



SUORE DOMENICANE di S. Caterina da Siena

FOGLIO INFORMATIVO

n°1 January 2009

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PROVINCE OF PAKISTAN

1. The tragic death of Father Joseph Bertaina has grieved us very much. We share fully the suffering of Sr. M. Carla and Sr. M. Vincenza.

We were close to them with our prayer for the funerals on 22nd and 23rd January. In the light of faith, we accept the mysterious ways of God and thank the Lord for the fruit that the sacrifice of Father Joseph will make to sprout in Kenya and in the whole Church.

2. The week of prayer for the unity of the Christians was celebrated at diocesan and parish level with special religious functions, in union with various representatives of Christian denominations

3. While war in Gaza sows death and destruction, in the north-west of Pakistan violence and fights go on against the militants who are destroying systematically also the schools, especially well furnished schools for girls, many of which were built at the time of President Ayub Khan. The girls who want to go for further studies risk their life. There have been explosions of bombs also in other parts of the country, for instance in Lahore, near two theatres along one of the main streets, not too far from our convent which, however, this time has not been damaged, thanking God. Let us pray for peace and for the conversion of all those who use violence to state their convictions or their (real or presumed) rights.

4. At Faisalabad 4 sisters, 2 seniors and 2 juniors attend the public university. They wear the university uniform, but everybody knows that they are sisters. The university is co-educational, boys and girls together, and this often creates difficulties for the girls, because the boys are not used to live this reality. The Teaching and Managing Staff, as well as the students are respectful towards the sisters and gradually open up to friendly relations. The sisters are offered a good occasion for the Christians testimony of a presence serenely, prudently and respectfully open to diversity. They will appear in their final examinations in February, thus they ask the help of your prayers.

DELEGATION OF THE FRONTIERS

BARI 18th January

“To be united in your hand”

In the first prayer meeting for the Unity of Christians, a numerous crowd filled the Basilica of St. Nicholas. The participation in this event was surely not urged by curiosity, but by the desire of meeting as brothers and sisters, despite the persisting separation.

The world day of migration was celebrated on the same day, for which the celebration was enriched also with the contribution of our brothers from other Countries, who brought to evidence some particular signs of their original culture.

The prayer for this year, inspired by the Biblical text of Ezekiel 27, 1 – 14, was proposed by the Churches in Chorea, a people divided into two parts. From this painful experience an invitation was addressed to all the Christians to be aware of the scandal caused by disunion, to invoke forgiveness and to become, consequently, ambassadors of reconciliation in the world. To do this we need to set on a journey of conversion, without which no progress can be verified.

A track of this journey was suggested, during prayer, by Prof. Paolo Ricca, from the Waldensian Church, with his reflection on a verse from Ezekiel, "They will be one in my hand".

Here are some of his expressions, "Whom is the Prophet speaking of? He is speaking of us who are here; of us the prophet says, 'you will be one in my hand'. We can say: How is this possible? We are many divided groups? 330 Christian Churches: we are not divided only as citizens, but also as believers: Hebrews, Muslims, etc. How is it possible to be one, as Ezekiel tells us? Even more: we are divided into peoples, therefore, unity is impossible for men, we know only how to divide ourselves. The ecumenical Christians are still very few: the unity of men is impossible.

However, the announcement brings to evidence that what is impossible for man is possible for God! Impossibility, possibility, "See, I shall take you out of your tombs, I shall raise you and then I shall make you one!"

Unity is possible only among risen men and women: New men and new women! To rise is a new creation. Only a new Catholic can make unity with a protestant, we need a new Orthodox to make unity with a Catholic and a Protestant.... We must be reborn, if we want to be one.

What is the hand of God? It is the hand of a God who has come down to reach our meanness and to free us; the hand of God is:

- Jesus Christ, in whom we are one
- The name of God in whom we have been baptised
- The Word of God, the same for all men and women
- The Holy Spirit in whom we are one
- The hand who offers us bread and wine from the supper of the Lord; the unique broken bread....and many chalices

However, in that hand we are one. God has not called us to be Catholic, Orthodox, Protestants....but Christians, therefore a new Catholics, a new Protestants, new orthodox believers....it is more important to be Christian than to be Catholic or Protestant.

May God help us to be true Christians!"

At the entrance of the Basilica, each faithful received a little wooden stick of different type according to nationality, as a sign of our division. During the exchange of the kiss of peace,, each person had to seek another person with a stick different from his own and bind their sticks together, as sign of reconciliation and a symbol of the initiative of God who keeps us one in his hand. Then, in procession, the sticks were deposited at the feet of the cross by the hand of the two persons who had tied them together.

DELEGATION OF NIGERIA

IBADAN – Happy New Year 2009!

A new day has dawned, a new year! A new page is opened in the life of each of us. The first day of the New Year was celebrated with the midnight Holy Mass in the Chapel of the Salesians. The liturgy was prepared by the youths. We thanked the Lord in unison for his love and his mercy, remembering all the favours received from heaven, as well as the sufferings, disappointments, difficulties, loss of dear persons, finishing by entering the new year with good resolutions, zeal and generosity in welcoming God's Will in everything.

A second novice, Veronica, left for her apostolic experiences in the community of Lagos. Naturally her departure left a void among us.

On the day of the Baptism of our Lord we celebrated the "Novices Day" with the novices of our Dominican brothers. The day was great and specially celebrated. We went for sightseeing to the Salesian youth centre, where they took us round to see their compound.

Our inter-novitiate class commenced on the 6th of January 2009. It was a beautiful experience to see everyone back together again after 3 weeks holidays;; everyone from different Congregations narrated his or her Christmas and New Year experiences.

Fortunately sister Paulina O.P was with us when we started our lessons.. The principal message was that Jesus came among us to reveal the Father's Love to us. He came to invite us to become like himself, following his footsteps. Though he was divine, he humbled himself and dwelt among us; he became a son of man to teach us how to welcome God, who wants to dwell in us.
The novices.

PROVINCE OF ITALY

VIGEVANO: 60 YEARS OF PROFESSION CELEBRATED BY SR. M. VERONICA

On Sunday, 21st December, 2008, our community celebrated the 60th anniversary of religious profession of Sr. M. Veronica Fiorella.

Some of her relatives and friends joined us in the celebration. It was a day lived in simplicity but strongly felt and intimately shared by all the participants. The Holy Mass, celebrated by our chaplain and vicar general of the diocese, was the principal moment of the day. In his homily, Don Gianfranco highlighted the concept of the Christian reality, particularly of the Religious life: the Lord never fails to precede us. He preceded Sr. M. Veronica in the desire of offering her life to Him, he precedes her in the desire of offering herself to the Father and the brothers, as he has been preceding her during these years of service and self-oblation.

Gifts and a festively shared lunch made us rejoice with our dear sister; the day was concluded with a solemn celebration of Vespers.

We pray that the Lord may grant Sr. M. Veronica many more years of generous and fecund apostolate blessed by divine grace. **Sr. Maria di Gesù**



PECCIOLI: THE DRAFTING OF THE NEW CONSTITUTIONS IS OVER

*“Receive, Lord, our gifts in this mysterious encounter between our poverty and your greatness. We offer you the things that You have given us, and you, please, give us yourself in return”.*This song accompanied the sisters of the Commission for the Constitutions, and we heard this same song sung on 11th January at 21,00, when the four sisters came out of the room in which they had been working! We saw them deeply moved for having brought to completion the service entrusted by obedience to them, and grateful to the Lord for the gift of Communion in the not easy required study and writing.

The proof is now ready and it is up to the Chapter, after a revision from the General Council, to revise it again, to discuss, to welcome and to hand it over to the Church for the approval.

We go on invoking the Holy Spirit that He may bless our Family and may make us ever more united in His Name.. **The community Peccioli**



Lari – Commemoration of Sr. M. Vincenza Frangioni, 23rd November 2008

“We are here in memory of Mother Vincenza, a simple but extra-ordinary sister, with a big heart, full of energy, capable of creating solidarity, a serene and joyful milieu in the home for the aged. This sister has left a “sign” not only in this house, but also in the hearts of those who knew her. Mother Vincenza was a daughter of the Tuscany land, a generous land also for the many religious vocations. She was very young when she answered enthusiastically the call to follow the Lord. Very soon the superiors send her to Lari to devote herself to the service of the least one, being they “weak”, whom she lovingly called “my little children”. We owe the major part of development and of modernisation of the Institute to her richness of soul, her intuitions, her long-sightedness, her trust and her determination: The Institute continues up-to-date to be a very much appreciated reference-point.

Her work of charity was not limited to the rest-house: she was ready to offer her help to everybody in need. Where did she find the strength and the energy to offer a word of stimulus, support and encouragement to each and everyone? Her interior life was nurtured daily by prayer and contemplation of the suffering Christ; after the example of Mother Gérine, she made the face of God visible as a good and merciful Father. She loved to repeat: It is important to do good!"

To remember means to make something present and Mother Vincenza is still present among us, in the memory of all those who had the chance of knowing her, in the heart and mind of all those who today continue with passion her work of humanity pro aged men and women"

This is how Sr. Rosa Daminato has remembered our sister Vincenza during a ceremony wanted by the municipality of Lari (Pisa). The administration decided to call a new street with the name of Sr. Vincenza Frangioni. who had been living there for 34 years.

On this occasion, many sisters, who had been in the Institute, were present for the celebration. Particularly moving was the moment in which the sisters met all the people who had known and appreciated Sr. Vincenza's humanity and competence very much.

The inauguration of the street followed the moment of commemoration: after a prayer, conducted by the Parish Priest of Lari, and the blessing, they unveiled the inscription "Via Mother Vincenza Frangioni (Dominican Sister)", accompanied by a prolonged and intense sound of the sirens from all the vehicles of Mercy (Ambulances). The inscription will be there to make the present and future generations to remember this luminous example of charity.



PROVINCE OF LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL GOIÂNIA – SUMMER COURSE

The community of Nostra Signora of the Land participated in an ecclesial meeting during the month of January, known as "Summer Course". It was thought of in the 6th meeting of the CEB (Episcopal Conference of Brazil) 20 years ago, in Trinidad/Divino Padre Eterno-Goiânia, in the light of the Church of Vatican II and the meetings of Puebla, Medellín, S. Domingo e Aparecida.

These meetings have the purpose of creating new formative orientations for the people of God, so that all may have sufficient efficiency and depth, may acquire such an interactive methodology as to generate energies for a new creative and joyful evangelisation, rich in songs and prayers of hope.

The Church in Brazil desires to guide the people of God in the light of faith and of reason, so that the faithful may become the protagonists of their own history, capable to take decisions before the challenges of reality, giving their contribution as missionary disciples of Jesus the Liberator. This year, the summer course celebrates the 20th century of its birth, underlining the following points: *memory, ransom and perspective.....*

The invited animator was Father Carlos Mester, Biblist and founder of the Biblical Centre. He accompanied us in our study-reflection on St. Paul and the yesterday's and today's communities.

In the second part of the course, we had among us Father Oscar Beuzzo, who spoke to us about the analysis of the "congiuntura" with a sight on the roots and another on the future".

The participants were from various movements: all of them were communed by the will of serving man and helping him to be the protagonist of his future.

We thank the God of life for his presence: he walks before his peoples inviting us to form living communities that may allow us to be involved, thus generating life and feast. **Sr. Mercedes**

CERRADO, GARDEN OF GOD

The conference of religious in Brazil, CRB, together with social and popular movements, such as the Commission for the defence of the environment, have been invited to give their support for the promotion of life in Cerrado.

Cerrado is a territory, which was formed more than 45 millions of years ago; its vegetation is extremely specialised with plants and animals which live and develop only in that characteristic environment of the tropical regions.

The Savannah/Cerrado is the second largest Brazilian vegetal formation, surpassed only by the Amazon Forest. It extends for many kilometres, distributed in 11 States, 0,25% of the national territory, equivalent to the total surface of Spain, France, Germany and England.

Savannah/Cerrado possesses the three idiographic resources of South America: Tocantins/Araguaia, San Francisco y Panaíba/Plata. With the deforestation the resources are getting dry and the level of the rivers keeps on lowering.

Actually many ambitious projects of colonisation are being experimented, without any planning and knowledge, with purely political and lucrative perspectives. Recent events, still alive in our memory, confirm the power of this economic model, such as the occupation of the indigenous Chapadones, to obtain an international fund in favour of reforestation projects, with species extraneous to the Cerrado environment, for the production and exportation of cereals. The creation of the State of Tocantins can be given as another example; the implantation Hidrovía de Araguaia and many more like the actual project for the deviation of Rio San Francisco, prove the power of this ideology..

The destruction of Cerrado is provoking a heating at global level of the land, which is deprived of nourishing substances because of the intensive use of monoculture, the bio-technology, the plantation of sugar cane utilised as combustible, the extraction of material to produce carbon in the mines. Another factor is: the installation of the erosive process, resulting from the drawing back of vegetal covering and its turning into saline land.

The Cerrado will be destroyed, our environment as well!! What can we do to save the biome?

A concrete action is that of participating in a manual or electronic campaign of signatories for the transformation of the Cerrado, Caatinga y Pampa into national Patrimony.

This would be the priority of the National Congress together with the voting for the Project of the Constitutional Emendation 115/150(PEC) for the year 2008 and 2009 for the Federal Camera. Sr. Mercedes participated in this campaign as soon as she arrived in the CRB. She declared that it was a positive experience and her participation was a way of contributing our concrete support for the defence of an ecologic campaign.

The approval of this project would lead to improve the quality of life for tens of million Brazilians, as well as to keep the balance of the environment of the country and of the world.

For further information see www.abaixoassinado.org/abaixoassinados/908

Community of Nª Sª della Terra



THANKSGIVING

Dearest sisters, dear lay associates, friends and acquaintances,

Through the F.I. we wish to send each of you our heartfelt thanksgiving for the affectionate proximity you have shown us on the demise of our brother Fr. Joseph and for the choir of prayers you have raised to the Lord for him and all his relatives. To feel surrounded by so much sincere participation as yours has been of great consolation for us: THANK YOU! May the Lord reward each of you with an abundance of his blessings.

Sr. M. Vincenza e Sr. M. Carla Bertaina



From the General Curia

January 2009

The sisters present in the Curia started the New Year 2009 by sharing of conviviality with the sisters of the Delegation of the Frontiers in Assembly, at Montemario.

Then, they accompanied the departure of Sr. M. Jamila and Sr. M. Razia for Kabul, of Sr. M. Francesca Bray for Uganda, of Sr. M. Bernadette Duru e Sr. M. Celina Stangherlin for Nigeria.

They followed Sr. M. Vincenza Ruggi in the conclusion of her sabbatical time and Sr. M. Alessia Spinelli during her stay in hospital for a surgical intervention of the knee bones.

Sr. M. Carla was in Genova from 25th up to 28th January to plan with the Committee the events of 2009, as commemoration of the centenary of Mother Theresa Solari.

Calendar for February 2009

1 February: Sr. Suzanne comes back from Argentina

3-7 February: *meeting-days of the General Council*

7 February: Final Profession of Sr. M. Lucia Duacastella in La Consulta - Argentina

8 February: Final Profession of Sr. M. Valeria Di Tonto in Naples, Quartieri Spagnoli - Italy

16 February: Sr. Suzanne e Sr. M. Josy will leave for Lourdes (France), where a month of formation for lay persons will be held

21 February: Final Profession of Sr. M. Shazia Rehmat an Sr. M. Razia Sadiq, in Faisalabad, Pakistan.

