



**JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2015**

*Dearest Sisters and Friends, The Lord gives you Peace.*

*Pope Francis has given us a year of reflection, prayer, re-launch of consecrated life. We can go back to the prominent points of his letter, a treasure to put to fruition.*

*In the introduction, he referred to the Apostolic Exhortation Post-Synodal Vita Consecrata: 'you do not only have a glorious history to remember and to recount, but a great history to construct! Look at the future, in which the Spirit is pointing to work big things with you.'*

The **objectives** of this year of Consecrated Life are: looking at the past with gratitude; living the present, embrace the future, therefore express: recounting our own history is indispensable to keep alive our identity, the unity of the family and the sense of belonging by the members.

Do we have the same passion of our Founders for our people; are we near them to the extent of sharing the joys, the pains; to understand really the necessity and ability to offer a contribution to respond to them?

We are invited to be 'experts in communion'; we are called 'to offer a concrete model of community; to live the mystical encounter; the capacity to feel, to listen to other people, the capacity to search together the way, the method'. Embrace the future with hope: 'the hope we talk about is not based on numbers or actions, but on Him in whom we have put our trust, ... do not surrender to temptations of numbers and the of the efficiency and less still in trusting in our own strengths.

Called to experiment and show that God is capable to fill our heart and to render us happy... and give the fulfilment to our life''. That among us no sad face is seen, persons unhappy and unsatisfied, because 'a sad following, is a following full of sadness'. The Church grows by attraction. Consecrated life does not grow by organizing good vocational camps, but when the youth whom we meet feel attracted by us; when they see happy men and women. It is your life that must speak, a life from which brings out joy and the beauty of living the Gospel and of following Christ. The document continues to invite us to keep account of the internationality, of the synergies with other institutes and all ecclesial realities; getting away from the disease of reference to self.

The Holy Father takes us back : 'do not bend to yourselves, do not let yourselves be fixed to your little quarrels, do not remain prisoners of your own problems: 'there is an entire humanity that awaits you.

I await that form of consecrated life asks itself that which God and today's humanity is asking'. Nobody in this year should remove oneself from a serious verification of one's presence in the life of the Church and in the mode of responding to the continuous questions that are raised around us, to the cry of the poor'.



The Holy Father speaks to the Laity who participate in the same charismatic reality.; to the entire Church, for a new knowledge of the gift which is Consecrated Life which has produced saints like Benedict, Francis, Blessed Theresa of Calcutta and so on. To all Christians is requested: 'feel their affection and warmth of all the Christian people. To the families 'space of humanization in the building up of vital relationships, places of evangelization. The document talks to the consecrated persons in the churches of diverse traditions, remembering the richness of monasticism of other expressions of religious fraternity, recalling the importance of dialogue through significant initiatives. The document concludes by urging the bishops the promptness to promote the various charisms and to make known to the people of God the value of consecrated life. To Mary, the model of the following in the love of God and in the service to the poor, the Holy father entrust this Year, and we do it with him.

# ***SIGN OF THE LOVE OF GOD IN THE SIGHT OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE***

February 2013: The beginning of a project put in the hands of God. Much joy, but preoccupations for the foreseen problems of following from afar the works for the construction of the new house in Mexico. The time to obtain permits, realising and valueing the project, choosing the constructor.

December 2013: Beginning of the works. With the beginning of the works, the difficulty of following up and controlling the materials through photos and letters by e-mail or through written financial account and calls by Sr Ireen, of Gianni our friend and of Fr Max. Problems are inevitable. July: almost at the end of the work. And then the joy of knowing that Sr Ireen, Sr Paola and Sr Gemma by September, would receive the children and families in the new house and that the house was welcome. End of September, the invitation to participate at the inauguration on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2014.



*House "Mom Elvira" - Mexico*

Immediately a sense of the impossibility to accept the invitation; and then someone pushes me to accept. It seemed impossible leaving my family, my house, my work, my parish for one week.... Then I thought Someone would take care of everything as usual, even when I am there.

After twenty hours of travel between hours of waiting, flight, controls, Mexico City with its 2,300m of altitude, and after landing, travelled for two hours in chaotic traffic to reach the new house.

I was well received with hugs by Sr Ireen, Sr Paola and Sr Gemma: Africa, Europe and Asia; the love of Christ in them pushed to the centre of the four continents. The reception of this dimension in which human hearts profoundly meet, pervaded all days we had spent together; even Sr Regina, Sr Victoria and Sr Caroline from United States arrived for the inauguration. We were accompanied by the sisters like guardian angels to symbolic places of Mexican faith like the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Cathedral of the City of Mexico and other historical places of this lively country. Together with the Sisters we wanted to share the joy and service to the children during school and meal times. During lunch and supper, we were always invited to taste the Mexican specialities.

The festival participation with traditional dances, sustenance by the youth organization, material help from some families to the Sisters for the challenges of the new house, the closeness of the entire parish, the presence of the Franciscan Friars and the father Provincial, were all a visible sign of a sincere communion with the community of the Sisters in the Eucharist celebration and inauguration of the house. The profound joy in unforgettable moments of fraternity, and entrusting to God and the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe of the house, so that it could be a sign of the providential love of God where under the eyes and arms of his beloved daughters, receive and take care of his children.

*Enzo*

## LUSAKA-ZAMBIA: PROF GRISOSTOMI TELLS OF THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT OF CHILD CARDIALSURGICAL

In October, together with Dr Bellagamba (Cardiologist), Dr Massini (Cardiac surgeon) and Dr Morelli (Anesthetist) returned to Lusaka with the intention of moving ahead with the treatment of cardiac-surgical of children initiated in Mav at the UTH.

This is a project initiated some years ago with the sending of some Zambian children, affected by the cardiac pathology, near the Torrette Hospital in Ancona. In the previous months, however, the region of Marche had removed from its budget funds destined for this project, and thanks to the support of the associations 'We For Zambia' and Heart of Children', we have tried to take the project ahead in an autonomous manner, without transporting the children in Italy but operate on them in Zambia, and thanks to the help of the Italian doctors and the assistance of the local health personnel; This is because some of these children affected by the cardiac pathology at a lower level, but if not operated upon would be destined for a premature death.



*Prof. Grisostomi and Team*

The motive of our journey in fact was to try to organize and plan for the next March, for a series of surgical cardiac operations, selecting children in need of an operation, check on machinery and an adequate operating theatre; and keeping in mind the availability of the Zambian medical personnel.

In the meeting with the Director General of the hospital, we concluded that two theatre nurses could come to Italy to upgrade their profession (one to go to Bergamo to be with Professor Vanini and another to Bari at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) department in the civil hospital); and four bed space in the ICU to be set aside specifically for these children. For all these, the intention is that of training Zambian heart specialists to attend to these children.

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## A CONTINUED TALE OF THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS VIETNAM NOVEMBER 2014

I know it is so easy to talk about a country where one has had a very short stay, but I believe that what has been perceived with the heart, often is seen with the soul's eyes and some realities could be looked through with realism. I would like to share.

Our community of Franciscan Sisters is found in the South of Vietnam, in the city of Chi Min, a city which presents itself as full of life: the people move harmoniously, all knowing where they are going and what to do. All say that Ho Chi, the commercial capital of Vietnam is a city which is more open with regard to practical communism, but in reality there is no religious freedom, and religious practices can only be done within the church premises. No external religious sign is allowed; where even the religious sisters wear the traditional dress (trousers, blouse).

In the city of Ho Chi, all talk about life: occupied with small businesses, improvised tables where hot food is sold; smell of flowers and tropical fruits; while on the road, motorbikes cover the vision of the road and at traffic lights, when green, the rustling of the motorbikes leaves you to a funny imagination: the motorbikes can carry anything.

Each open gate gives a view of a room where some small productive activities are carried out; each room is a factory at family level. All move and work at fast pace. At the morning Mass celebrated at 05:00hrs there five people to distribute holy communion because many people attend Mass with great respect, praying with songs of Buddhist tunes.

The impression which is more clear is that of people that are happy, serene, serious, women properly dressed,

people that are educated and kind. This is clear from how they relate to each other.

Hospitality is indescribable: a visitor is sacred and walking into a house and having been attended to, puts on the table all that he/she has with a touching, unique cordiality. Visiting the underground city, built at the boundary with Cambodia, during the war in the 60-70s, it was constructed to attach to the American bases. Its incredible how the Chinese and Vietnamese could have thought of such a strategy, for a useless war. In that zone, water and land are poisonous and children, because of that are born with deformities and intellectual deficiencies.

We visited a house, run by Korean religious, which accommodates 73; and we were informed that very few of the youth reach adulthood.





*Comunità Del Vietnam*

One morning, whilst on the grounds of the convent, I saw two figures working at a construction at the sixth floor, without proper protection such that any bad step made, they would fall badly. The security, the risk, the fear?

I was the one concerned for them, yet they seemed calm and sure. I was told that human life here does not matter much.

I was informed that 20% of the Vietnamese belong to a tribe known as 'minor ethnic' or 'mountain tribe', considered uncivilized. The children are slow learners. Health and education services are lacking. It is among these people that the Sisters spend the Christmas feast; hoping to get established among them to render a service, to accompany them on their journey to knowledge and affirmation.

I like to bring to mind and to the eyes, the beauty of Vietnam, where nature leaves one breathless for its liveliness, for its sweet and intense green, which feels the soul. Along the rural roads, small habitations made of wood, while the shops full of small objects, foodstuff, clothing, speak of a dignified life, of a people that demands nothing, but does its part in putting up a development. This is the Vietnam that feels my eyes and my heart.

*Sr. Rosalinda Salmaso*

## *PRAYER INTENTIONS*



**16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015-** Let us pray for the youth who will begin their novitiate in the Philippines, a new international novitiate. Let us pray also for the 40 Junior Sisters, 26 Novices and 32 Postulants in their initial formation in various parts of the world, at the Lord gives to each one the fullness of life.

Let us pray for all the young persons in formation in our Institute, to whom the Pope Francis addressed these words for the Year of the Consecrated Life:

I would especially like to say a word to those of you who are young. You are the present, since you are already taking active part in the lives of your institutes, offering all the freshness and generosity of your YES. At the same time you are the future, for soon you will be called to take on roles of leadership in the life, formation, service and mission of your communities. This year should see you actively engaged in dialogue with the previous generation. In fraternal communion you will be enriched by their experience and wisdom, while at the same time, inspiring them with your energy and enthusiasm, to recapture their original idealism. In this way the entire community can join in finding new ways of living the Gospel and responding more effectively to the need for witness and proclamation.

I am also happy to know that you will have the opportunity this year to meet with other young religious from different institutes. May such encounters become a regular means of fostering communion, mutual support and unity.

**16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2015-** Let us dedicate this day to the Lay people with whom we share our Charism, enriching it with reading, interpretation and life. For them and for their families, we raise our prayer.

Sr Isabella Ciruzzi and her team, for many years have been meeting many lay people in our Motherhouse. They have been committed and fruitful meetings, that take our charism to a deeper level, viewed from a particular angle to become a common good. A particular interest towards the Mission is coming out to which some desire to participate concretely. It is a new avenue that has opened, while examining the possible commitment that would be according to the will of God.

There are some other groups of Lay people interested in living by our charism; they are in Korea and in the United States. Pope Francis in his letter for the Year of the Consecrated Life addresses the Laity:

I urge you as Laity, to live the Year for Consecrated Life as a grace which can make you more aware of the gift you yourselves have received. Celebrate it with your entire 'family', so that you can grow and respond together to the promptings of the Spirit in society today. On some occasions when consecrated men and women from different institutes come together, arrange to be present yourselves so as to give expression to the one gift of God. In this way you will come to know the experiences of the other charismatic families and the other lay groups, and thus have an opportunity for mutual enrichment and support. The Year for the Consecrated Life concerns not only the consecrated persons, but the entire Church.

