

16 MAY Celebrating the 275 years of the death of our Founder, Fr. Joseph Anthony

Marcheselli, we intensify our prayers for every sister in the Institute, so that we may always become more worthy children of such a Father, for a renewed commitment of a holy life, for a more significant presence in the Church and in the world. Let us also pray for the laity who share the charism in many ways, so that they can joyfuly live in communion

with the Sisters with whom they have in common the spiritual journey and the journey of friendship.

From the Testament of our beloved Fr. Marcheselli, we read: "Finally, I beg you not to forget the one who has written it. Pray for him during his lifetime, that he may be able to live that which he has written. Pray for him during his death, that the Lord out of his great mercy may grant him a place with him. Pray for him after death, so that when he leaves purgatory he may go to that most holy land, and have that highest contentment, of seeing you all entering, full of merit, and sanctity; and destined his head to be your footstool. So be it. *Laus Deo*" (Writtings, 298-299). What desire of sanctity had spurred our Founder! Him, who led a life of ascetism and very high sanctity, desired a lot more for us, to such an extent of asking to become "our footstool", for that sanctity of life that will accompany us to God's presence.

"A true missionary is a saint" says St. John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio*; the message is clear, today, as it was yesterday, our task is to commit ourselves in order to realise the dream of our Founder, which is God's dream: see to it that you lead a holy life. Therefore, we can celebrate the 275 years accompanied by the gift that we wish to give to our beloved Founder: to be holy!



16 June We dedicate this day of prayer and missionary commitment to the sisters in the Italian Province, in

their commitment towards the opening of new missions in favour of the later. The new small gatherings that will spring up may be new seedbeds of sanctity shared with others.

The Italian Province, which is the mother Province of the Institute, has a story of grace and blessings which many generations of holy sisters have passed through, those who had laid a foundation of a spiritual reality that has continued to give a good scent to the Church of God. Today, the Province is composed of "Small Gatherings" which take on the spirit of the Founders of bearing witness to fraternity, service and prayer, in a Church that seeks to become more alive and present, on the journey of the New Evangelization, which calls for a true "conversion in order to convert".

The needs of the Church in Italy are many, and in the same way the requests of new presences are equally on the increase, especially at the service of the most needy. The Province is doing everything possible to try and give adequate responses, while discerning on which ones are most urgent. Let us unite in prayer, asking the Spirit to enlighten us on the choices that the Province will have to give.



#### FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY SISTERS OF ASSISI

Via San Francesco, 13 - 06081 Assisi Tel. e Fax: 075/816825 - e-mail: suore.assisi@virgilio.it

**We are present:** Italy - Corea - Cina - Russia - Zambia - USA - Cuba - Malawi - Filippines - Croatia - Kenya -Romania - Mexico - Moldavia - Indonesia - Argentina - Japan - Brazil - San Marino - Germany - Vietnam



Dear Sisters, Friends, may the Lord give you peace!

On 16 May we celebrate the 275 years of the birth of our Founder in heaven, Fr Joseph Anthony Marcheselli.

When he was alive, his dream was that of seeing a small gathering that is composed of holy souls, who are all dedicated to prayer, contemplation and works of mercy. In his death, he wished to see his sisters enter in paradise full of merit, radiant with sanctity. In reality, our history talks of truly holy Sisters, who had laid a solid foundation to a charism that continues to become even more beautiful, thanks to these lives that were truly given, of truly consecrated women. With this inherited richness, our Small Gatherings worldwide continue to fuel the lamp that was lit by Fr. Marcheselli, for it to be a light to the many people whom the Lord entrusts in our care and whom he allows us to journey with towards the realization of His project of Love.

The light has become warmer from the moment the many brothers and sisters had enriched the charism with their deisre for knowledge and embellished with their lives of affective charity. HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



### Sharing the journey with Jonkica

The sisters of Zagabria

Humanitarian action for a child ....

"Make your day sweet with the cakes made by us, make Tonkica happy, a wonderful child!" These words were used as a message that accompanied this humanitarian action in favour of Tonkica, a child who belongs to the group that is prepariing to receive the first communion. With the help of our sisters, the children as well as the parents were involved. The mothers had prepared cakes whereas the children made cards with their own designs, while the sisters displayed the cakes at the end of each Mass on Sunday at the parish; all this was done for the little girl Tonkica. The child is aged 10 and she has twice been the victim of ictus. Right now she is in hospital where she is undergoing rehabilitation, at a fee. We as sisters, are helping the parents spiritually. They are grateful and they always say: "Thanks you, thanks for your closeness, for your prayers, which grant us the strength to go on with joy. We feel the closeness that comes from heaven when you are in our lives". We also thank God because he gives us in order for us to help others, and we continue asking him to make us "True Instruments of his peace", thanking him for having chosen us to give this true witness of consecrated life, the rehabilitation.



Tonkita durante la riabilitazione.



# The first steps towards the realization of a dream

by Sr. Anna Uyen and Sr. Maria Nhung, from Vietnam

The first three young women who did their novitiate in the Philippines have gone back to Vietnam and they share with us their desire to be missionaries among their own people.

"It's like a dream. Four years ago, we started the postulancy, followed by the novitiate in the Philippines, a really joyous period, despite the challenges of having to adapt to the new culture, a new language and pastoral experience in Korea, with yet another new language. Thereafter, there was a great moment of our lives, the day when we made our vows in the hands of Sr. Martha, the Provincial Superior. We say "goodbye" to the Philippines, with profound gratitude to the Philippine and Korean sisters, for having taken care of us, and for having instructed us to be true mothers; we are back in our country feeling quiet mature. After spending some time in our families, our apostolic life has started. In the spirit of Pope Francis and in response to his invitation, we find ourselves in a new missionary territory - Rach Suc Church - in Can Tho City- the biggest City in the South-eastern part of the Country. The majority of the people in this mission are poor and non-Catholic.

We only carried few things when we came to this place, some utensils, and three packs of personal clothes. We live in a missionary station, where a priest has offered us two small rooms, without a kitchen. After putting everything in place, we looked at ourselves and we smiled: all was the same like when we started four years ago at in Ho Chi Min, the first community in Vietnam. Everything is the same, but we feel different,

we now feel like sisters who are beginning their missionary life with responsibility, as Franciscans called to love the poor.

We started working a day after our arrival, at the Parish Centre where they take care of children. The majority of these children come from poor families, or devastated families and they need a lot of love and care to enable them feel part of a bigger family. In response to Pope Francis, we shall continue to accompany, take care, and offer good and quality education to these children so that they can become active citizens in our society and that they can experience the love of God through our humble missionary work. Please sisters, pray for us so that we may follow the footsteps of our Founders."



# Mr. Trump's ecological polides.

by Nadia Roscini

Quite differently from his predecessor, Barak (very active fighting pollution, who with 195 signed, Countries, the COP21 Agreement to reduce green house gas) Mr. Trump blatantly said he has no intention to respect the Agreement, means the cancellation of Agreement itself.



Ironically, this happened at the Headquarters of EPA, the American Agency for the protection of the environment. This is the end of all previous commitments taken by Mr. Ohama.

In view of the above, let's try to examine the key points of this presidential decree.

Revision of the Clean Power Plan (which aimed to reduce by 32% the level of emissions as of 2005 within the year 2030).

Revision of the law issued by Mr. Obama which compelled all new plants to significantly reduce CO2 emissions. The law in fact made it hardly possible to build new energy plants because of the excessive costs involved (CO2 was to be separated and stored underground).

We do not know at the moment what the new rules will be. It appears that Mr: Pruitt, the new director of EPA, is taking care of the issue (By the way, Mr. Pruitt has always disputed, on legal ground, the environmental policies of president Obama. Also, he is a known negationist of climate change.

The moratorium regarding concessions to dig coal mines on public property shall be cancelled.

Many times in the past environmentalist groups denounced how easily and cheaply these pieces of land were sold; so much so that Obama had to reduce the number of licenses in 2016. This rule, too, shall be cancelled "in order to create new jobs".

This policy is being criticized by many economic observers as the impulse to increase mining activities may not necessarily create new jobs, as a lot of progress has been made using extracting machinery, as asserted by Mr. Robert Godby (an economist at University of Wyoming).

Also the laws for methane emissions resulting from the processing of gas or oil shall be revised

The Obama administration targeted a 40% reduction as of 2012 within the year 2025 by issuing laws that obliged the Companies to repair immediately any leakage or

overflowing that may occur at the mining sites, pipe or gas lines. All this to the delight of the oil tycoons!

Obviously all estimates of the social costs involved, which justified Obama's environmental policies shall be revised, due to "lack of transparency"

During the year 2009 president Obama's

administration asked a number of agencies to give estimates of the social cost caused by a ton of CO2 (with reference to the damage of either draught, flooding or such extreme events due to global warming. In 2015 the cost was estimated at 36 US dollars. For many experts this figure should be reviewed upwards, while Mr. Trump's policy is ready to lower it as it considers only the damages caused in the USA, not those at global level.

However, in the opinion of some observers, many of the measures taken by Obama are so intertwined into the economic tissue of the USA that they might be weakened, not cancelled.

In fact many Companies are in the process of changing to more economical renewable energy sources. Therefore it is very unlikely that these new provisions may stop them. Still, what may be foreseen is the loss of determination to reduce climate change.

If we want to try and survive, we need a big leap forward in this direction, not to keep the "status quo".



7

# Justice and Meace

#### by Sr. Dolores Caneo



As already anticipated in the previous bulletins, we begin today a series of articles, referred to the summary of the Social Doctrine of the Church written in 2004 by the then pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. The summary contains teachings of the Church regarding the social doctrine for the development of an integral humanism (i.e of the whole person) and is in agreement. Each of our commitment to the evangelization, in the service, in the apostolate and in the mission, should be accountable to this teaching. In the introduction to the summary we read: the Church does not get tired to announce the Gospel that gives salvation and true liberty even in temporal things. To the men and women of our time, its companions on the journey, the Church offers its social doctrine.

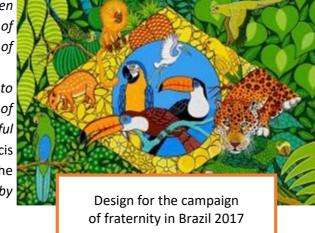
When the Church "accomplishes its mission of announcing the Gospel, it testifies to mankind, in the name of Christ, its dignity and its vocation to the communion of people; it teaches them the demands of justice and of peace, conforming to its divine wisdom". The people made new by the love of God are in position to change the rules and the quality of relations and also the social structures: they are persons capable to take peace where there are conflicts; to build and cultivate fraternal relations where there is hatred., to search for peace where frustration of people by other people dominates. It is only love that is capable to transform in a radical way the relationships of human beings that exist among them. inserting in this prospective, each person of goodwill could foresee the vast horizon of justice and of human development in truth and wellbeing.

Many needy people await help, many who are oppressed await justice, many who are unemployed, await employment, many people await respect: is it possible that in our time there should people dying of hunger? That remain illiterate? That do not access primary health care? That do not have a shelter? The scenario of poverty could become high. Definitely, to the old ways of poverty, new ways could be added; that invest also even the environment and the categories deprived of the economic resources, but exposed to the desperation without sense; to the snare of drugs; to the abandonment of old age or sickness; to the marginalization or to social discrimination... and to hold oneself in desperation in the face of prospective ecological ruin, that renders vast areas of the planet inhabitable and enemy of man. With regard to the problems of peace, often threatened with nightmare of catastrophic wars; or disregarding the fundamental human rights of many people, especially children.

Humanity understands more clearly of being attached to a unique destiny that demands a common assumption of responsibility, inspired by acceptable integral humanism: sees that this unity of destiny is often conditioned by technical or by economical and cautioned of the need for moral knowledge of the majority that orients a common journey. Faced by the multitude of technological innovations, people of our time strongly desire that the progress be finalised for the good of humanity of today and of tomorrow. In these hard times, our commitment should be continuously look towards the building up of this goodwill for all and not for a few. An aspect pertaining to justice and to the safeguarding of creation, in the message of Pope Francis for the campaign for fraternity, encourage by the Church in Brazil for the Lenten season of this year, it was looking at the theme of ecosystems and on the defending of human life, it read: there is need

to be conscious that the environmental degradation is accompanied by social injustice, and it is the poor people that pay for it. We can't even consider the effects of environmental degradation, the actual mode of development and the culture of rejection that is imposed on the life of a person.

This campaign invites us to contemplate, to admire, to thank and to respect the diversity of that manifest in the different ecosystems of Brazil; a true gift from God- through promotion of respectful relationships of the people that live in such contexts. Pope Francis emphasized that this was the greatest challenge in all parts of the earth because environmental degradation is always accompanied by social injustice.



## An explosion of life that becomes Evangelisation ...

#### The Sisters from Indonesia



The Indonesian Mission, opened in 2003, is a very flourishing reality, with many vocations of Consecrated life that opens the hearts of many just by having a look at these young ones full of enthusiasm and joy. Four of them have already made Final vows and this allowed them to open a second community, with only Indonesian Sisters, in the City of Cikarang, in Jacarta. In this period, the Sisters from Medan, together with Korean Friends from Singapore provided Funds from the St. Vincent

Society, to escavate a well to provide water for the Leprosarium of Lou Simomo, where many Leprosy patiens live, with their families. These families were supposed to live with 40 litres water per persone per day. The charity of these friends has allowed to have the bathrooms repaired, new washing basins and a good shelther to work in. Life for these 70 families has changed because where there is water, life changes for the best.





**Kenya** – Sr. Daria Kabwe, after her staying in Malawi, is now leaving for Kenya; Sr. Adelaide, a young Kenyan sister, will leave with her, to opend the new community in Malindi. The area is "transit" area where people coming into town to search for work live. We all know the situation of the coast where 2.700.000 people live with great scarcity of water and where insecurity is daily bread because of the presence of El Shaabab.

**Zambia** – Maria Pia and Sandro Martini, of the "We for Zambia" Association left for Zambia, where every year they work on strenghtening and improving projects that they have carried on for years. Orietta, their daughter i falso full time committed to implemment the life of the Association that works in favour of numerous children.

**Vietnam** – A new Catholic University is opening, after 60 years of expropriation by the Givernent of Universities and Catholic schools. The church in Vietnam counts about 7.000.000 catholics and is rich in priestly and religious vocations who are preparing to become missioneiries.

**Mexico** – There is rejection and suffering among the Mexican Bishops for the proposed building of the wall to be cut off from the United States of America. Meanwhile, Mexico confirms its willingness to continue allowing people from Central America to reach teh United States in search for a better life. The USA Episcopal Conference supports the position of the Mexican Bishops.

Italia – On the 25th. March, the Diocese of Padova concluded the first phase for the beatification of the servant of God, Fr. Ezechiele Ramin, killed in Brasil, where he was defending the poor farmes, on the 24th. July 1985. His example illumines the faith and commitment of the christian communities, strenghtening them in their committent for the struggle to have the land which is theirs.

3

## A life that continues!

by Clara Grillo



Dear Kid sister, I wish to describe you a bit to the readers in these few words, but it's not easy, because despite the fact that the things that I wish to say are many, it's not easy

to express myself with precision on certain aspects about you which are so delicate and profound, but eventually I would have to let myself be guided by the words which I know you would tell me at this moment ... "let yourself be quided by your heart and write with simplicity"... well, i'll try... Barbara had lived with a long illness for about six years, last July she became very sick, she was admitted in the hospice and in February she passed on. Let me say something about her illness because, though it was a "pressing" illness, during the last months of her life, the illness could not take away her joy of living, she always had a smile for everyone, was available, and much more.... These experiences, this difficult path would certainly put one to the test, but often times when we spoke to her we could also see the "potential" of what we ourselves were experiencing. It's difficult to think of it. In certain criticalities she was constrained to look into herself in a more profound manner, to face her fears or to simply learn how to live with the fact that one would not manage to overcome them, but even that helps us to grow and to discover more about ourselves. I often get to think that the experience I had with my sister in the last months of her illness, the affection, which was communicated in a simple glance, the comfrontation on difficult themes like death and many others, maybe I would not have lived it in the entire life that I shared with her. You would say "simple consolation", maybe yes, but this is our journey and I know that we have an obligation towards ourselves and towards those who leave us here on earth to live life to the full with love and a positive approach to LIFE.

Let's now go back to her... In some of our discussions, Barbara spoke to me about her dear friend, Sr. Barbara from the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi and of what she was doing in Zambia. When she received a text message from Sr. Barbara or the videos of children, and celebrations with marvelous songs, she would share with me, her friends and she was very happy to see how even in their poverty these children, men and women always had a smile, seeing the particular strength with which this

friend was going on with the aim of improving the conditions of life of this small village, seeing how really one can do more with little. The friendship that she had with Sr. Barbara and with other sisters of Assisi was strong and even though I don't know much about their relationship, one could perceive this affection from the joy which she expressed with her eyes whenever she received a text message or a phone call. In such situations and experiences of life, there's a spontaneous coming to birth of the desire to try and do something according to ones capabilities; to a certain extent, after death, we have two very close friends of Sr. Barbara to reflect on what she would have loved to do, how she would have loved to leave a message of "continuity", in one way or the other. Then came the idea of proposing a donation instead of flowers or other things for the function. None of the three of us at that moment had doubts, we all said "yes, certainly this is what she would have wanted". The message that is coming to my mind which I would want to leave for you is that of CONTINUITY; through the life of Barbara and to a certain extent through the end of her earthly life. All the people who knew her and loved her gathered to give a donation just as she would have loved; she was a gift to all and knowing that she can continue to be so for her long-distance friends who fight against poverty and other difficult situations, is a message of LIFE AND HOPE. Nothing dies, everything remains, it's only that it is transformed a thousand time in a manner that we don't even know; even in a difficult journey like the one she had, especially in the last months of her life, can eventually leave a beautiful mark in peoples' hearts, even some form of practical help for the needy.

Here my kid sister, I hope I said everything that you would have loved to say, together lets embrace all the friends who are reading this with all the affection which we know you are capable of! Continue to guide us from where you



Barbara during a meeting at Casa Emmaus in Assisi

# The 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation remembered in Assisi

Goumenism

by Sr. Bernaveta Ciobanu

There was a meeting at the Franciscan Centre for Ecumenical Dialogue in Assisi (CEFID) on 18th March with the theme "500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation", where speakers specialized in ecumenism and Franciscanism participated. The meeting was divided into two parts: in the first part the following themes were analysed: *Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation in Germany*", assigned to Jens-Martin Kruse, a pastor of the Evangelical Protestant church in Rome; "the spiritual protestant movements in Finland", conducted by Taneli Ala-Opes a protestant pastor from Finland, and was concluded by "the Christians of the reformation, the Franciscan Friars and the city of Assisi", a topic that was entrusted to Fr. Silvestro Bejan, the OFM Conventual's General delegate for ecumenism and interreligious dialogue and Director of CEFID. The second part was dedicated to prayer and ecumenical celebration, presided over by Fr. Francesco Lenti, the Rector of the post-novitiate, Franciscanum, and by Fr. Antti Kruus, a Finish protestant pastor. The choice of Assisi, other than its "obligation" owing to its character and ecumenical vocation, also came about due to the fact that for many reasons, in the city of the "poor man" the protestants "are at home".

The contrast between the two figures of Francis and Luther which came out in the various inputs, were quiet interesting. Francis of Assisi dedicated his whole life at the service of others and he imitated Jesus Christ, according to his capability, dying with the stigmata on his hands and feet and lighted a light that illumines (and guides) the Church even today. Martin Luther, a German monk who knew very well the Franciscan spirituality, especially through St. Bonaventure and Duns Scot, and was irritated by the "sins" of the Church and its people, scandalised by the distance between the Church and the Gospel. Luther was a reformer very different from Francis, though they had in common the inner depth and enthusiasm for the Christian faith, however, he was a son of other times and other countries and he was a fighter armed with all the arms of the spirit and angry for the scripture, and he was ready to destroy all the deceit and abuse in order to build. From the widespread relativism, he decided to make the Church better by condemning it. This resulted into a schism, division, and centuries of war. One aspect that both of them have in common, was sentiment: they both loved God with zeal and dedication, with all their strength (physical), with all their mind (intellect), and with all their heart (sentiment). In their lives, they dedicated and gave themselves to be at the service of God. But there came a time when they had to decide whether to serve God or to serve their own project. One aspect that distinguishes them is the reformation. The first one – a rich young man – preached a return to the origins, to simplicity and evangelical poverty; he did this by serving the poor, by incarnating that which he was preaching and, above all, he always acted in obedience to the Church and the Pope. The second one – an elderly monk – preached a return to simplicity and evangelical purity, but he had put one foot out and then the other foot outside the Catholic Church; he distanced himself from the Pope, from the tradition (apostolic) and eventually he no longer accomplished what he preached. Together with him, millions of Catholics left the Church. The results were contrary. Francis, the poor man, reformed the Church. Martin, the monk, divided it, shattered it. Their works are known from their fruits. Where they God's works or personal gestures? The German Church is called Lutheran because was founded by Luther, the Church in Rome, Instead is called Catholic, which means "universal", Because it was founded by Christ, who is God. If it were to

be calledamasse "the Franciscan Church" one would say that something.



The photo on top: was during the meeting

The photo on the right: was during the ecumenical prayer

