

REFLECT

Ursuline Sisters
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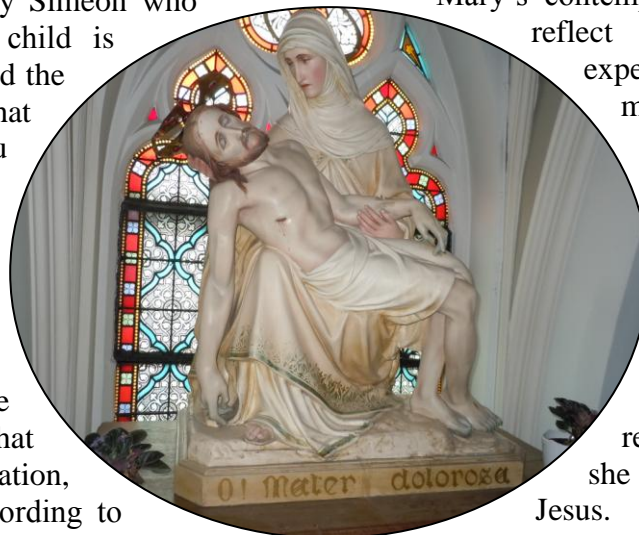


September 2015

Mary Returned To The Source

Mary, known as Our Lady of Sorrows, focuses our attention on her intense suffering and grief during the passion and death of our Lord. This suffering was not limited to the passion and death event; rather, it comprised the seven dolours or sorrows of Mary, which were foretold by Simeon who proclaimed to Mary, "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare (Lk 2:34-35).

Each new suffering that Mary endured was received with the courage, love, and trust that echoed her Fiat at the Annunciation, "Let it be done unto me according to Thy word." Certainly her foundational experience was the Annunciation. By the power of the spirit it was possible for her to say "yes" to the divine call. Her foundational experience was a dynamic force during her entire life. She felt pain mentally and spiritually with her Son. We can say she suffered a spiritual martyrdom. Mary was allied with the suffering of her Son throughout her life.



She often returned to the source of her initial response to God, her Fiat, to be fortified. Throughout her life she treasured the moment of her initial Yes to God and pondered the moment in her heart.

Do I ponder and embrace the Word of God in times of sorrow?

Mary's contemplative spirit invites me to reflect on her foundational experience. Suffering did not make her weak but made her courageous and strong in her trust in God. She, as a faithful disciple, followed her Son encouraging and supporting him on the way to Calvary. Her perseverance and endurance led her to redeem the whole world and she became co-redeemer with Jesus.

Mary's contemplative life and endurance can serve as our inspiration and a consolation in our present turbulent times. Moments of darkness and suffering come our way unexpectedly, caused by death of loved ones, war, violence, poverty, injustice, and sickness. All this is a reality for each of us.

Fr. John Lambertz had an unshakeable faith in Mary, as Our Lady of Dolors. It was through her assistance that he attributed the miraculous change of attitude in the parishioners of the parish to which he was first assigned. He prayed fervently to her when the Dutch government ordered him to discontinue his construction project. Through Mary's intercession, he was able to continue building the first convent and boarding school in Tildonk.

Trust in God and fidelity to prayer are offered to us as ways to overcome the sufferings we experience. We gain hope through the Resurrection of Jesus and the New Life he brought to the world. In her life, Mary moved through suffering and found New Life in her daily Fiat. She believed in God's Almighty power: "The Almighty has done great things for me, and his name is holy." Lk 1:49

May you find peace and joy in celebrating Mary's Feast this month.

- Sister Nirmala Kujur

UT UNUM SINT artist



Sister Ignatius De Ridder designer of our Symbol.

"That they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that you sent me." Jn 17:21

May we be pillars of strength as we continue to build a society of justice, love, and peace in the true meaning of Ut Unum Sint.

Remaining connected with God through Saints

On July 3rd 2015, as I was meditating on the Word of God, my heart was welling up with tremendous gratitude for the favors received in my life through St. Thomas the Apostle. I dedicated my B. Ed. study to this saint while I was in Chennai in 2000-2001. I prayed to God through him faithfully every day. On our Convocation Day I was surprised to know that I was to receive an endowment prize for having scored highest mark in one of the papers in the university exam. Like St. Thomas, I was doubtful, since I was the only one from the north of India among 160 students who were very talented and intelligent. God listened to His man who interceded for me and I was blessed for my hard labor. The credit goes to the whole congregation. I do not deserve it personally.

An insight stayed with me on the Feast day of St. Thomas. The following thought engraved itself in my inner being in a very special way I had not realized before. I thanked God through this friend of Jesus for this awareness: " He was chosen by Jesus himself, lived with him, talked to Him, listened to Him, touched His wounds so when he pleads certainly Jesus would listen." I felt happy to share this thought in the Novitiate and so with you all.

- Sr. Dorothea Kullu osu



Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations

The 70th anniversary of the United Nations is an opportunity to reflect – to look back on the UN's history and take stock of its achievements. It is also an opportunity to spotlight where the UN – and the international

community as a whole – needs to redouble its efforts to meet current and future challenges across the three pillars of its work: *peace and security, development, and human rights*.

The official logo for the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations has been created by the UN for use with the UN 70th Anniversary activities and programs. As members of the Ursuline NGO, we are encouraged to use the logo for educational and public outreach projects advancing the goals laid down in the United Nations Charter. We can inform the public of the role of the UN in the modern world, and promote issues important to us.

For information on the use of the UN70 Logo: undpingo@un.org, indicating in the subject line “UN70 Logo Use”.

8 September International Literacy Day

The theme of International Literacy Day 2015 is *Literacy and Sustainable Societies*. Literacy skills are the prerequisite for the learning of a broader set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

15 September International Day of Democracy

This year's theme for the International Day of Democracy, *Space for Civil Society*, highlights the need to strengthen the voice of civil society and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes.

21 September International Day of Peace

The theme of the 2015 International Day of Peace is *Partnerships for Peace -- Dignity for All* and draws attention to the contributions that partnerships with governments, the private sector, civil society and faith-based groups have made to upholding the ideals of the United Nations. It highlights the essential role civil society and NGOs will play in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs). For more information, please visit:

<http://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/>

Prayer for Universal Peace

***Let there be peace
between neighbors and friends...***

***Let there be peace
in the streets of our cities...***

***Let there be peace
when positions are argued...***

***Let there be peace
between immigrants and natives...***

***Let there be peace
when patience is scarce...***

***Let there be peace
in times of confusion...
Let there be peace
among the world's nations...***

***Let there be peace
between us and creation...***

***Let there be peace
within my own being...***

***Let there be peace
in my heart and my soul...***

***Let there be peace, Lord,
between you and me...***

***Let there be peace, Lord,
and let it be yours,
the peace that comes only
from you and your word...***

Amen.

By A Concord Pastor

Mining in Katanga

Tenke Fungurume Mining (TFM), owned by Freeport MacMoRan, is one of the largest copper and cobalt producers in the DR Congo and an investment in the future of the country. The project provides a vital source of revenue for regional and national development.

Mining companies sign contracts with government representatives of developing countries to extract resources in exchange for payments to those

governments. The money sometimes contributes to development of the country's economy. Often it does not and even when used appropriately, rarely extends to the members of the natural community, indigenous and ecological alike, which have been devastated by the mining.

The Mitumba-Fungurume resettlement process impacts approximately 1,240 households that will be physically or economically displaced, of which 324 are entitled to resettlement housing. Physical resettlement was initiated in 2014 with the first 40 households resettled in the New Mitumba resettlement site. An additional 20 households who opted for cash compensation were resettled in privately acquired residences in Fungurume, Lubumbashi and Likasi. This is just one of the social aspects connected with mining in the DRC.

Sisters Valerie Heinonen and Jane Quinlan participated in a teleconference with Tenke Fungurume mining in July. Fourteen faith-based investors, members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, questioned the U.S. company representatives on aspects of the mining. These included: relocation policies, mining safety and security, health services, pensions and waste water runoff.

Both Valerie and Jane have been following Katanga mining practices in the area where our Congolese Sisters minister. Mining directly impacts the health and safety of many people in Lubumbashi and Likasi. Therefore, we believe it is important to continue the dialogue around mining as a response to our General Chapter Direction Statement: “We adapt to the needs of our times and we become messengers of joy, peace and hope especially to the vulnerable.”

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* states: “When nature suffers, so do cultural and social values.” This is particularly true with respect to indigenous peoples who Pope Francis holds up as a model for “responsibility, a strong sense of community, a readiness to protect others, a spirit of creativity and a deep love for the land [which] they will eventually leave to their children and grandchildren [179].” The encyclical calls for

more stringent legal measures to be put in place for their protection since “pressure is being put on them to abandon their homelands to make room for agricultural or mining projects which are undertaken without regard for the natural and cultural degradation [145].”

Annual Assembly of LCWR



Ursulines at LCWR Assembly in Texas

Sisters Catherine, Judith and Jane were part of the group of all the Ursulines from the US who attended the Assembly.

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) was held from August 11-14 in Houston, Texas. The approximately 800 participants discussed some of the essential considerations facing religious life and its leaders under the theme of “**Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World**”.

LCWR has nearly 1,400 members who are leaders of their religious orders. They represent approximately 80 percent of the 50,000 Catholic Sisters in the United States. The conference develops leadership, promotes collaboration within church and society, and serves as a voice for systemic change.

Sister Jane noted, “There was a spirit of friendship and congeniality among all the participants. I noted the names of certain influential religious writers whose names were mentioned and who I’d

recommend: Rev. Bryan Massingale, Stephen Cardinal Kim, Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB, Walter Burghardt, SJ, Katryn Tanner.”

Sister Janet Mock, CSJ, former executive director of LCWR, named some of the realities facing communities of Catholic Sisters in her address “Surprised by Joy: Springs from the Great Deep Illuminating Religious Life.” She mentioned that the times call for partnerships and companions in mission. “What you must offer, however, is your charism and the wisdom that has come from the years your sisters have practiced the congregational virtues that shape your charism,” Sister Janet stated. “The way you will move into the future must be influenced by those rich gifts which you still have to offer – and must for the good of the world.”

Sister Sharon Holland, IHM president offered insights on the experience of working through the doctrinal assessment of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). She focused on the concept of “cultural chasm” the gap in understanding that comes from familiar unexamined practices or thought patterns. “Bridging chasms,” she noted, “is more difficult when you don’t expect the chasm, assume there isn’t one, and/or believe that there should not be one.”

In another keynote address, Father Stephen Bevans, SVD spoke of thirst as a grace, as a yearning for something more – a yearning that can lead to growth. He spoke of four thirsts – the thirst for the water of integrity, the wine of hope, the nectar of justice, and the elixir of beauty. He noted that only the church that serves the cause of people who are poor or suffering can be considered the true church of Christ.

LCWR members from Texas led the participants in a justice action focused on the plight of families seeking refuge in the United States from violence and death in their home countries. Participants viewed the testimony of three mothers from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala who had been held with their children and hundreds of other

families in the for-profit detention facility in Karnes City, Texas

The LCWR members also affirmed a resolution to commit themselves to examine the root causes of injustice and their congregation’s complicity in injustice, and to work to effect systemic change as they seek to establish economic justice, abolish modern-day slavery, ensure immigrant rights, promote nonviolence, and protect Earth and its biosphere.

CDF Doctrinal Assessment

The assembly met for one afternoon to speak about the conclusion of the mandate of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), and to consider together the impact that CDF’s doctrinal assessment of LCWR had on the conference, the church, and the wider world. The LCWR officers and executive directors reported on the steps leading to the mandate’s conclusion, as well as on their April 16, 2015 visit with Pope Francis at the Vatican.

Sister Marcia Allen, CJS the president of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas, assumed the office of LCWR president for 2015-2016. Sister Mary Pellegrino, CSJ was elected its president-elect.

The texts of Sister Sharon Holland, Sister Janet Mock, and Father Steven Bevans, as well as photos of the event are available at

<https://lcwr.org/calendar/lcwr-assembly-2015>

*Silent One,
who lives within me,
gracious are your ways.
You offer me the gift of peace and the
stillness of the night.
In the quiet and tranquility my soul
begins to hear.*

Sisters Visit the Congo

Sister Bimla Minj and Sister Bernadette MWAVITA from the Generalate visited us for a month. Their visit brought us great joy and an abundance of grace. What made Sister Bimla's visit special was that it was the first time she had come to the DR Congo as the congregational leader, although she had visited previously as part of her other ministries.



The two sisters took the time to visit each individual sister, and each of the eleven community houses. During their visit, six sisters made their temporary profession as Ursulines: Sisters Colette, Esther, Irène, Jeannette, Marie, Marie-Grâce. The profession ceremony took place in the Blessed Anuarite parish in the neighborhood near our St. Ursule community in Himbi.

On August 15th, parents, members of various Religious communities and priests of Goma all gathered for the profession and this contributed to creating a warm supportive atmosphere.

Bishop Kaboyi who is the Auxiliary Bishop of the diocese of Goma, was unable to be present for this ceremony. His delegate was Bishop Ngabu, Bishop Emeritus of Goma, who was on holiday from Italy. His presence was encouraging to us as we carry out our mission in the diocese of Goma.

During the Profession Mass, we paid special attention to the anniversary of 60 years of our Ursuline presence in the Congo. We are grateful to God that our Sisters from the Generalate were with us for this notable occasion.

For the important 50th anniversary in 2005, we had invited all the former missionary sisters to join us in the celebration. At that time, our former students were involved in the celebration and helped to make it a beautiful feast. During this year, we are planning to focus our thoughts and prayers on all that the Lord has done for us throughout the 60 years. Recently our Sisters broadcasted a radio message; other initiatives are planned as part of our pastoral outreach.

We closed the evening of the profession with an informal gathering with Sister Bimla and Sister Bernadette. The leadership team of the Vice Province also took advantage of the presence of our sisters from the Generalate for some advice and guidance.

Vacation time offered us an opportunity for various meaningful and enriching activities, but the highlight was the visit of Sisters Bimla and Bernadette. On behalf of the entire Vice Province, I thank them for their availability, careful listening to us and their loving care which has brought us many blessings.

We continue to acknowledge with gratitude the first Belgian Sisters who founded us, as well as all the other missionary Sisters who ministered in the Congo and who have continually shown their love for us and been true supporters of our vice province.

Thank you for continued prayers.

- Sister Deodata BUNZIGIYE