

Ursuline Sisters, Congregation of Tildonk



E-News - February 2017

News from the Generalate

The Sisters from the Generalate enjoyed a visit with the Lier community. Pictured here are; Sisters Ursula Vinkx, Nirmala, Kujur, Jyoti Kiro, Bernadette Mwavita, Ghislaine Debusschere, Bimla Minj, Hildegarde Claes, Kanchan Tirkey and Annette Vinkx.



Sisters Bimla Nag, Bernadette Mwavita, Paula Geeraerts and Bimla Minj enjoy a conversation during a visit to the sisters in Floordam at Christmas time.

From the DR Congo

Efforts at peace

The Catholic Church is for peace and justice and so the Bishops of the DR Congo were involved in the dialogue proposed by the head of State between different political parties to help during the recent political crisis. The people had put a lot of hope in our

bishops who were involved in the dialogue.

The Pope himself had encouraged our bishops and had requested prayers for the DRC. We know that many people were praying for us including our sisters who followed our news on the radio, television or in the newspapers. We thank you because ultimately the agreement was reached. Thus, the majority of Congolese celebrated Christmas and New Year 2017 without fear.



Due to this peace, our sisters in Goma were able to go to their field 10 kilometers from the city to harvest beans. God has blessed us, we went there safely and we harvested 700 kgs of beans unlike last year when thieves had taken our harvest. Again happy new year to you all.

Sr. Colette Mwamini OSU

Joy of Furahini School children

Recently some students from our Ursuline High School in Goma visited a remedial school for children run by the Collective Alpha Ujuvi. Children in the remedial school, Centre Furahini, are being helped to catch up on years of schooling they missed due to various circumstances. The Collective Alpha Ujuvi focuses primarily on building relationships while helping children in precarious situations to regain their place in society.



Centre Furahini students welcoming the students of the 5th from in Lycee Chem Chem, who came to visit them as part of their outreach apostolate.

The high school girls showed their support and encouragement in a material way by making a donation of a few bags of clothes. The immense joy of the children in the

Furahini School and the students of Lycee Chem Chem was visible on the faces of everyone.

The coordinator of the Collective Alpha Ujuzi expressed her appreciation with a word of thanks to the students on behalf of the children from the Centre Furahini.

Furthering the SDGs in Goma

Responsible leadership requires us to try to achieve the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) even in small ways. An example of leadership comes from the students in Lycee Chem Chem, who are helping to achieve #16 *Peace and Justice*. The students of the Ursuline School in Goma won the Cup in the competition for debate/public speaking which had the theme "Repression of financial fraud in the region of South Kivu of the Great Lakes, effective, or not effective."

This outstanding award given to the talented students of Chem Chem is noteworthy because the competition included students from Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. Since it was held in Bukavu, the Governor of the city invited a group of sisters to his residence to congratulate them.

Calling All Youth for Change

We are looking forward to receiving news, photos and results of the SDG Art Contest announced in September by Sisters Jane Quinlan and Matilda Dungdung. Children between 8 and 14 were invited to design a poster of one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The contest ends on Feb 1. Thank you in advance for furthering the SDGs through art.

The Ursuline sponsored art contest is designed to familiarize children with the SDGs proposed by the United Nations, which give us a set of goals to be achieved in order to make our world better for the coming generations. By allowing diverse voices and experiences of our children in Ursuline Schools, we share their understanding of peace, hopes for their country, and ongoing challenges to building lasting and meaningful peace. Art gives a glimpse into their dreams for tomorrow.

A Friendly Pope

On New Year's Eve at 11:45 am, Pope Francis called up the small community of the Carmelite nuns in Spain, but they didn't pick up the phone. Their once-large community has now dwindled to a mere five nuns, three of which are from Argentina, which is also the pope's home country. He left them a voicemail in Spanish which said: *What are the nuns doing that they can't answer [the phone]? I am Pope Francis, I wish to greet you in this end of the year, I will see if I can call you later. May God bless you!*

Build community wherever we go - 5th Council

While attending the *North American Ursuline Convocation* in July, Sister Bimla and Jane supported the following *Statement of Non-Violence and Compassion*: "We pledge to live the call of non-violence and compassion through our prayer, our thoughts, words and deeds, and to participate in dialogue and actions in our local areas which will contribute to reconciliation and understanding."

A call for respect for each individual person was reiterated. Our differences are not a cause for violence among us, but an opportunity for dialogue and for finding solutions in this challenging era.

St. Angela Merici, calls us to: "Live in harmony, united in one heart and one will. "9th Counsel and "Be bound together by the bonds of charity, respecting one another, helping one another, supporting one another." 9th Counsel

From India

AMRAT - Asian Movement of Women Religious Against Trafficking in persons

In the Annual Report of AMRAT, the Major Superiors of Women Religious of India were informed about 'AMRAT' during their National plenary meeting in Goa. All were encouraged to enlist their support and participation in this important mission. The Action plan for the year 2017 was laid out. Sisters from Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar,



Odisha & M.P have pledged to end violence against women as per call given by the UN Secretary General in 2013, many Congregations in India are having Orange Day on the 25th of every month in their education institutions. The students have to wear a Yellow Ribbon made in the shape of the Ribbon for Aids Day.

Human Trafficking is a modern form of slavery which is intrinsically linked to migration. Combating trafficking- in-persons is one of the most pressing challenges facing the international community today. The victims of this insidious crime each year number in the hundreds of thousands, possibly millions.

Contact Sr. Julia George (Ranchi Province- juliageorgek5@gmail.com) for any clarification and help.

February 8, 2017 is the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking.

Ranchi Province: Entrance Ceremony of 11 Postulants.

On our Foundation Day, 13th January, Friday, 2017, the Ranchi Province received a beautiful gift from the Church of Chotanagpur in the persons of the 11 energetic and vibrant postulants for the Province. The entrance ceremony began at 11 a.m. All the postulants, dressed in their new uniform sari, lined up in front of the entrance of the Formation House, each holding a burning lamp in her hand. They



entered the chapel one by one responding to the roll call done by the Provincial, Sr. Suchita Shalini Xalxo. Sr. Ansumala Tigga, the Postulant Mistress led a very inspiring prayer service based on the theme, "Remain in my love" Jn. 15:9. Each postulant surrendered herself through a self-composed offering prayer, which was very genuine and touching. Their generous response to the call of Jesus to the Ursuline Congregation was enlightened and strengthened by the Gospel reading taken from St. John, 15: 1-15, followed by a short reflection given by Sr. Matilda Dungdung and by the intercessory prayers of the sisters present there. They were given the books of St. Angela and Fr. John Lambertz and the medal of St. Angela. After the group photo, the postulants were escorted to the dining hall and were congratulated. The whole programme was concluded with a delicious dinner prepared by Sr. Karuna and company. We thank the good Lord for the gift of our postulants and pray for their perseverance.

Sr. Matilda Dungdung

From the U.S.

This Christmas was different from others at the St. Ursula Center. In the very near future, due to financial constraints, we will be closing our retirement home. As you can imagine, this is a very difficult time for all of our Sisters. In a spirit of gratitude, the Sisters had a special tree of Hope in the chapel on which they placed ornaments with prayer intentions sent to them. During this Christmas season, our Sisters will pray for the needs every day.

The National Religious Retirement Office NRRO coordinates the annual national appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes financial assistance for

retirement needs to eligible religious institutes. The National Religious Retirement Office and the Retirement Fund for Religious are sponsored by the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The NRRO strives to support, educate and assist religious institutes in the United States to care for their elderly and frail members now and in the future. NRRO aims to raise funds for retired religious, help religious institutes assess their current retirement needs and implement planning. They also educate religious institutes to allocate assets realistically, and develop educational tools, programs, services and resource materials that enable religious institutes to address retirement wisely.

The U.S. Province has been fortunate to have the assistance from grants from the NRRO. They received a grant to study the Blue Point property to see if there could be uses that would generate income so that we would not have to sell the property. The report came back that selling was our only alternative for the future financial viability for the Province. This year we received a grant to update our website and to examine our development efforts and to plan for future direction in development. We have bi-monthly conference calls with a committee from the NRRO to help us assess what the next steps are that we need to take in the process. They are most helpful.

Sr. Jean Redigan moved to Maria Regina residence last month and is doing well in her new home. Other sisters will be moving there over the next few months. Please pray for our sisters as they leave Blue Point and move on to the next phase of their lives.



Sr. Joanne Callahan

Sister Carmel Ruth's smile shows her
joy on her
100th birthday.