

REFLECT



Ursuline Sisters
Generalate
Rue Musin 1
1210 Brussels

September 2013

Dear Sisters and Associates,

What Difference Do I Make?

I have been wondering what difference a new Pope will make in our violent, fragmented and angry world.

Roman Catholicism has taken a beating in the developed world and is often under persecution in the developing world. The hierarchy of the Church is upholding long held beliefs and practices while the People of God are struggling to keep up with a rapidly changing world. Has the hierarchical Church lost touch with her people?

Pope Francis visited Brazil in July for World Youth Day and, while there, met with the Bishops of Brazil. To the Bishops, Pope Francis said, "Unless we train ministers capable of warming people's hearts, of walking with them in the night, of dialoging with their hopes and disappointments, of mending their brokenness, what hope can we have for our present and future journey?"

"There is a need for increased collegiality and solidarity, not unanimity, but true unity in the richness of diversity."

"We need a Church capable of rediscovering the maternal womb of mercy. Without mercy we have little chance nowadays of becoming part of a world of "wounded" persons in need of understanding, forgiveness, love."

"Let us not reduce the involvement of the women in the Church, but instead promote their active role in the ecclesial community. By losing women, the Church risks becoming sterile."

Pope Francis' message gave me reason to believe that he does have the potential to make a difference in our world. He is calling the Church back to its roots, to discover again its love of the poor, its simplicity and its compassion.

How do you make a difference as you live your life every day? What is your personal response as you apply the words of Pope Francis to yourself?

Yes, we, Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk have the potential to bring peace, unity and love to our world. We pray to God, Angela Merici, and John Lambertz that this may be so.

Sr. Margaret O'Brien



Belgian Province Celebrates six Jubilarians

On August 24th, 2013 all the Sisters of our Belgian province, along with the associate members and the Congregation Leadership, came together in Floordam, Melsbroek, for a celebration. All the arrangements were



done in a big hall in Floordam in order to provide better care and attention to the needs of our elderly Sisters and to make the day enjoyable to each of them. The participants were 65 in number.



All the six jubilarians of this year were given special attention. Sister Maria De Kinder entered the congregation 80 years ago, Sisters Benigna Cools, Benigna De Maeyer, Els Peeters and Jozefa De Keizer

entered 70 years ago and Sister Ursula Vinkx 60 years ago.

During the beautiful Eucharistic celebration in the quietness of Floordam chapel, we prayed for all the Sisters of our Congregation, in particular for our six jubilarians, for our Sisters in Vice-Province of Congo who are facing the problems of war and for our Canadian Sisters who begin the year of centenary celebration. The Chapel looked grand with gorgeous flowers and lights.

The oneness and the unity we experienced during the celebration of the Eucharist was extended to the big hall. After a little reception, we all enjoyed the graceful dances of our Indian Sisters. Sister Olga from Vice-Province of Congo, who is studying in Rome, was here for summer



holidays. She got herself dressed up in sari and joined Sisters Tina and Lilima in dancing. Meanwhile at the small tables the Sisters and Associates were exchanging their life stories.

For each of the jubilarians a song was composed, in the form of a folk-song or a nursery-rhyme, so all could sing together. It sounded sometimes very funny and it was interesting at the same time. Each of the jubilarians was also presented with flowers and little gifts.

At the end there was tombola and all the participants had pleasant surprises.



After supper, Sister Olga accompanied by Sisters Ghislaine, Bimla, Tina and Lilima closed the day by singing the Magnificat in French.



For the refrain we all were invited to sing together with actions. Our heart was singing out of joy and we were thankful for all who helped in small and big ways to make this day a pleasant and a joyful one.



Quebec City: A Blend of Old and New by Sister Jane Quinlan, OSU

Marie Guyart (Mother Marie of the Incarnation, 1599-1672) has interested me ever since visiting Tours, France, where she

was born and entered the Ursulines. She was among the first Religious Sisters to go to Canada. She founded a school in Quebec which has been in continuous operation since 1639. Marie of the Incarnation, mystic, mother, and missionary, was declared "Blessed" in June, 1980.

This summer for two weeks I was a volunteer assisting the Ursulines in Quebec as a resource person at the "*Parloir Marie de l'Incarnation*". In the "*Parloir*", a small

Sign for the Parloir

The Parloir Marie-de-l'Incarnation is a site dedicated to the life and works of the Venerable Marie de l'Incarnation (Marie Guyart). The Parloir takes its name from the street on which the site is located (6 rue du Parloir).



Tomb of Marie

Marie of the Incarnation

The tomb of Mary of the Incarnation is a prayerful and peaceful oasis for the people living near, as well as for the pilgrims and tourists from all over the world.



exhibit area, visitors view some personal items, such as her rosary beads, samples of her letters, and a series of paintings depicting her life.

We averaged 20 visitors per day; most followed the tour in French. I gave the tour in English when necessary. I discovered that many people have a deep interest in Marie's life and writings. Being able to explain her life and mission was an extremely worthwhile experience for me. The main Museum and Chapel host larger groups. There are several aspects of my time in Quebec that I'd like to share with you concerning the



Ursuline Monastery and Sisters and the history and pageantry of Old Quebec.

The Ursuline Monastery is situated in the "Upper Town" of Quebec and is a spacious well preserved historic building. The chapel is memorable for its ornateness and beauty. The 53 Sisters of this particular

Sisters at the port

This picture shows Sr. Jane and a few other Sisters at a celebration marking the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the "King's Daughters," or "les filles du roi," in Quebec. (a further detail if you want it) They immigrated to New France between 1663 and 1673 as part of a program sponsored by Louis XIV. The program was designed to boost Canada's population both by encouraging male emigrants to settle there, and by promoting marriage, family formation and the birth of children.



Castle like arch way

The old part of Quebec has an ancient arch way that adds to the historic nature of the city.

community live in a part of the large complex which houses the school, museum, archives, reception areas and more. It took me a few days to find my way around the convent. I appreciated the Sisters' kindness and gentleness as I tried to navigate from my bedroom on the 4th floor to the Chapel on the 2nd then to the Refectory. I enjoyed the beautiful chanting of the Sisters during the Office and Mass as well as the garden walks and orchard. They were very interested in our Tildonk roots and foundations. These Sisters are from the Ursulines of the Canadian Union. It was a pleasure to get to get to know the Sisters. Each one gave me a new perspective on Angela's charism and the importance of Marie of the Incarnation in history. My heart has been profoundly touched by their friendship and inclusiveness.

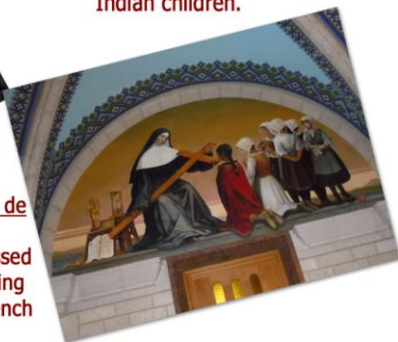
Truly the Ursulines are a part of the rich historic fabric that makes up Quebec. I consider them the Guardians of the Heritage of all that concerns Marie of the Incarnation and the other women who followed her through the years. Her letters and other writings explain the early settlement, especially work with the Amerindians, early settlers, Jesuits, and political leaders. Her letters are considered important historical documents. Quebec City combines an old European flavor mixed with a modern twist. The terrace boardwalk in front of the Chateau Frontenac, a castle like hotel, is where fire jugglers, jazz musicians, spoon and fiddling players perform for passing tourists. On every corner, there is a historical marker as a reminder of important people and events, including a monument to all the Religious Women who have ministered in the city. The Ursulines and the Augustinians who came on the same boat in 1639 headed the list.

A magnificent fireworks display on the last



Stained glass window of Marie and children

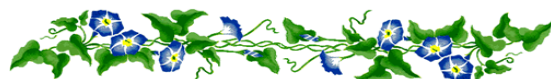
The chapel of the Ursuline Monastery is open to the public. This stained glass picture is in the chapel and depicts Marie teaching the Indian children.



A mural on the wall of St Anne de Beaupre Basilica

This beautiful mural shows Blessed Marie of the Incarnation teaching Native Americans as well as French girls.

night in Quebec culminated my memorable two week stay in this lively city. Quebec is a place worth visiting and revisiting.



Dear Sisters,

I express my deep gratitude to all of you for your prayerful support and best wishes for my knee replacement. The operation was successful in the hospital of Heilig Hart, Leuven. Being a week in the hospital, I came to the Multiple Sclerosis Clinic in Melsbroek for the physiotherapy.

The process of healing invites me to slow down and be aware of the present moment of what is happening within me and around me. I am surrounded by the MS patients. I notice that even in their physical inability to movement and natural flow of life, they are happy to help themselves and be helped by others and find meaning in their present situation and make their lives as best as they can. In fact, I am sharing a room with one of them. I am very much touched by her courageous and optimistic conversation. They have a lot to teach me. As I pray today, a verse of Psalm 145 rests with me "The Lord is compassionate to all creatures".

I am very grateful to the Generalate Community for their encouragement and support to have this surgery. I also thank the sisters in Belgium especially the sisters in Melsbroek for their visits and taking care of my needs. Above all, I am grateful for the doctors and nurses for their loving service during my journey of healing.

Bimla Minj, osu



CHAPTER OF THE CONGO VICE-PROVINCE

The theme of our Chapter was: "While facing the challenges of our times, let us walk towards light, in view of our mission".

The Lord's light really preceded us, as we lived our Chapter in an atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity. Our Chapter was preceded by preparatory work, sessions, and especially by a retreat on the subject: "*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life.*" (Jn 6:68). We experienced the Chapter in a spirit of openness, and especially of cooperation. We were expecting the members of Congregation Leadership to be with us but they could not be with us because of the political disturbance in our country. In spite of that, we felt their presence intensely. Personally, I experienced St. Angela's words, when she said: "*I shall always be in your midst, helping your prayers.*"

Sr. Margaret's opening letter encouraged us, as she recalled our Ursuline life: "Unity". The other speakers: priests for the retreat, sessions, opening Mass, all went in the same direction - especially since our environment needs union and solidarity, in order to participate in the promotion of peace. Thirty six Sisters took part in our Chapter; they came from all our communities in Katanga, Kalima, Bukavu and Goma.

We also had a wonderful opportunity during the Chapter to see all the beautiful things the Lord accomplished for us through

Sister Espérance; we thanked her during our 25 Year Jubilee Celebration, together with Sr. Léonie Omari and Sr. Véronique Fundi.

Through "Reflect", we express our gratitude to Sr. Margaret and to the whole team of the General Government, for the

support of their prayers and outstanding love. We thank all our Sisters in the different Provinces for their prayers and fraternal love during the time of the Chapter. We are grateful to all our Sisters in the DRC who committed themselves for making our Chapter a time of life and grace.



The members of the New Leadership Team to the Vice-Province of Congo are:

1. Sister Deodata Bunzigiye: Vice-Province Leader
2. Sister Bernadette Mwavita: 1st Councillor
3. Sister Casta Sengiyumva: 2nd Councillor
4. Sister Marie Brigitte Ndala: 3rd Councillor
5. Sister Sylvie Sendegeya: 4th Councillor

