

Ursuline Sisters Congregation of Tildonk



E-News - June 2016

From Congregation Leadership

Three Provinces hold their Chapters

The Belgium Province held its Chapter on May 16th and 17th in Grimbergen. The United States Province will meet in Blue Point from June 24-26 for their Chapter. The Vice Province of the DR Congo Chapter is scheduled for August 16-19 in Goma.

We are happy to announce **the new Leadership Team** of Belgian Province:

Sister Hildegarde Verherstraeten
(Province Leader)

Sister Lea Cools (Provincial
Councilor)

Sister Ghislaine Debusschere
(Provincial Councilor)

Sister Celestina Lakra (Provincial
Councilor)

Sister Felicite Wera (Provincial
Councilor)



Sr. Bimla, Sr. Felicite, Sr. Celestina, Sr. Ghislaine,
Sr. Hildegarde and Sr. Lea Cools

We thank them for their joyful and courageous response to the call of God in serving the Province. We wish them God's blessings and our prayerful support as they take up their ministry of leadership for five years. May our Founders St. Angela Merici and Father John Lambertz accompany them every day in their leadership.

International Union of Superiors General Assembly 2016:

Weaving Global Solidarity for Life, the 20th Plenary Assembly of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) was held in Rome May 9-13, 2016. This was a special assembly as it marked 50 years (1965-2015) of its existence. Sister Carmen Sammut, MSOLA, the President of the UISG addressed 870 General Superiors of 750,000 members from around the world by inviting them to global solidarity by weaving relationships among them. She said, "Let us weave dreams that awaken what is deepest and truest in us, dreams that will lead us to action, to participation, to commitment."

The speakers were Sisters Carmen Sammut (UISG President), Patricia Murray (UISG Executive Secretary), Carol Zinn, SSJ, Mary Sujita, SND, and Marian Ambrosio, Sr. Grazia Loparco, FMA, and Sr. Rosemary Nassif. They addressed

challenges around some of the "signs of the times" like our Common Earth-Home, Existential and Social Peripheries (migrants, trafficking, and peace) and apostolic response as consecrated women. A history of 50 years of UISG was presented. All the inputs were directed towards the theme from different perspectives and reflected the message of Pope Francis in one or the other way. Sr. Marian gave a new insight, "...we



Sr. Bimla at UISG meeting in Rome

are not special for **what** we do, or for **why** we do it. All Christians are predestined for this answer. Religious Life is the **POWER OF A "HOW."** It is our way of doing, it is the manner we follow Jesus that gives meaning to our being Women Religious of Apostolic Life.

On May 12th, Pope Francis addressed the General Superiors in Paul VI Audience Hall and responded to their questions. Sisters experienced support and encouragement by the Pope in their leadership.

It was an extraordinary experience to be amidst all the Congregational leaders of apostolic women religious with various languages, cultures, color, features, and religious dress. It was an experience of a New Pentecost. "How it is that we hear, each of us, in our own native languages?"(Acts. 2:8). There were 11 language booths set up for translation.

On May 13th, all were sent forth empowered by the spirit of *Global Sisterhood* in building a borderless community of partnership, communication and communion.

Please visit the website www.uisg.org to view the UISG Plenary Assembly 2016 and the message of Pope Francis to the International Union of Superiors General (UISG).

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2016/may/documents/papa-francesco_20160512_uisg.html

- Sr. Bimla Minj

Guyana: A Vibrant Mission

Srs. Suchita Xalxo, Maria Kujur and Nirmala Kujur visited the United States and Guyana. The following report gives us a vivid picture of their visits.

Srs. Suchita, Maria and I all enjoyed our first visit to the U.S. and Guyana from April 12-24th 2016. We received a warm welcome from Sr. Catherine Talia at JFK International Airport. Sister Judith O'Connor greeted us at the Provincialate in Jamaica, not far from the airport. During our time in New York, we drove to visit our sisters in Blue Point and Seaford.



Sisters Maria and Suchita hold the children's attention under the mango tree as they discuss Matt.28:15

Our Guyana visit was a unique experience. We arrived in Georgetown on April 15th in the morning and the same day we flew to Lethem in a small plane seating only 20 people. We were amazed at the sight of the vast thick Amazon Forest during the two hour flight which was both delightful and frightening. In the evening we continued by road to Karasabai, a journey of two and half hours.



Sisters Dibya, Maria and Suchita join local women in making cassava bread.

Sisters Divya Gulab Sanai, Bernardine Kiro, Seraphinna Kerketta and Anima Soreng are fully one with the people, making themselves available to the people in all their needs. There are no resident priests, therefore the sisters play the role of the priests in all respects except administering the sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation. Our sisters are very

appreciated for their manner and efficacy of working with the Amerindians in the interior of the

country. The presence of the sisters has made a huge difference in the life of the people.

We experienced that our sisters are continuing the wonderful work that Angela did in her time. Knowing this fact gives us joy and satisfaction in seeing that the spirit and charism of Angela is fully alive and active in Karasabai. The sisters are ready to take new risks with zeal and enthusiasm. They adapt to the needs of their times and circumstances and are messengers of joy, peace and hope to the Amerindians in living the General Chapter Direction Statement of 2014. We were happy to bring our Ursuline presence in Guyana.

We traveled by bus on April 19th from Karasabai back to Georgetown where we were happy to stay four days with the Roman Union Ursulines. We attended the conference of Cardinal Claudio Hummes from Brazil based on Laudato Si - To Care for Our Common Home. The participants were all the religious men, women and lay parish associates of Guyana Diocese.

During our time in Georgetown, we also were invited to a very impressive assembly on Earth Day with the Cardinal and school children at the Ursuline Marian Academy. We had a meeting with the Jesuits with whom the Ursulines are working, and with Bishop Frances.

Our visit was very enriching, informative and fruitful. It was truly a learning experience for us. Our gratitude goes to all who accompanied us through their prayers and best wishes.

Sr. Nirmala Kujur, osu

Sisters interviewed in Guyana

While in Guyana Sisters Nirmala, Suchita and Maria were interviewed by an Indian priest responsible for communications in the Diocese of Georgetown. In response to two questions: How was your experience in Guyana? And how do the Ursulines promote vocations in Guyana?



Sisters Maria, Nirmala and Suchita promote vocations during a TV interview.

The Sisters said they were very happy and satisfied with their visit to Guyana. They expressed their appreciation of the work being accomplished by the Sisters for the Kingdom of God. Regarding vocation animation, our Sisters are fully engaged with the people in the interior of Guyana. They pray, visit and share their joys and sorrows with the people. Through close contact with the people wherever they meet them, they witness to what consecrated life is and encourage the parents to live a good Christian life as an example to their children. Our Sisters give witness by their prayerful life style and the way they conduct prayer services in the absence of a priest.

News from the Congo Vice Province

The Angela Merici Center for Literacy and Tailoring

On Sept 8, 2010 in an effort to put our charism into practice the Vice Province opened a Center for Literacy training and professional formation in sewing. The center is called The Angela Merici Literacy and Sewing Center.

Thanks to a project directed by Sr. Georgette Moya and funded by CTB (Coopération Technique Belge), it was possible to build two classrooms for literacy and tailoring in Angela Merici Primary School in Kalubwe. The lofty aim of this Center is the development and self-sufficiency of young girls and mothers from Kalubwe to overcome the inability to read and write, idleness, and early unwanted pregnancies and poverty. To reach this goal, we guarantee a valuable formation both professional and moral to the beginners to help them to take charge of their life and to participate in the economic development of our country.



Sr. Petronille explains her apostolate through photos

During the first three years classes were given in modules of nine months, but since 2013-14 we have been offering a shorter period of professional training. Fifty five beginners started in 2013-14, fifteen were mothers. Twenty one finished the year, the others had to drop out due to various reasons: transfer of their parents, birth of a child, the death of a guardian, or lack of money to pay the small tuition.

The following year, 2014-15, fifty nine began, among them ten were mothers. Thirty five courageously persevered to complete the year. This school year, 2015-16, fifty seven learners are enrolled: thirty four in first year, seventeen in second year, and 6 in third year.

Recognized for its fine work, the Center for Literacy and Sewing was officially recognized on August 21, 2015 by the Provincial Ministry for Social Affairs and National Solidarity. The finalists will receive a degree for their three years study. We are happy for this and thank the Lord.

At the close of the year, parents and friends are invited to visit and view the class notebooks and an exhibition of the finished work of the students in the sewing class. The positive expressions of gratitude encourage us to continue moving forward in this endeavor. As one of the four coordinators of the Center for Literacy and Sewing program, I can say that we are convinced that we are serving a present need keeping in mind our charism of education of women in a broad sense. We will continue our campaign against illiteracy and unemployment which are far from being eradicated in our country.

Sisters Adolphine Mukekwa, Stéphanie Mukanya and Pascasie Furaha all served as directors for a period of time during the first three years of the Center.

Sr. Petronille Chibelushi

I am happy and pleased to visit and admire the literacy formation and sewing lessons which are being given here in the Centre Angela Merici"

**Bishop Floribert Songasong,
Retired Archbishop of Lubumbashi**

"The Social Supervisor of the city of Lubumbashi congratulates and encourages those responsible for this Center of formation of young girls who do not know how to read and write. May God bless what you are doing for these girls."

**Mr. Lukunku wa Kitenge
Inspecteur Social Urbain.**

United Nations Days of importance

June 4 is *International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression*. The purpose of the day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the world who are the victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse. This day affirms the UN's commitment to protect the rights of children.

June 20 is *World Refugee Day* declared by the UN. "Refugees are people like anyone else, like you and me," said Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon. "They led ordinary lives before becoming displaced, and their biggest dream is to be able to live normally again."

National Religious Vocation Conference NRVC

NRVC is a U.S. based organization which believes that all religious share in the responsibility of promoting vocations to the consecrated life. This is true for thriving and aging congregations as well.

NRV is in the process of creating a network of young adults who will be commissioned as Vocation Ambassadors and equipped with media training and communication skills to represent and promote religious in the church and to the general public.

Jubilarians 2016

80 years in Religious Life:

Zr. Ignace Van Waes

US Province

Sister Cecilia Moloughney

Canada

Sister Mary De Pape

75 years in Religious Life:

US Province

Sister Carmel Ruth

60 years in Religious Life:

Belgium Province

Zr. Clara Verlie

Zr. Josée De Prins

70 years in Religious Life:

Belgium Province

Zr. Hildegarde Claes

Zr. Rita Moens

Zr. Josée Proost

Tezpur Province:

Sr. Alma Ekka

50 Years in Religious Life:

Belgium Province

Zr. Lea Cools

Zr. Ghislaine Debusschere

Zr. Monique Dufraing

Zr. Jacqueline Vergouwen

Ranchi Province

1. Sr. John Mary Ekka

2. Sr. Emma Ekka

3. Sr. Wineeta Bilung

4. Sr. Evelyn Lakra

Gumla Province

Sr. Bindu Kujur

Sr. Pratima Kujur

Tezpur Province

Sr. Cornelia Bilung

Sr. Ursula Lakra

US Province

Sister Mary Ellen Theriault

25 Years in Religious Life:

Ranchi Province

1. Sr. Salomi Hansdak

2. Sr. Sarita Bodra

Gumla Province

1. Sr. Sabina Tigga

Ambikapur Province

1. Sr. Florencia Samad

2. Sr. Bertha Lakra

