

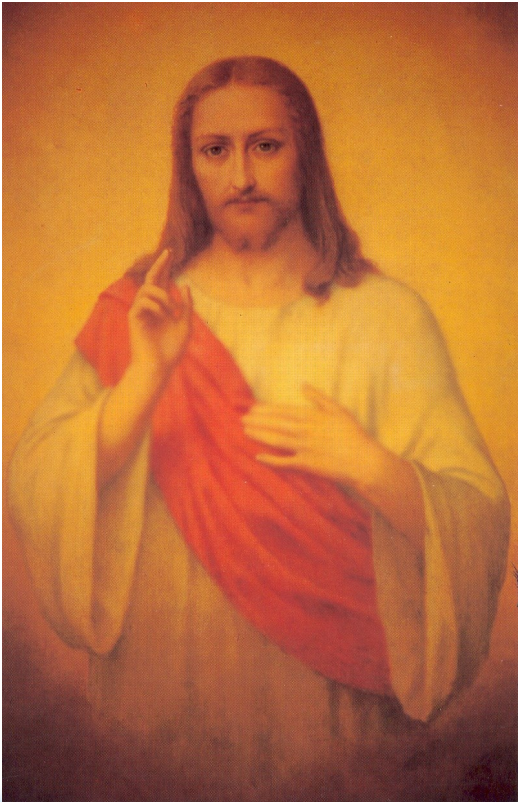


# Interconnections

NO. 61

FEBRUARY 2022

INFO/COM SERVICE



**'I AM**

**WHO**

**I AM'**

**(1822 - 2022)**



**RELIVING OUR MEMORIES**

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The Miraculous Benediction on 3rd February 1822, Sr. Marie Louise Francoise Peychaud, who did not see the apparition, but her eyes closed in deep prayer, heard these words in heart.



*"I am the One who is and there is no other. Honour and the esteem of creatures are but smoke and I am the One who is. Their friendship is but dust and I am the One who is. Wealth and pleasure are but mud and I am the One who is and there is no other."*

**WEBSITE :** <http://www.saintefamillebordeaux.org/>

**FACEBOOK:** Sainte-Famille Bordeaux

**YOUTUBE:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBa2x1ncfYtTiFUasEoseSg>

## EDITORIAL

Everyone treasures some memories in their life! It can be in childhood, adulthood, Sisterhood, etc. These memories help us to cherish and re-live the delightful times in our lives. Memories become stories that we tell hundreds and thousands of times to others. The beautiful thing about our memories is that, not only are they beautiful to us, they are also interesting to others. Our memories can encourage, give happiness to others. Some memories never fade.



The celebration of the bi-centenary of our Eucharistic Miraculous Benediction on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 was a wonderful opportunity to journey with our Founder and Early Mothers who underwent confusion and struggles in the early life of the Association. However, the Lord affirmed them through the Eucharistic Miraculous Benediction: 'I am who I am', and continues his blessings until today. Let us acknowledge God's faithfulness and unfathomable love flowing through every second of our life. Each one of belongs to a unique and blessed people, privileged to continue our journey in this Sacred Family and to experience the same Lord in our life.

The bicentenary celebrations of the foundation of the Holy Family and the Miraculous Benediction inspire and encourage us to move forward together with one mind and heart. May these memories become a journal of love to overflowing with the fragrance of the Holy Family in our era.



## HERE IN ROME

## GENERALATE

It is obvious that in the Generalate, persons in different services will change after any General Chapter. As part of the transition following our 20th General Chapter, our Local Community in Rome bids farewell to those who have served here, and welcomes new members.

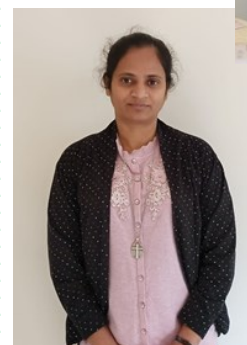
### GOOD BYES:

Monica ALEXANDER, having served here as secretary for 18 years in two different terms, has returned to Colombo, Sri Lanka, her Province of origin. Maristella Annie ANTHONIPILLAI from Jaffna, has been working here for the Information Communications for 7 years and will also be returning soon to Sri Lanka. Gratitude and wishes of wellbeing and love are extended to them.



### WELCOME:

Mercy Rani JEBAMALAI from the Unit of India has joined us to work for the Information Communications service. After a time of being in quarantine she is already being initiated into the service. A warm welcome to the Generalate community. We wish her a fruitful experience as she integrates herself to a multicultural community and blessings for her ongoing journey.



It's not the end! As we all know there are changes in the General Leadership Team. By the time you receive this publication, two new members will have already arrived, and the third is still making her travel arrangements. As soon as the handover is complete, those members who have finished their mandate will move on. All this will be notified later through our means of communication.

## EARTHEN VESSEL- WHAT TREASURE LIES WITHIN?

Sr. Maristella Arokiam - ITALY

Humanity is afraid to die. The fear of death is inherited, but the global health crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic has given our contemporaries a very vivid awareness of human fragility, radicality and general questioning and reassessment.

It is quite clear that "The Covid-19 virus has totally changed our way of living in community, our interpersonal relationships and even our spiritual practices".

The light of inspiration comes essentially from hope in faith. All is not lost

Our Founder, Pierre Bienvenu Noailles, taught us to discern the presence of God, in joy or sorrow, through everyday events.

The global health crisis is a call to conversion to a new way of life, in awareness of our human frailty.

A painful ordeal like the Covid-19 Pandemic can generate in us a specific charism offered by God for the salvation of humanity.

**The pandemic makes us aware of human frailty.**

Pope Francis tells us that we must never forget that we are like "vessels of clay" in which to cherish the treasure that God has given us: the revelation of the mystery of the Incarnation. When we forget this, we deceive ourselves into thinking that we are something other than clay; this turns our heads and we think that we are greater than we are.

**We are like clay vessels that contain an immense treasure.**

The apostle Paul, a simple, frail and physically challenged



man, renounced the grand phrases suggested by human wisdom. Yet it was to him on the road to Damascus that Jesus fully revealed himself, inviting him to make His light known to all. Paul was the first to realize the gap between the greatness of his mission and the weakness of his own per-

son: a treasure hidden in a poor clay pot. *We often make the same observation nothing our poverty, our inadequacy, our powerlessness in the face of situations that are beyond us. We perceive our tendency to evil, and the difficulty of resisting it because of the weakness of our will. Like Paul, we feel we are vessels made of clay.*

**We have shared our personal experience during this time of the epidemic:**

In general, we have lived it with difficulty. We of course have to obey the rules imposed by the government to protect others and ourselves. The constraints of isolation before, during and after the contamination ... remembering that we live in a community ... being deprived of Mass, community meetings, apostolic activities (such as taking communion to homes, etc.) Repeating the instructions and constantly warning of the danger, sometimes created tension.

But at the same time, there is the awareness that this time calls us to live in communion with the sufferings of people

around the world. It calls us to recognize God's love and blessing upon us, to live in thanksgiving.

Because of the coronavirus, the Sisters of the Marino community have gone through a difficult period with successive times of isolation, quarantine, and transfers to other more suitable healthcare structures.

On April 4, 2021, the feast of Easter was lived in the joy of the Risen Lord, but in the suffering of not being able to participate in any liturgy, not receiving the Eucharist, not living "together". But there was no shortage of greetings and contacts, transmitted by internal telephone or by the service personnel.

The community suffered a great deal from Covid, because of these repeated times of isolation, but what was hardest to live with was the death of three Sisters in the space of 20 days.

However, life goes on... We wanted to boost our morale, so after so many months of isolation we took the risk of organizing the 2021 Jubilee celebrations of the Italian Province in Marino, the house of the elderly Sisters.

We celebrated our 4 jubilarians: Daniela PALLOTA and Giovanna PAPA 60 years of religious life, Gertie PEIRIS, 50 years and Jacqueline IMBUNGU, 25 years. On Sep-



tember 25, all the Sisters of the Italian Province, together with Ana Maria, the General Council, and the local community of the General House, gathered to give thanks with them and to surround them with our affection and our prayer, in the presence of our older Sisters, who are precious in our Holy Family Institute.

We also thank the Lord for having allowed us to live this celebration together, despite this pandemic and after so many months of absence. It was a great joy for all.

Looking at the clay vessels that we are, we could lose heart. But what is valuable -

and what we want to focus on - is the treasure we carry within us!

St. Paul knew that his clay vessel was filled with the light of Christ, which gave him the audacity to dare everything for the spreading of the Kingdom.

As Sisters of the Holy Family, we too carry an infinite treasure: the Holy Trinity.

If we look within ourselves, we can discover an immensity, a divine sun shining within us and around us.

Let us go beyond appearances, beyond the "clay pot" that we see in others, let us also discover the treasure that they are.

Plecka Dabrowa in Poland - a small community of three sisters situated in the countryside, on the side of a national road where trucks pass just beneath the windows. The sisters serve in a primary school here and in the diocesan curia in a town 15 kilometers away. Sister Marta, who is 82 years old, is also part of the community. While the other sisters minister outside, she does so on the spot, in response to the needs of Providence, which in different ways and circumstances offers many opportunities for planned or unexpected encounters with people.



It is almost evening, I am alone at home. The doorbell rings. I open it and see a young man in front of me. His face is so strange. I think: My God, are those burns? He comes closer and I see that his neck and face are covered with tattoos. In a trembling voice, he says: Praise be to Jesus. Will I be able to attend Mass at your house tomorrow morning? Some time ago, I saw this man kneeling on the pavement, and the priest praying over him after he had completed the sacrament of penance. Two days earlier, we had heard from a neighbour that a certain Mariusz, a converted prisoner, was living and working in their house. I guessed that it was him. The next day, at 6.50 am, he was already in the chapel. He participated in the Eucharist with enthusiasm. He answered the Mass, he secretly wiped away tears. He

helped me to have a special experience of the Eucharist. His words in saying goodbye: I do not organize my life anymore. I allow God to lead me .

Another encounter comes to mind: five men, aged between 22 and 60, as I later learned. Pilgrims who had stayed with us two months ago. I was alone again and it was already evening, but

I had no reservations about them. They had just returned from Gietrzwałd and said that Our Lady had told them to stay here. Are you forming some kind of community? - I asked. "Yes," said the oldest, "the Community of the Converted". We talked for hours about conversion, about the joy of knowing God, about their difficult journey. They are all in love with Our Lady. They told us how she led them: We are poor, we entrust ourselves to our Mother. People feed us, even if we don't ask for it.

Who knows these beautiful stories? Most of the time, we talk about what's wrong... I thanked the Lord for Mariusz from Silesia and for those five converts from Lednica.

The Church, Lord, is your house, and you invite whomever you want. Be glorified, Lord, throughout the history of salvation! The gates of hell shall not prevail against your Church.

## ASEC

The Major Superiors in Lesotho have become a member of ASEC (African Sisters Educative Collaborative) since 2016. A Holy Family Sister was nominated as the first coordinator of the programme in the country at its inception.

This is a non-profit programme educating Catholic Sisters in Africa, to equip them with skills needed for their ministries in their Institutes and the entire Church. The countries involved include Lesotho, South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania Uganda, Cameroon etc.



The programme includes the following course;  
**1. SLDI** (Sisters Leadership Development Initiative), which equip Sisters with computer skills, management and financial skills over a period of three years. The Sisters are educated at the workshop during the school holidays for a

## LESOTHO

month over a period of three years after which they graduate. This has helped many Sisters in their respective areas.

**2.HESA** (Higher Education for Sisters in Africa) which is at the University / College level. This funds Sisters in respective academic courses of their choice if they qualify to enter university.

The Holy Family Sisters of the Unit of Lesotho are now enjoying the fruits of this programme.

The first SLDI administration / finance track students graduated in 2018 with 3 members, while the second graduated in July 2021 with three members also.

The first group of the HESA students from the University of Lesotho graduated in December 2021. One Holy Family Sister graduated, while there are two more Sisters who are continuing their studies through this programme. The programme now is under the administration of the Congregation of the Sisters of Sacred Heart and it is still flourishing.

Our gratitude to the Lesotho Major Superiors who are putting their efforts to ensure that the Sisters are educated in different areas, for the betterment of their ministries and pastoral activities in the Church.



## BICENTENARY CELEBRATION OF THE MIRACULOUS BLESSING

February 3rd lived differently. Didn't the Twentieth General Chapter of our Religious Institute invite us to break out of our mental models? The two-year celebration of the Miraculous Blessing of the family of Pierre Bienvenu NOAILLES in D.R. Congo/Burkina gave us an opportunity to do so. Leaving our traditional adoration practices, the members of different Holy Family vocations in DR Congo/Burkina mobilized not only for the decoration of our chapels, they also prepared their hearts to mark this founding event of our Holy Family history and to extend this blessing to the people of God to whom we are sent. Conferences, pastoral visits, media broadcasts, a Triduum of adoration, a Parish Mass sung by the three vocations, so many means were used to help radiate our charism.

The TELAMA bulletin shares with us its exchange with our different communities as they recount their lived experience:

**Hello Burkina**, *what initiatives did you take to mark this great event?*

"We lived this moment of adoration with our Christians and our students in the parish. The prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude to God invited us to develop trust and abandonment to Providence, after the

example of our first mothers.

The presence of the other Christians, who came to join us, comforted us in our mission, having the certainty of God's presence in our midst.

The community of **Kikwit** speaks to us:

We gathered with the Lay Associates and the Christians of the parish of Our Lady of the Rosary for the Prayer of Adoration, this 3rd February 2022 in the local church.

**Community of Lakas**, *what do you have to share with us for this February 3rd 2022 different from other years?*

"We celebrated this event with great joy.

During the preparation of this bicentenary, we visited different villages where the Lay Associates are located, in order to strengthen and revitalize their presence and enthusiasm in the living of the Holy Family Mission. On 3<sup>rd</sup> February, Lay Associates, Apostolic Religious and other parishioners spent a time of adoration in recognition of this founding event of our nascent family.

**Community of Gungu** (Diocese of Kikwit). *What did you do for this important event in our Holy Family history?*

"During the preparation of this event, we, Lay Associates and Apostolic Religious, undertook

## D.R.C / BURKINA FASO

to translate the prayer prepared at Institute-level for this purpose into the local language, so that everyone could participate. Together we also animated radio broadcasts with the aim of making known our Family and the meaning and profound sense of the Eucharist and adoration".

**Idiofa Centre /Novitiate / Manding** communities, would you like to share your experience with the whole Institute? "We organised ourselves together with the Lay Associates and the Consecrated Seculars in order to live this event in a significant way through certain actions, namely: a broadcast on the diocesan radio of Adoration and Mass. Already in the morning, a Eucharist was celebrated for this intention. We ended the day with the Renewal of the Vows of two Secular members.

It was a time of joy, an experience of being and creating family, and a celebration of our diversity.

Community of Patu/Kongo-Central; the Telama newsletter is waiting to hear from you some of your experiences for February 3, 2022.

"The celebration was centred on a time of meditation and intense prayer lived in community. We went beyond this



framework to make ourselves heard over the airwaves, inviting the people of God to participate in the prayer of Adoration followed by the Eucharist celebrated in the parish church. Finally, we shared with the Christians of Patu our existence as a five-vocation family.

**Communities of Banda and Ngashi** comment:

"Students, families of Lay Associates, other Christians joined us to participate in the different activities organised: the conference animated by the Apostolic Sisters and a Lay Associate to explain the meaning of this important event.

**Communities of Kingabwa/Kipase and Bibwa (Kinshasa):** *What good wind brings you to the TELAMA bulletin for this landmark event in our history?*

"Being a blessing to each other is a joy for our family life.

Since 28 December 2020, we have been praying with the text sent to the whole Family in preparation for this great event. Throughout this time, this phrase has accompanied us: *Jesus blesses us so that we become a blessing to*

*others.*

This was the focus when our three communities, the Lay Associates (couples and young people) and the Secular in formation, gathered in the Kiwanuka/Kingabwa parish to remember the blessings received from God in and through the Family of Pierre Bienvenu NOAILLES.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was the moment of thanksgiving and praise. At the end of this prayer, each vocation made itself known to the Christian community of the parish, inviting them to find their place in this Family and to share the richness of its charism. The parish priest (Father Quévin, Salesian of Don Bosco), closed this moment of prayer with the procession of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church.

Here we are at the end of our exchanges. This invitation is offered to the whole Family of PIERRE NOAILLES: At the beginning of our tercentenary, let us welcome this Miraculous Blessing as a grace, and rediscover the fervour of our First Mothers, as we continue our journey.



We, the Sisters of the Holy Family in Congo, are contributing to the process of the Synod in our diocese of Idiofa through the reflections of the first phase of the Synodal Consultation. This assembly brought together religious men and women, diocesan priests, consecrated seculars and pastoral animators around the local Bishop under the theme of "participation and communion", which is in line with the expectations of our local Church for a new beginning.

During these meetings, the first part of the synodal consultation was shared around the following three points

- ⇒ **The Companions on the Journey**
- ⇒ **Listening**
- ⇒ **Speaking out**

Concerning the first point, it emerges that we are all companions on a journey towards the Kingdom. We are a local Church made up of pastors and faithful who are on this journey together, and it is Christ who asks us to embark on this journey. Apart from all those who are members, there are those outside the Church whose faith we are called to respect.

As for the second point: Listening, we realised that this attitude is the first step along the path. It requires us to have an open mind and heart, without prejudice. We came to realise that there is a category of people in the Church who, for many reasons, are often not listened to: children, women, young people, politicians, those who do not share the same faith as us, Christians who are ill in various ways (physical, spiritual, moral). Some people are listened to with reserve and discrimination.

Also with regard to listening, some participants felt that social and cultural contexts are not often listened to, or if they are listened to, it is with prejudice and stereotyping. However, we noticed that via ecclesial structures, the faithful



are able to listen to consecrated persons and work together to achieve common goals.

At the same time, we feel an urgency to develop our capacity to listen to the new forms of life that are emerging in the realities of our context.

The final point of this sharing focused on the capacity to "speak out" in the Church. Indeed, the freedom to express oneself has its place in the Church as well as in society. But sometimes, Christians are afraid to speak out, fearing the consequences that this may entail, especially when it comes to telling certain truths to the authorities.

The reflections in the first part of the preparation of the Synod are, in fact, helping us to become aware of our place in society and in the Church as Sisters of the Holy Family, connected to our reality as a Family in our world. After this first phase of reflection, we feel the desire and responsibility to continue this process with all the Christian faithful.

“The long-awaited dream has come true” last year December 2021, the Unit of Rwanda / Uganda was privileged to witness the commitments of Holy Family Lay Associates. **Glory to God alone in Jesus Christ through Mary and St Joseph.**

As a Unit we thank God for this great blessing showered on our Unit and the Institute at large. Fifty Holy Family Lay Associates made their commitments in the month of December 2021: 18 members from Rushaki parish Rwanda, 16 from Buhara parish Uganda and 16 from Gikongoro, Rwanda. The commitments took place on different days according to the arrangement of the parishes. The Rushaki group was the first to make commitment on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021, followed by Buhara on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and finally Gikongoro on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2021,

the Feast of the Holy family in which we were united with the whole family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles and the family of God, the Church. We thank God for this vocation of Lay Associates to our Spiritual Family; we thank them for their self-giving to God and for committing themselves to live the Holy Family Charism in the Church. We appreciate their patience and perseverance, as most of them have spent long time in formation. The journey to reach the day of commitment was long but they never faltered

– rather, they kept going with joyful hope that one day God would fulfil their desire.

**Rushaki community 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021**

Both groups had intensive preparations before making commitment in order to understand the importance of giving themselves for the mission. One of the group in Rwanda (Rushaki group) was facilitated by Sr Julia the Unit Leader. In her talk to the group she said that this self-giving requires a deepening of the Holy Family spirit consist of



imitating Jesus, Mary and Joseph whose lives were centred on God alone.

Our lives as members of the Holy Family should be centred on the Eucharist and the Word of God.

Both groups after commitment felt that they were ready to go and spread the good news of our Charism to other families in the places where they are.

**Buhara community 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

The commitment happened in the Church during the celebra-

tion of the Eucharist. Afterwards, the Lay Associates expressed their great gratitude to the Sisters who journeyed with them from the beginning of formation to the time of commitment. They also thanked the Sisters who bore witness by their self-giving to God and to their brothers and sister Lay Associates. They expressed that this journey was not easy. It was by the grace of God and the support from our elder Holy Family Sisters who walked with them and supported them both spiritually and financially to the day of commitment. Even after commitment, the Sisters promised their spiritual support in the new journey they have just started.

Both groups prepared a delicious meal for those who came to witness their commitment; this was served after the celebration of the Eucharist. Among of those who had come for Holy Mass many expressed their desire to join the group Family.

As a Unit of Rwanda /Uganda, we thank God for all he has been to our brothers and sisters in their journey of faith as Holy family Lay Associates. May Jesus, Mary and Joseph lead them in their daily life as they continue to deepen and live the Spirituality of Holy family institute.

**Glory to God Alone in Jesus Christ through Mary and St . Joseph.**

Four Novices from Pakistan: Abida Parveen, Sanam Arshad, Sonam Kalid and Shame Akhtar and two from Sri Lanka: Harsha Fernando and Meusiya Veerasena were members of the intercultural novitiate in Sri Lanka. After their formation they returned to their respective Units to make first commitment.



We are privileged to write about our international novitiate experience in Sri Lanka. God gave us this beautiful opportunity to mingle with other cultures. We are inspired by their way of living, their rituals, languages, delicious food, environment and people. Here we have enough time to be with the Lord to encounter Him within ourselves. Prayer is what always keeps us alert in Christ. When we pray we find ourselves becoming stronger persons. In prayer, we accept our weaknesses and strengths. Here we are very happy to be Holy Family novices. We appreciate our Sisters who willingly helped us in each and every moment to integrate our life through daily

life experience. Through the rich experience of living together with our companions we came to accept our differences, finding that each one is unique, and that uniqueness brought us together as one family. It is the Spirit of faith and the Charism of our Founder that is leading us beyond our boundaries. We helped each other and learned from each other. We enjoyed our journey together. We also enjoyed the atmosphere of silence and solitude; we felt God's presence in

us and around. We enjoyed the flexibility of time and rhythm of the novitiate life-style. Specially we are glad to have had a great experience with nature. We were very happy to keep our garden clean and plant fruits and vegetables. We experienced a good relationship with lay people as well as with our Holy Family Associates, they are very loving and caring. We appreciated their hospitality towards us. Actually, it is God's love what we have received through others during our time of formation in Sri Lanka.

**Abida, Sanam, Sonam and Shameen.**

**Sharing our oneness - from Sri Lankan Novices**

We are happy to share our intercultural living experience in the novitiate in our country. As we have already experienced for more than one year, we are very close to each other and we don't want to forget our enriched experience and the golden memories with our companions. Journeying together as people with different back-



grounds, languages and ideas is not an easy task. However, with deep listening, understanding in God and the help of our community Sisters we were able to experience the difference and the spirits of oneness in each and everything. We thank our Creator God for our dear Founder and

his deepest desire, which lives from generation to generation: the spirit of “COMMUNION”. We are proud of our big Family. The God of the Universe gave us this blessed opportunity to love, share, live and experience our lives with other cultures. During our period of the novitiate, we also faced and experienced the Covid-19 Pandemic that affected to our daily life style. Together we prayed and shared our lives by bringing our different ideas together. We had enough time to be with our

companions, to learn, and to share our cultural values. We are inspired by their beautiful life style, which they lived with us during this period. Their cultural ways of interacting with each other helped us to get to know and to be free with each other. Our rhythm of life in the novitiate and our environment also helped and taught us to be with each other.

**Harsha and Meusiya**

## ‘COUNTING THE BLESSINGS WITH GRATFUL HEART’

### Jaffna Unit -SRI LANKA

We, the PBN Family members of our Association are privileged to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year 2022 of the Miraculous Benediction. It took place in 1822 in a small community, at the beginning of the Foundation of the Holy Family of Bordeaux, the Family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles. It is very appropriate to quote the statement of our Holy Father Pope Francis “It is love that transforms: ordinary things become extraordinary when they are done with love”.

What does this date mean to the Family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles? It means that the seeds of what has become a big **Tree** produces different kind of fruits, attracts all kind of birds to enjoy themselves on the tree and sing....The tree has grown and has spread its branches towards the peripheries of countries beyond ethnicity, language and culture. The roots are firm and holding up the tree to be strong and steady to bear more fruits.

A branch of the tree was rooted in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. We are thankful for our pioneers from abroad and ours of Sri Lanka. Their faith and commitment are still alive in us and in our people. In this special year of 2022 we, the Jaffna Unit organized an hour of Eucharistic Adoration every day in our communities for 200 days, starting from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 till on 30<sup>th</sup> January

2022 in gratitude for the Blessings received from the beginning of our Association.

Apart from this every-day adoration, the ULT planned to devote one and half-hours Adoration on every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 9.00 to 10.30 p.m. Responsibilities were shared by the Councillors with the ‘Teams of Participation’.



They organized the adoration with the other members of PBN Family according to their convenience, covering all areas/clusters such as the Provincialate, Mannar, Batticaloa, Passaiyor, Ilvalai, Jaffna and Uruthirapuram. All the communities with the other vocations participated via Zoom.

Not only the members of PBN family, but other people in the areas also started coming for the adoration. They gave priority for this time to sit in front of the Eucharistic Lord, experiencing consolation, tranquility and peace of mind. They shared with our Sisters the changes that took place in their personal and family life. The impact of the coronavirus, interruptions caused by sickness, economic crisis, education, lack of interest in doing any good work, frustration, misuse of modern technology, involvement in violence, all these engulfed the happiness of families. This situation also made many people recall and reflect on their life individually and as families. In the past years they were not able to participate in the Liturgy but from mid 2021, there was a little release from those restrictions. So, people were able to seek consolation only by praying in the churches.

Jesus loved us so much that he wanted to remain with us. and because of this, he gave his life in the form of Bread for us. During his lifetime on earth, he shared himself with others in many ways. The Eucharist is the source and summit to our life of faith. It is from him, through the Eucharist, that we draw the desire for his Kingdom. We too are called to follow Jesus, to be ready to break ourselves for our brothers and Sisters to bring them into one family in the heart of our Church.

In his Encyclical 'FRATELLI TUTTI' #181, the Pope says; "Every commitment inspired by the Church's social doctrine is derived from charity, which according to the teaching of Jesus is the synthesis of entire Law. This means acknowledging that love overflowing with small gestures of mutual care, is also civil, political, and it makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world. For this reason, charity finds expression not only in close and intimate relationships but also in 'macro-relationships': social, economic and political."



The Synodal renewal of the life and mission of the Church is a great privilege for the people as well as for the Religious to be in solidarity with all. As we celebrate the blessings of 200 years, we also renew our life and deepen our faith in the Eucharist, which was established by Christ Jesus to be with us till the end of the world. This gives us strength and courage to increase our fidelity in carrying out our mission, the Mission of Christ that brings all scattered children into one. The aim and dream of our Founder was 'to be one family'. The Encyclical 'FRATELLI TUTTI' of our Holy Father Pope Francis also gives us an affirmation to carry out our mission to proclaim, "We are all brothers and Sisters, we are all one Family". The Pope expresses the same spirituality as that that of our Founder; inter-connectedness, inter-relatedness, inter-dependence and 'One Family'. Wherever the Pope goes, he sows seeds of peace and walks alongside the poor, the abandoned, the infirm and the outcast, the least of his brothers and sisters. Our Founder established our Institute for this same purpose.

The miracles of Jesus had the aim to affirm the faith and to increase the faith of the people. Likewise, the Eucharistic miracles which take place all around the world have increased the faith of Christians to a great extent. The repeated apparitions of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection are clear signs to strengthen their faith. However, once they believed in Jesus they began to bear witness, to the extent of sacrificing their own lives. The Transfiguration of Jesus was a fore taste of heavenly glory, which would become a reality after the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. The curiosity or an anxiety to see a miracle is in our human nature. Jesus demanded faith before performing miracles. Every miracle is indeed a call to a deeper faith and thanksgiving.

**EU + CHRIST which means you and me - Jesus and Vimala.**

Every day I reach the Church early to prepare myself for the Eucharistic celebration. During the Eucharistic service, Jesus encounters me through the penitential rite and the Word of God and I receive His healing power for my ministry. I am privileged to share with you my experiences of the Eucharistic Lord in my life.

During the Eucharistic adoration, I praise, worship, adore and thank Him for His benevolent love. I encounter Jesus when I sit with Him and listen to Him. He speaks in silence and whenever I keenly listen, I can hear his voice. One day as I was sitting in prayer, I heard an inner voice, saying Vimala I am suffering, and at the same time, I heard a voice in front of our convent gate calling 'Sister, Sister', and immediately I went out to see and I saw a man suffering from itching all over the body and vomiting. As soon as I took him inside the Holy Family First Aid Centre at Mangalombombu, I checked the vital signs of the patient, and I understood the severity of the condition. Before I could treat the patient, he collapsed in the bed. I was stunned and called on the Eucharistic Lord to help me to save his life. In a fraction of a second I asked the man who was standing near me to start the CPR (Cardio -Pulmonary Resuscitation), and in the meantime by listening to the cry of the attenders, the Sisters also reached and started to load medications. I understood that, each and every second is important to save his life so I started intravenous line (IV), gave lifesaving drug and continued with CPR. I could see from the monitor that the strait line changed into starting graph PQRST complex and asked Jesus to give him a healing touch. After twenty minutes of struggle from the shock, he regained consciousness and started to talk. Immediately I sent him to a Multispecialty hospital for further treatment and on the way to hospital, he was totally alright. They gave a checkup and treated him and on the same day he returned home fully recovered.

Another day, in the middle of the night, the whole community was asleep and someone rang the entrance bell. I got up and in the meantime, Srs. Viyakulam and Milred woke up. We went near to the gate



there were eight people in front of the gate with the complaint of diarrhea and vomiting due to consuming the field mushrooms. The owner and the family too were affected. We did not have enough beds to treat them so we put two by two in each bed and started the treatment. Most of them were in need of drip alone. I could not do everything by myself and each one started to help me. It was a real struggle to treat all. After sometime with the medications, two little girls and two elderly persons stopped vomiting. For others the problem was still persisting. Meanwhile many others also reached the centre with the same problem. The whole night and day we treated them and they became normal. My prayer was '*Jesus in the Holy Eucharist save us/them.*'

I conclude with the words of Pope Francis "*When you understand that the Word of God is real then you will sit at the side of the Father and listen to him. The Father who is in heaven comes lovingly and sits near to you. The Lord the good teacher will teach you the correct message.*" I daily thank the Lord for His miraculous presence in the Eucharist and His marvellous blessing on my healing ministry. I believe He is our great healer.

" Realize that true happiness lies within you.  
Waste no time and effort searching for peace and contentment  
and joy in the world outside.  
Remember that there is no happiness in having or in getting,  
but only in giving. Reach out. Share. Smile. Hug.  
Happiness is a perfume  
you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself."

Remembering a Miraculous Blessing of the Eucharistic Lord two hundred years after its occurrence is indeed a great gift. This was the priceless gift bestowed on the members of the Holy Family of Bordeaux at its very beginning.

The PBN Family Team of the Colombo Unit came up with an action plan, the idea of sharing when they remembered this great event. As a mark of the preparation of the Bicentenary celebration of the Eucharistic Apparition, in appreciation and thanks to God our Father, they decided to give food parcels to 200 needy families of the Colombo Unit. Each cell did their bit and worked really selflessly on 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> December to make this work a success for this event.

The members were able to make even more than the number required and were happy to give them out to the families of the needy and the destitute. Christmas 2021 was a happy one for them as the families enjoyed an adequate meal on this day. The pandemic had left its mark specially on these needy families and times were extremely hard for them financially. What a joy it was to see them gathered together around the table to enjoy a good meal on this joyous day of our Saviour's birth! Moments of appreciation and thanks were aplenty with the contented and smiling faces of the children and adults.

Thanks, and a sense of appreciation poured in to the Sisters and the members of the PBN Family who were the ones responsible for this deed of feeding the poor.



*And if you give yourself to the hungry  
And satisfy the desire of the afflicted,  
Then your light will rise in darkness  
And your gloom will become like midday.  
Isaiah 58:10*



## IN A SYNODAL CHURCH WHICH ANNOUNCES THE GOSPEL

### WE “WALK TOGETHER” AS FAMILY

Synodality in the words of Pope Francis highlights and focus on the touchstones of PARTICIPATION, COMMUNION and MISSION which are the base of our Holy Family Charism – the legacy left to us by our venerable Founder Pierre Bienvenu Noailles to live, to experience, to share and to spread as well, wherever we are present as the Family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles. This “Walking Together” is consciously taken forward through the same touch-stones of Participation, Communion and Mission by us as “Family” which was in the mind of our Founder in his own words:

“In devoting yourselves to the works of the Association, you have not separated yourselves from those who live under the common law. As companions of their good angel, you follow them in the valley of tears... you share with them, as far as you can, all the fatigues, the trials and the dangers of the journey....”

#### Our Holy Family documents further challenge us:

“Attentive to the calls of our times, we are ready to respond to new needs, to search for the causes of evil and to collaborate with others to change the situations which produce them...”(Vowed for Mission)

Following are some highlights of how this “Walking together” is carried out by us today here in the Unit of the Philippines - being true to our Charism of Communion, within the Church, the Unit, the Society and among the People – very specially in the forward move-

### Sr. Ida Joseph - Philippines

ment towards the peripheries among the Poor:

#### PANDEMIC AS THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Our Holy Family presence, in the Filipino context invites for a discerned reading of the signs of the times. Amidst the Pandemic situation, we are challenged and made to realize the urgency and the need to “Walk together” with the suffering people. This realization brought home to us that sickness is real. Death is real. Hunger is real. Incompetence and corruption

is real in handling the pandemic situation. The politics of fear is real.

Though the lockdown virtually paralyzed us from “walking together” with the poor,

their struggle for survival impelled us to intensify our Apostolic action, organizing different programmes of feeding, educating and taking care of children and families, providing them also with necessary health care...

#### CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Inspired by the Dream of our Founder, we were challenged to listen to nature, see the consequence of human neglect and to walk together in solidarity with the people and the whole Community of Life. Thus, to shift our metaphors from stewardship to “Care” to save Mother Earth, being promoters of Life, and initiating, organizing and implementing Pro-Environmental Advocacies – awareness sessions, Tree Planting, Waste management, Home Gardening and having Celebrations of “Creation” at Diocesan and Parish levels.



## MISSION AND ITS CHALLENGES

We are called and prompted to

- Revisit our Missionary Vocation to see where we lack in joy and zeal to proclaim the Good news and rediscover the sources of Our life-giving roots in order to chart our way forward. We found value in being bruised, hurt so as to be in great solidarity with the suffering - the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed in the peripheries, being involved in visible and tangible actions towards JPIC concerns.
- To be inclusive in our Advocacies for Human Rights and Rights of Nature:
  - Advocacy and activities to fight against Human Trafficking, Child-abuse, Online Sex, Safeguarding Children and the Vulnerable of the Society
  - Working hand in hand with other Organizations in all these areas and in Ecology related Activities, rallies, forums, Earth hour observation and Creation celebrations at all levels.
- To practice within the 'Family' and with those around us, the Ecological Spirituality and virtues such as the Ethic of "Just Enough", care in the use of Natural Resources, simplifying our life style to be identified with the Poor, consciously creating Rituals, celebrating Nature and conducting healing services to be aware of and repent for our shortcomings against safeguarding the integrity of Creation.

As a Unit and as Family of The Holy Family, we believe that our future credibility lies in our

living unity in diversity and in gathering all the scattered children of God into one Family, to be a moving witness of Jesus' prayer - **"That all may be one"**. (Jn.17:21)

Our 20<sup>th</sup> General Chapter preparation from 2018-2021 has been a time that we, as an Institute and as Unit and as Family have seen and recognized the urgency to "leave that which cannot be continued", to leave behind the irrelevant in order to move to the other shore and to take forward our Holy Family Mission as the Spirit ushers us in the New Way to "walk together" as Family in the Synodal path of PARTICIPATION, COMMUNION AND MISSION. We have become very conscious of this in order to be credible witnesses to our Charism of Communion and Being Family – where "walking together" with the Church, the People, the World of today and the with the whole Community of Life become indispensable.

We recognize once again the urgent need to walk together with the Laity, empowering them in their role as equal messengers and disciples of the Gospel. We realize the fundamental truth that without personal and collective conversion – a change truly from within – we cannot proceed to activate Participation, Communion and Mission as the way to experience Synodality as a Unit and as Family.

The vigilance we need is – not to get obsessed with immediate results but to move with conviction, without anxiety but willingness to move, trusting in the movement of the Spirit.

