious illness, Sr. Illuminata went to her heavenly abode to be with God on 9 June 2008 at the age of 96. We sisters remain deeply grateful to her.

## 25 Years of Existence as Vicariate Uganda

Sr. Immaculate Birwanya, Vicariate Uganda

To mark the 100 years of our presence in India (1994), four sisters were sent to Uganda to make the love of Christ visible there. The sisters were warmly welcomed by the people. In 1999, two communities were elevated to the status of vicariate. Formation and training is the first and most important task, combined with the apostolate in the parish, in the school, in nursing and social work.

### Message

In his message to the sisters in Vicariate Uganda as recorded in the Silver Jubilee magazine His Eminence Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala who welcomed the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross in Uganda says, **'The need of the**

**time is the Will of God'** as your Motto dictates derived from the conviction of your Founder and Foundress ... is the very Spirit that prompted you to come to Uganda in response to God's call to enrich the Church here with your unique charisma. I thank you for maintaining your missionary



Jubilarians: Sisters with 25 years, first and final profession with Sister Pratima and Sister Genevieve D'Silva

character by not only remaining at Kiziba Parish where you first established your community, you have expanded to other areas like Kiyinda Mityana Diocese, Kasana Luweero Diocese, Tororo Archdiocese, Mbarara Archdiocese and Kakamega Diocese – Kenya! You are like a great tree with many branches, (Luke 13:18-19) one great tree whose branches are full of good and sweet fruits.

### **From the jubilee celebration**

Yes, on 15th February 2024, Vicariate Uganda was filled with echoes of joy as we celebrated God's kindness and mercy upon our existence as Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross in Vicariate Uganda since the Ugandan Mission was elevated to the status of a Vicariate. This was a culmination of the joy that started 25 years ago on 14th February 1999, when Sr. Louise Henri, the then General Superior declared Mission Uganda a Vicariate, a time that has seen our Vicariate blooming from the then two communities of Kiziba and Busunju to 7 communities in all and one more soon to be opened. Yes, it was an occasion of rejoicing in gratitude to God's goodness.

During that occasion in 1999, the

then mission Superior Sr. Amala Kunnath became the first Vicariate Superior and to crown it all, we received the first four African sisters in the Vicariate the following day on 15th February 1999; Sr. Maria Sarah Nabaggala, Sr. Gertrude Nampeera, Sr. Mary Margaret Nnassuuna and Sr. Mariedita Kabajungu, who are today the first Silver Jubilarians from the Vicariate. Praises and thanks to God for the journey they have travelled!

The day began with non-stop heavy rain that began in the early hours of the morning but did not prevent the Eucharistic Celebration to begin. In Uganda, such functions are always arranged outside under tents to accommodate the large number of participants. It ceased raining towards the end of the Mass.

The Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by the His Grace Archbishop Paul Ssemogerere of Kampala Archdiocese who con-celebrated with Bishop Lawrence Mukasa of Kasana Luweero Diocese together with several priests. During this solemn occasion we not only celebrated the Silver Jubilee of our presence in Uganda and of the first four sisters, but we also witnessed the first profession of three Novices: Sr. Eunice Abbo, Sr. Olivia Abomwe and Sr. Susan



Congratulations dance by the candidates



jubilee choir

Ngabire and perpetual commitment of Sr. Florence Nyakach.

Thus, it was not only a time of thanksgiving but also a time of joy as we witnessed the commitment to the consecrated life of our sisters.

We were blessed on our day to be graced with the presence of the General Councillor Sr. Pratima Minj, who received the vows of our sisters and also brought for us a special gift from Motherhouse of the statue of Our Lady.

The choir of the day was from Kiziba Parish where the Vicariate began the 25 years journey and it comprised of the parishioners, our sisters and our candidates.

Among the many people who joined us for the memorable function were parishioners in the parishes where we serve, the staff and co-workers especially those who have served

and are serving with the Jubilarians sisters in our apostolates, the priests and religious from communities around and those close to our celebrating sisters, the families of our sisters and our neighbours in Namugongo.

After the Eucharistic Celebration, the Candidates and children from each of our school presented different items of entertainment that were all focused on the theme of celebration.

In memory of the day, some of the distinguished guests including the Archbishop, Bishop and Monsignor Expedito Magembe were given a souvenir shawl by the Vicariate.

### **Thanks to all concerned**

We thank our former General Superiors and teams who played integral roles in the growth and mission of the vicariate, and

accompanied us during these 25 years, for the support, guidance and encouragement very specially from the former General councillors late Sr. Shalini Kozhuppakalam, Sr. Selma Nalloor, Sr. Tessy Churanad and Sr. Sheeja Kolacherril who is presently engaged in other responsibilities of the team. They were the Councilors responsible in the care of the vicariate and its mission. May the Lord reward each abundantly!

We owe much to the present General Team with Superior General, Sr. Marie-Marthe Schönenberger and all the

councillors for nurturing us and supporting us in living the vision of our founders in Africa.

Our special thanks to the Indian Provinces for by sending the missionaries to the Vicariate, they made its establishment and growth possible. We thank all the Provinces and Vicariates who, with their prayers and financial support, have made it possible for the Vicariate of Uganda to flourish. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the benefactors specially from Europe and America who have helped in diverse and creative ways in the building up of the Vicariate.



Presentation by the pupils

We are indebted to the people of God among whom we serve who make it possible for us to bear witness to the joyful and hopeful message of divine and compassionate love that we have experienced.

To all the sisters who have served in Vicariate Uganda, thank you for

your openness and generosity to God's goodness to you that has sustained the missionary face of our Vicariate over the years! We pray that you continue to live our congregation mission statement and many more be inspired by the same: Called to participate in the prophetic mission of Jesus to witness God's love for all creation.

## The "Amadea" Center in Đakovo

Sr. Amadea Birovljević, Đakovo, Province Croatia

Fr. Theodosius' motto: "The need of the time is the will of God" continues to give rise to contemporary, new tasks for the Sisters of Mercy to this day. A junior sister looks "through her glasses", as she says at the work of the centre and the "Amadea" association, in which she herself is involved.

I am thinking about how to start this report ... how I can give you an understanding of the work of an organisation, because there is much more to it than one report can cover. It is impossible to go into all the details, but I would like to tell you something about what I see and how I see it from my perspective.

### **The 'Amadea' association**

The "Amadea" association was founded in Đakovo in 2010 to provide psycho-social support for children, young people, families, the elderly and the sick. The main activity of the association is realised in the form of a day care centre for elderly and lonely people as well as people with mental difficulties. An adapted daily programme is organised for these people. In addition to the day centre, elderly people who are dependent on outside help are provided with help in the household. Our organisation is

financed by donations, projects and public competitions. A few official details! In the following I would like to take you into the centre and let you experience what happens during this day stay and what goes on around it.

### **The 'Amadea' day care center**

Around 20 people come to the day care center in the morning. Most of them are unable to come alone, and many also live in the suburbs of the city. For these reasons, they are picked up every morning by the association's car and taken home again in the afternoon. When they arrive in the morning, a coffee or tea is already waiting for them. As soon as they arrive, a cheerful atmosphere is created during the get-together, which is very important to them. At the moment, as I'm sitting at my computer in my office at work, I can hear the dice rolling on the table and I know that the first





Inspiring games

round of 'Do not get upset' has already started. Parlour games are part of the daily rhythm. We play 'Do not get upset', chess, card games, memory, bingo, table football and so on. Various didactic methods are used to maintain motor and cognitive functions: knitting and crocheting, word games, games that stimulate thinking and bibliotherapy. In addition, there are various activities that promote creativity,



Baking together

provide occupational therapy and keep the children physically fit. The programme also includes excursions and happy get-together with the staff. Educational programmes are also organised for relatives of these people. Other interested parties can also take part in these programmes. An important place are our gardens, raised beds and a spiral garden with medicinal and aromatic herbs. These plants are designed so that people with movement difficulties can take part in this occupational therapy and enjoy the fruits of their labour. Our team includes a retired psychologist who runs various workshops and is available for personal conversations with users of the day center as well as other people in need.



Encounters between generations

Probably the most important thing is regular spiritual content. This includes: the daily Rosary together,

the Divine Mercy Rosary, the singing of spiritual songs, the opportunity for personal prayer in the house chapel, joint pilgrimages to places of pilgrimage in the neighbourhood, visits to the convent and the convent church, visits to the cathedral. Every first Friday of the month, a communal service is celebrated in the day care center and confession is made possible for them. This spiritual dimension is very important for the people who come to the day care center. The spiritual dimension helps us all to grow in a sense of belonging to a community and to help each other in differences and weaknesses.

Volunteers make an important

contribution to the success and further development of this apostolate. A few of them regularly take part in all activities. They help to look after the needs of the users of the day care center and to organise various activities. Others join in with certain activities or weekly events. One of these events is 'Thursday Music'. This event is very popular with everyone - both the day visitors and the volunteers.

There are many administrative tasks waiting at the background: Preparing projects, writing reports, preparing content for social media and communicating with the media. The most diverse professions have a place here and make a



Daytime residents in the garden

contribution to the whole. Including me. My job is working with the media. What inspires me most as a junior sister is the experience of how the charism of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross is lived out here. At the 'Amadea' center, I am given a chance to experience this. When things become difficult at times, I think what a blessing these people are, with whom and for whom we work. I also ask myself, where would each of these people be if they weren't in our day care centre? And what about those people who are unable to come to us but whom we visit? They are the poor, the forgotten, the sick... I must also mention the sisters with whom I work and from whom I learn a lot in different areas: Sr.

Natalija, who started the whole thing, and Sr. Franciska, who gives her time and energy to the people in the day care center. I name these two sisters because I recognize in them and through them our lived charism in this apostolate. They set an example for me of how to dedicate myself to others and always look for new ways to help those God sends on our way.

I am grateful to God that I have the opportunity to be in such a place, to grow and develop. Here, I can learn how prayer flows into the work and permeates it.

I commend ourselves and our work to your prayers. That is what we need most.

## International Nurses Day

The International Nurses Day on 12 May is dedicated to the approximately 28 million people who currently work in the nursing care professions worldwide and give their best every day. The date of the day of Nursing Professions goes back to the birthday of Florence Nightingale (12 May 1820 to 13 August 1910) who is considered a pioneer of modern nursing. The day of remembrance aims to honour the and express appreciation and gratitude. So a special special thanks to all the nurses in the nursing profession and the many employees. In the following, Sr. Laisa looks back at her life, how she became a Holy Cross Sister and doctor. The figure of Moses, in particular the 'burning bush'. She searches for it in her life. Her Life has taught her many things. Lessons that are precious to her!

### The burning bush of my life

Sr. Laisa Kakkatt, Tarwa, Central Province, India

It was 2 a.m. at Holy Cross Hospital Kunkuri. I was in deep Sleep. Suddenly the intercom rang, and the voice echoed, "There is a delivery just now, but baby is not breathing." In a fraction of second, I was in the delivery room attending to the child. I felt from within. "God must have heard the cry of these people and that is why He called me." I recalled the number of complicated cases brought to the hospital at the last stage, difficult surgeries, high risk cases in ICU, in delivery, new born ward, giving them care, both day and night. I did not know how 16 years have passed by. After these experiences, as I looked back into my Life, I realized that my call is to be like Moses, (Ex.2:28) and I searched for the burning bush of

my life.

### The key experience

When I was 5 years old, I got a younger brother, Judy. My Mother was six and a half months pregnant. One day, she had severe bleeding and was hospitalised, doctors at once advised to abort the child and my father as faithful as he was to God, refused to give consent for abortion. The doctor warned him to be ready to take the dead body of mother and the child. He pleaded to doctor and to God to save his wife at least. While he was praying for the courage to face the situation, she delivered and both were saved. As they were about to throw away the child, they saw some signs of life in him and kept him in the incubator for 21 days. I remember still going to the hospital holding the hand of my father and my mother asked me, "Laisa, do

you want a child to play with?" Then she showed me the cute little one sleeping beside. As days passed by I saw my parents were worried as the child was not turning as it should be and not lifting his head. We realized that Judy was paralyzed. He had Spastic Paralysis. My parents took him to several hospitals and all kinds of treatment and finally to Christian Medical College Vellore in Chennai and the Doctors there declared that only a miracle can help him. I prayed continuously that he may walk. As I completed 12th, I had many dreams, except the dream of becoming a doctor and a sister. On a Maundy Thursday adoration time suddenly, a thought came to me, God alone could give him life, then why not I give my life to God? That very thought made me to be what I am today.

Judy is our joy giver in the family and I continue to serve God in the marginalized as a Religious Sister and a Doctor.

Though one of my sisters is religious, I was miraculously led to Holy Cross Hazaribag. I could see God's hand at work through my

formators and superiors during my formation and in the choice of my profession. The urgent need for a sister doctor in Holy Cross Hospital Kunkuri, made my superiors to send me to Rome for Medical Studies. I had no idea of what it means to become a doctor and the demands of this profession. In faith I entrusted myself in God's hand and ventured into the unknown journey. Today I can see how God had been paving His way to make his dream come true.





Sr. Laisa

### **Holy Cross Hospital, Kunkuri**

In 2002 when I took charge as Medical Superintendent at Holy Cross Hospital Kunkuri, it was at the point of closure and our superiors were considering to convert it into an old age home. Within six months, we were able to see the signs of growth. Patients started coming more and more, finding confidence and trust in us. After being away for almost 9 years for my studies, I was longing to come back to a community where I was expecting love, support and acceptance and I soon realized to build up and work as a team, as a community was not an easy task.

In every sick person, I encountered Christ. We had only minimum basic facilities and the patients who came to us were referred from other hospitals and critical. As I listened to their pain, understood their suffering, confirmed the diagnosis with the needed test and provided them appropriate treatment. I learned to cling to the Lord all the more and search for ways and means to serve them better.

### **Holy Cross Hospital, Tarwa**

The branching out of Mid India Province, brought the need for making a General Hospital at Hazaribag. In view of that I was transferred to Holy Cross Hospital, Tarwa. The Hospital catered to the needs of patients with HIV, TB and needing Palliative Care. These patients do not have a promising future and the quality of their lives is unpredictable. Most of them need to be prepared for a Joyful transition from life to death. I found it very difficult in the beginning to accept them and to love them. Slowly I began to think that they represent the fallen face of humanity and it is for them Christ is incarnated. Entering in to their lives

struggles and pains helped to change my attitude towards them.

The year 2021-22 brought before us Covid patients, we treated so many including several of our own sisters. Surprisingly there was very few Covid deaths. But at the end of Covid Pandemic, I got Pneumonia and had to take rest. Yet, the good Lord continues to sustain me through ups and downs of my life till today.

### **Lessons that the life has taught me**

- Cling to the Lord at all times for He is my life partner.
- The more wounded I am, the more healed I am, and the more

healed I am, the more I am able to heal others. So I need not worry about the wounds, all that I need is to seek healing.

- The more at Peace I am with myself, the more integrated I feel. When there is a confusion and clash, reconcile with oneself first.
- The more gentle I am with myself, the more compassionate I can be with others.
- The more I give to the world, the more at home I feel with the world.
- Self-love and Self-care is not selfishness. Care and self-respect will enable me to love and respect others.

## Formation Program for Junior Sisters of Indian Provinces

Sr. Arpana Barwa, Directress of Junior Sisters, Mid India Province

Based on previous experiences, the junior sisters of all five Indian provinces are now given the opportunity of getting to know each other and deepening their knowledge. This is organised on the basis of our formation programme 'Living from the source in the Indian context'. They are accompanied by our experienced sisters and the goodwill of all the sisters.

### Formation program till 2018

It is a joy to see young sisters blossoming after their first profession in their commitment. Following the initial jubilation of embracing a religious life, sisters undergo some challenges and confusion in their personal and community life. To live a religious life in a meaningful way, they need renewal and guidance. Until 2018,

there existed two distinct formation programs, scheduled during the 2nd and 4th years of their profession, each spanning a month. However, many sisters found it difficult to attend the second formation due to conflicting class schedules, as they were engaged in higher studies or training. Realizing this problem, the "Provincials' Consult" convened in 2018, decided to



Group photo



combine both programs into a single two-month session. This revised formation program has been conducted since 2019 at the provincial house in Raipur. They are the future of our congregation, and it is our responsibility to nurture their growth in the family of Holy Cross.

### **Formation program since 2019**

They come together from five Indian Provinces, from varied states, tribes, cultures, and traditions, witnessing the beauty of unity in diversity. These sisters gain valuable insight into their religious life, enabling them to make proper decisions as they prepare to renew their vows for three years.



Manual work

Under the discerning guidance of Indian Provincial Consult, these junior sisters embark on a meticulously planned journey of growth and enlightenment. The program's curriculum is designed in accordance with the topics outlined in "Living from the Source within an Indian context." These carefully selected topics are aptly suited for the group at this juncture as they learn to deepen the teachings acquired during their novitiate and strengthen their spiritual foundations before they go for higher studies.

It starts with an orientation of three days, reflection, and sharing on the lived experience in the community. This helps sisters to acquaint



Classes



Outing

themselves with one another's joys and sorrows, thus laying the foundation for profound mutual understanding. Following this communal bonding, input sessions are given by experienced and qualified Holy Cross sisters from different Provinces. Resource persons play a vital role in the success of this program. They avail themselves for this noble cause of shaping the future of the Holy Cross. It covers the following topics - Christology, Personal Charism, Institutional Charism and Basic Spiritual Values, Deepening of the vows, Prayer, Affective maturity, social teachings of the Church and Church documents, Indian Social realities, Community

life and Interpersonal relationship, Mission and the Acts of the Apostles. After each class, they are helped to integrate by spending time in prayer, reflection, and evaluation. Amidst the structured schedule, the sisters also enjoy moments of leisure as they go for outing and sightseeing.

As the weeks unfold, the program culminates in a profound six-day retreat, a sacred period of introspection and spiritual rejuvenation. The retreat offers them the opportunity to deepen their relationship with the Lord, which is their primary aim when they come for the formation.

For these young sisters, the

program serves as a beacon of inspiration, motivation, and profound spiritual deepening. They depart from the place taking along valuable treasures, resolving to live an authentic Holy Cross Sister.

### **Conclusion of the juniorate period**

Following this formation program junior sisters will be sent for studies of 3 to 4 years duration. The juniorate culminates further in a six-month tertianship program. Thereafter, they will be given one year of community experience to internalize their learnings before

they take their final vows.

Each province holds the responsibility of organizing renewal programs for them according to their needs and schedules. Throughout their juniorate, they are under the guidance of a junior directress who maintains close contact with each individual, meeting them regularly to offer support and assistance as needed. She fosters the growth of these sisters, nurturing them to become an effective instrument in the church by participating in the mission of compassion of the Holy Cross congregation.

## Information from the General Leadership

### Visit to Lampedusa, Italy

Sr. Sheeja Kolacherril and Sr. Rahela Lacković visited our sisters Sr. Danila-Marta Antunović from the Province Croatia and Sr. Rufina Pinto from the Province India South, who are working in Lampedusa, Sicily, in the migrant project of the UISG, Rome, from 14 to 18 May, 2024.

Sr. Doroteja  
Krešić  
Sr. Dubravka  
Medak

Start of office: 14 September, 2024

We sincerely thank the newly appointed and reappointed sisters of the Provincial Leadership for the Province Croatia for their willingness to take on this demanding task. We wish them strength, courage and confidence for the responsibility they have taken up, as well as God's constant blessing upon them.

### Visit to House USA

From 09 to 23 June 2024, Sister Dorothee Halbach visited the sisters in House USA.

### Appointments

#### Appointment of the Provincial Leadership Croatia on 09 May 2024

The General Leadership has appointed the Provincial Leadership of the Province Croatia for a term of three years:

Provincial Superior: Sr. Marija  
Brizar  
(1st term)

Councillors: Sr. Nikolina Nikolić  
Sr. Dragica Ivkić

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to Sr. Valerija Široki, the outgoing Provincial Superior, Schwester M. Lucija Kopic, Sr. M. Emanuela Kvesić and Sr. Ivanka Marija Vrgoč, the Provincial Councillors, for their dedicated work for the benefit of their fellow sisters and the province and wish them all the best and God's abundant blessing for their future work.

#### Appointment of the Provincial Leadership Baden - Württemberg on 16 June, 2024

The General Leadership has appointed the Provincial Leadership of the Province Baden - Württemberg for a term of three years:

Provincial Superior: Sr. Susanne  
Bader

Councillors: Sr. Dorothea  
Maria Oehler  
Sr. Benedicta-  
Maria Kramer  
Sr. Rita Dobler

Start of office : 27 October, 2024

We sincerely thank the newly appointed and reappointed sisters

of the Provincial Leadership for the Province Baden-Württemberg for their willingness to take on this demanding service. We wish them strength, courage and confidence for the task they have been assigned, as well as God's accompanying blessing.

We would also like to thank Sr. Maria Paola Zinnel, outgoing Provincial Superior, and Sr. Regina Maria Uhl, Provincial Councillor, from the bottom of our hearts for their dedicated work for the benefit of the sisters and the province and wish them all the best and God's rich blessing for their future mission.

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

139 Volume 2024 / 2