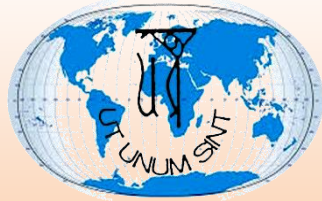


Ursuline Sisters, Congregation of Tildonk



E-News - May 2015

From Congregation Leadership

The Extended Council promotes growth and planning

Each year when the members of the Extended Council meet, they are faced with the daunting task of completing all the agenda items. This year many topics stemmed from the 2014 General Chapter Direction Statement.

Under Sr. Ellen's Doyle's expert guidance, this year's meeting achieved its goal of covering all the major agenda items facing the Congregation during the days allotted (April 14-18). There was even time for a half day outing to Tildonk to visit the World-War I Museum, Church and Tildonk House where Sr. Bernadette Uytterhoeven had prepared a display of Father John Lambertz' personal memorabilia.



Each provincial returned to her respective Province, realizing the work that lay ahead to encourage and support the mission of our congregation as it evolves in the church.

Education Excellence

Sr. Jayanti Kerketta, Principal of Ursuline English Medium School, Khalari was among a group of principals awarded the "Best Educationist" and a "Certificate of Education Excellence" by International Institute of Education and Management, Delhi.

Congratulations on this new venture!

The Ranchi Province has launched a new website. This website will not only share news worthy items, but also will reflect the Charism, Spirituality and Mission of the Ursuline Sisters of

Tildonk in India. Through this website the Sisters will share their ministries, reflections, insights and spirituality to enrich each other and motivate one another to live a deeper contemplative life.

Visit: www.urprovince.com

International Day of Families

Highlighting the importance of families as basic units of society, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 15 of every year as the International Day of Families. The day reflects the importance that the international community attaches to families as basic units of society as well as its concern regarding their situation around the world.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon said: "On this International Day of Families, I call on Governments, civil society, families and individuals to support initiatives that bring people together across generations toward building a healthier world for all."

Canadian Lives Shaped by Consecrated Life

April 30 is the feast day of Saint Marie of the Incarnation (Marie Guyart). This day is celebrated in both the Roman Catholic Church in Canada and the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada.

Ranchi Province

Year of Consecrated Life

April 19th, 2015 was an auspicious day for the religious of Khunti Diocese. In a simple but touching ceremony the Year of Consecrated Life was inaugurated in St. Michael's Cathedral in Khunti by Rt. Rev. Binay Kandulna D.D. Bishop of Khunti. Almost all the religious congregations were represented. During the Holy Mass the Bishop highlighted the special features of religious life. All had smiles on their faces when he ended by saying those who do not smile are not good religious. Before dispersing there was an election of the CRI (Catholic Religious



Institution) President of Khunti. Sr. Shakuntala Kujur osu was elected. Congrats Sr. Shakuntala.

Sr. Roshni Baxla osu.

Belgium Province

Tildonk Old Girls Society

One hundred years ago, at the beginning of the 1st World War the former pupils of Tildonk started to meet in London to assist the Sisters of Tildonk and help in their needs. Every year since 1915, the former students have been meeting in the Shering Cross Hotel. This year was their 100th reunion.

The English department in Tildonk stopped after the 1976-77 year, but every year former students visit "their school."

On March 11, 90 former students and a few teachers arrived in Tildonk and were welcomed by Mr. Jan Gordts, Fiona Hopwood and me.



When the women visited the school, they spread out looking for where their bed was as well as their respective classrooms and the monastery. Our Lady with Bullet wreath was admired and respectfully honored.

They found the state of the Art Nouveau Hall very worrying, but there is a plan of restoration. At the Salle-Saint-Marie each one found her place.

After a lunch in "their refectory" all were invited by the Mayor for a drink at the Town Hall in Haacht, where Sr. Ann gave a short speech highlighting the current state of our congregation. She thanked the audience for their loyalty to the school and to the Sisters. Then a few images of the horrific events in Tildonk during the First World War were projected on the screen.

Back in Tildonk there was an exhibition prepared. This brought back memory of their school days: the uniform with marinnenkraag the voile and hat, gymnastics costume, Belleke of Sr. Elizabeth, photos of their theatre performances and the obituaries of their beloved Sisters and more...

As time came to leave for the Eurostar all expressed their satisfaction with their visit to Tildonk. Some would meet each other again that weekend in London.

180 former pupils gathered on March 14th at the Shering Cross Hotel in London to celebrate the "Hundredth Meeting." The women came from all corners of the globe: Belgium, Canada, United States, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, the Netherlands, even Australia. I probably forgot to mention a few.

They were all at the school in Tildonk between 1950 and 1977, and did not want to miss this unique opportunity. Many come every year, for others it was the first time to go back to England. They all were happy to meet their former classmates, and to learn about how the school has evolved.

We thanked all present, wished them a pleasant evening and hope to meet them again next year for our 101th Assembly of TOGS (Tildonk Old Girls Society) in Shering Cross Hotel.

Sr. Bernadette Uytterhoeven, osu

A Big Gathering in Tildonk Village

Jan Gordts, a historian who has much interest in the Ursuline school and convent and Sister



Bernadette, did their best to make March 11 an unforgettable day. In his address Jan Gordts referred to the beginnings of the TOGS "In 1914 Belgium was burning after the German army had invaded the country. The convent school in Tildonk had to be vacated and most pupils, mainly English, returned home. Back home they could read in the newspapers terrible stories of German terror in "Poor little Belgium." That is when they decided to help their old school by sending supplies and they organized a first meeting. They called themselves 'The Tildonk Girls'. We do not know the exact moment of this meeting, but

we know that they met in 1915 in the Shering Cross Hotel in London. A tradition was born. Until today the old girls of the Tildonk boarding school meet in March in the same hotel, except during World War 2.

The Tildonk international school stopped in 1977. Today, 38 years later, the Tildonk Old Girls Society is more alive than ever. They have a website and a very active Facebook group with more than 300 members. And every year, there are different small meetings of TOGS all over the world. Amazing"

After Jan Gordts, Sister Ann Cuppens welcomed the old pupils in her own way. She referred to the many changes in Tildonk since they had left the school, mentioning that the ability to change is a sign of being alive. Sr. Ann Cuppens spoke about the beginning of the school: "Tildonk had already changed a lot before you arrived here as children. The school started in 1818 in the little stable of the presbytery where the goats had to make room for the children. There is one thing of this period that has always touched me deeply. Father Lambertz, the parish priest and founder, wrote a short rule for his school, a rule of only 4 lines. It was a primitive, simple, but very human rule. One of the 4 lines for instance, said: 'The children will receive hot soup every day'. Some children came from far away farms. They had to walk a long distance and they were poor and hungry, especially in the winter time.

Times had change, when you came to Tildonk. Rules were much longer and far more complicated, but I sincerely hope that you could experience this same human approach, this care for one another, and that you, in your personal life, could pass it on to your neighbourhood, to your children or other dear ones."

Finally Sister Ann invited them to come back to Tildonk in 2018 to celebrate with us the 200 years of existence of our congregation.

Sr. Ann Cuppens osu