

REFLECT



Ursuline Sisters
Generalate
Rue Musin 1
1210 Brussels

September 2016

Dear Sisters and Associates,

As vacation time winds down and ministries resume, so many images of the past two months come to mind that I'm not sure where to begin. We say we are ready to take new risks with zeal and enthusiasm and to make radical changes and I have seen how our sisters have risked new encounters with other people from various countries and backgrounds. In their travels they have met with people from different cultures, and appreciated the Gospel values present in each culture.

Among the places where some sisters' journeys have taken them: France, Poland, China, Canada, DR Congo and the United States. For a few of the sisters this was their first international experience. I've enjoyed reading the first-hand accounts of their adventures, which indicate how it feels to be part of an intercultural reality and illustrate how they learned about cultural values lived out in foreign places.

More than 1 million youths from 187 countries gathered for the World Youth Day (WYD) 2016 in Krakow, Poland. When Sisters Jyoti, Lilima, Pascasie, Marie-Dominique, Judith and Juliette went to Poland, they had numerous opportunities to

develop a global vision of the church around the world - a church moving forward.

Shouldn't we ask ourselves if we are aiding our local church to move forward?

China was new to Sister Sylvie Ilunga, yet she managed to adapt and speak publically on how Alpha Ujuvi promotes women's and girls' education in the DR Congo. In Lourdes, France Sister Bernadette Mwavita joined other religious in an intercongregational evangelization project.

While in Quebec City, Sister Mary Ellen and I had time to visit with Sister Anuarite and Benigna who are studying in Rimouski, Canada. In another part of Canada, Sister Bimla spent time with our sisters in Winnipeg.

Language is always a challenge when in a country other than one's own. Sisters Bimla and Nirmala had to attune their ears to French during their time in DRC.

The LCWR Assembly which I attended as well as the Ursuline Convocation which I also attended with Sister Bimla were set in a contemplative setting and dealt with trends in religious life today. The titles of both gatherings give a hint of their content; "Embracing the Mystery: Living

Transformation" (LCWR) and "A Radical Response in the world: Reimagining Angela's Charism" (North American Convocation 2016). As I try to carry out the theme of the LCWR Assembly, one insight stays with me: "We are called to be careful listeners for the still, small voice that is leading us to the edge."

What signs in your life indicate a balance between prayer and action?

The reality is that intercultural living on some level is the future of every international congregation. We are already putting this into practice, since sisters from India and the Congo have been in Belgium for some time sharing in various ministries. Two Indian sisters will soon be helping in the work in Guyana. They are responding to an invitation to live our in South America under the guidance of St. Angela and Fr. John Lambertz and thus to live the Ursuline mission to the fullest while deepening their relationship with Christ. This will lead to a deeper awareness of our internationality and charism as they respond to present day needs in the church and in society. As the sisters settle into Guyana, they will be called to move from what is familiar and to learn about and to adopt a new frame of reference.

How has your sense of God been evolving as you respond to an invitation to serve in a new place?

We have shown what wonderful qualities and creative gifts our members have. For some sisters, perhaps, appreciation of cultural differences does not require a new situation. Since ours is an international congregational, many long distance contacts have already been established through the

media and over the internet. This generation of young Ursulines is producing the leaders and key players to keep our international roots alive. New needs that call for our response are emerging in our Congregation and in the world.

It will be a blessing if we can recognize how the intercultural experiences of our sisters help shape our future as an international congregation.

Sr. Jane Quinlan

Events in the Congo: Embracing the Future with Hope

We were honored to have our superiors from the General Government with us for the two important events in the Vice Province of Congo.



Sisters who professed first Vows

On August 13 we had the joy of celebrating the first vows of seven sisters (Adeline, Evelyne, Séraphine, Marie-Madeleine, Yvette, Julienne et Consolata), and the final profession of four sisters (Françoise Fazila, Marie Chantal, Marie Rose et Scolastique), the Silver Jubilee of Sisters Deodata Bunzigiye and Sylvie Sendegeya and the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Wineeta Bilung our visiting missioner from India.



Sisters who professed final Vows

It was a great moment of grace and of witness; a time to thank the Lord for the gift of the life and the growth of our Vice Province. After this joy filled day, overflowing with thanksgiving, we started our Chapter on August 16th which was a profound experience.



Jubilarians

The Chapter was concluded on the 20th with the installation of the new Vice Provincial team composed of Sisters Esperance Hamuli Vice-Provincial Superior and her team: Sisters Georgette Moya, Marie Louise Zawadi, Olga Ilunga et Pascaline Mawazo.

The theme of the chapter was *Avec Jésus, main dans la main pour notre UT UNUM SINT* » (With Jesus, joined hands for our Ut Unum Sint) One impressive moment symbolizing the theme was during the prayer when the sisters firmly held hands

in the form of a chain. Also during the opening Mass, Bishop Théophile Kaboy of Goma, reaffirmed the theme of the Chapter by quoting Pope Francis: "Look at the past with gratefulness, live the present with passion and embrace the future with hope."

Once the Chapter was opened, Sr. Bimla guided the Chapter proceedings with wisdom and openness to the Spirit.

We are grateful for their presence. We thank all the sisters in the congregation for their companionship and prayer during the Chapter.

Sr. Sylvie-Louise Zawadi

North American Ursuline Convocation

"Act, get moving, believe, exert yourself, hope, cry out to God with all your heart, you will surely see marvels!

The 2016 North American Ursuline Convocation opened on July 7 in Louisville, Kentucky with a procession of lighted candles and closed on July 10.



The Ursuline Convocation occurs every 3 years, bringing together Ursuline Sisters and Associates from the United States with those in Canada and Mexico.

Those attending from the US Province were: Sisters Joanne, Edith, James Frances, Associates Barbara Stauffer, Barbara Tubito-Megara, Linda, Kathleen. Sisters Bimla and Jane also attended. All those present were called to "A Radical Response in the Evolving World.: Re-Imagining Angela's Charism.

Two nationally known speakers and authors helped to set the tone each morning: Sister Sandra Schneiders, IHM, whose writings on religious life, spirituality and feminism are well known and Father Michael Crosby, a Capuchin Franciscan author, retreat director and professor.

Sister Sandra spoke of new ways of living our charism and Father Crosby encouraged us to reflect, reclaim, and re envision for our time Angela's charism of being "Mystical" spouses of the Cosmic Christ.

During one of the breakout sessions called "On Pilgrimage, a meaningful way of living later life", Jane Thibault reflected on how our aging can be a pilgrimage: By envisioning the experiences of late life *not as a random series of sometimes positive but often negative events* that must be suffered, endured, or adapted to, but as an *intentional* embracing of all experiences in a movement toward our final fulfillment.

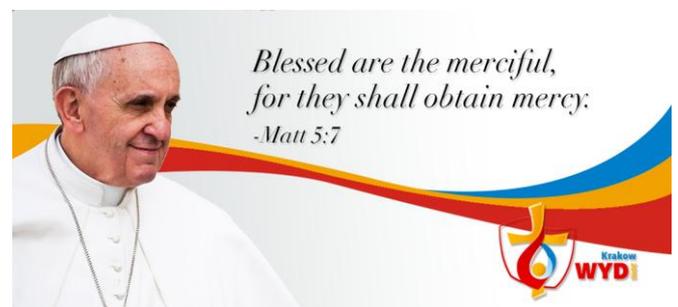
What kind of an experience has aging been for you so far?

Other breakout sessions dealt with topics as diverse as compassion, reducing gun violence, embracing a new cosmology, the art of story-telling, the evolution of the Ursuline Charism, schools, associates, poverty, human trafficking and the Water With Blessings ministry.

During the joyful Eucharistic celebration, the sign of peace lasted twice as long as at a regular Mass as participants moved around the room extending peace.

All the Sisters from "the Tildonk group" enjoyed an evening cruise on the Ohio River on the *Belle of Louisville*, a river steamboat in operation for over 100 years.

Each of the 181 participants (Sisters and Associates) was invited to take her candle with her and was encouraged to continue carrying the spark and to accept the challenge to re-imagine Angela's charism as a legacy for the future. With blessings and hugs, all returned to their homes while anticipating the next gathering in 2019.



Pilgrimage of faith and Mercy to Poland; a time to explore one's faith

"Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy" Mt. 5:7 was the theme of the 31st World Youth Day (WYD) 2016, which was held in Krakow, Poland. Krakow is widely known as the capital of Divine Mercy. Pope John Paul II and St. Faustina Kowalska have been recognized as special apostles of Divine Mercy. These two Saints were the main patrons of the world youth Day 2016 in Krakow. The world youth day actually lasts many days.

We, the Ursuline Sisters Marie-Dominique, Judith, Juliette and Pascasie from Congo Vice-Province and Sr. Jyoti Kiro and Sr. Lilima Toppo from Brussels, went to participate in this great event. We joined the Belgian group of the Congregation of the Assumption. There were 150 in our group, coming from 15 different nationalities.

Orientation program (from 18th -20th July)

We started our pilgrimage on the evening of the 18th in Sacred Heart Church, Brussels with an opening Holy Mass. We were divided into groups according to languages. For the next two days we were engaged in different activities e.g. morning Prayer (Lauds), faith sharing, Holy Mass, sharing of the Word of God, visiting an old age home and having recreation, etc. On the 19th we were prepared in a special way with an hour of Benediction, Confession and Holy Mass. This orientation for our real pilgrimage of faith to Poland made us feel at home and helped form friendships with others.



On the evening of the 20th we left in our bus for Warsaw. We were hosted in different families. The Kabyłka parish in

Warsaw diocese welcomed us warmly. The Day in the Warsaw Diocese began with the song of WYD2016 "*Blessed are the merciful* It was an inspiring and moving ceremony. This WYD was the time to share and to listen to other youth.



On the afternoon of the 25th we left for the main events in Krakow. On the way we made our *pilgrimage of mercy* to Auschwitz. This place is a symbol of terror and holocaust. This is camp created by Germans during World War II. This is the camp where 1.1 million people (men, women and children) mostly Jews were killed. This is the same place where Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe gave his life for another prisoner and Saint Edith Stein was put into the gas chamber for acknowledging being Jewish. It was very emotional and a painful moment to walk on this ground. It made us reflect on the nature of man and his humanness. We walked in the camp speechless, with wet eyes and in a prayerful mood. We offered our prayers and respect for these millions of innocent souls.

Main Event in Krakow (from 26th-31st July)

On the evening of the 25th we reached Wadowice the place where Saint John Paul II was born, baptized and lived for 18 years. We stayed with a lovely family for five days. Every morning at 9.00am there

was session where some youth shared their experience of the mercy of God. *"God-experience or mercy is not about feeling good and joy but it is more personal change in life."* Later we visited the sanctuaries of Saint John Paul II and Saint Sr. Faustina.



July 28th -31st were days to celebrate our faith with Pope Francis. These days are very blessed and memorable days for us. It was the time of great joy for us. On July 29th Friday we had an outdoor Way of the Cross. At each station different problems, struggles and challenges related to youth were addressed.



On July 30th the most important event began during the Vigil with the Pope. The idea behind the vigil was to find "The way to Jesus." The site of the Vigil was 15 km away from the city. We had to walk with our luggage for the night (sleeping mat/bag, food and water.) Our prayer song

along the way was *"Jesus Christ, You are my life, Alleluia Alleluia, Jesus Christ, You are my life, Alleluia....."*

We spent our vigil listening to the faith sharing of chosen members, an hour of Benediction and message of the Pope. He encouraged us to share the joy and goodness for which so many people are waiting. Pope Francis celebrated the final Holy Mass on July 31st. In his message he encouraged us by sending us out to the whole world to spread the theme of WYD. The Pope said, "Go and live the merciful life. Go to Him, He is there for you. Never be ashamed to confess for God is merciful. Pope Francis encouraged the youth the sacrament of reconciliation and receive God's mercy."

In the words of Sr. Jyoti, "WYD was a unique experience for us. It was a blessed time. To be with millions of youth and to experience them brought energy for our mission. This was the unique time of our journey of faith, our journey to mission and journey to God. I sincerely thank Sister Bimla Minj and Sr. Hildegarde who gave us this opportunity to participate in this event. In the year of Mercy to have this journey of Faith was very fruitful for us. It was an opportunity to deepen our faith, broaden our mind and thinking pattern, and to grow in life."

Sr. Jyoti Kiro & Sr. Lilima Toppo

Pilgrimage to Jarangdih

The Year of Mercy is the special time of grace announced by Dear Pope Francis. It is an occasion to renew our spiritual life and deepen our relationship with our Heavenly Father.



We, the sisters of the Provinciate community, School community and Novitiate community Gumla went to Jarangdih Dhori Mata (Bokaro) for a pilgrimage on August 21. For most of us it was the first time to go to Dhori Mata (Mother).

We started our journey at 5.30 a.m. from Gumla and reached the place at 11:30. We entered the shrine in a prayerful procession where we were welcomed by Fr. Abraham the assistant Parish priest, who offered Holy Mass for us. He prayed for us and for the whole province and gave us the message that we have to be holy like Mother Mary.

After Holy Mass Fr. Romanus Kerketta, the parish priest, welcomed us and shared the story of Dhori Mata. On June 12, 1956 while digging in the coal mines, Mr. Rupa Satnami found a wooden statue. The coal miners understood that the statue was a goddess and took it to their workers' office and started worshipping it. When someone said that the statue was of Our Lady, the Christians and late Fr. Albert Bharbharaken went to see it and found that it was an original Christian art statue of the Child Jesus in the lap of Mother Mary. When this message was given to the authorities of the Dhori coal mines, the authorities happily surrendered the statue to Fr. Albert.



In 1957 the coal miners moved the statue of "Our Lady" to a small prayer room from the office where they had kept it for a year. Mr. Rupa received a message in a dream that a beautiful prayer room was to be made where the statue of Our Lady of Jarangdih would be kept. So the wish of Our Lady of Jarangdih was fulfilled. Many people go to Dhori Mata to pray and receive favours from her. No doubt we have received many blessings and favours from Our Dhori Mata. While at the site, we offered prayers for each member of our Congregation.

Sr. Maria Swarnlata Kujur