

REFLECT

October 2019



Mary's Patient Love

Patience is a virtue that enables us to endure all the wrongs and misfortunes of life without discouragement, but instead with hope and trust in God.

Think of Mary's patience and trust in Divine Providence in her life. Mary's whole life was a continual exercise of her patience; as the Angel revealed to St. Bridget, "As a rose grows up amongst thorns, so did the Blessed Virgin grow up amongst tribulations." Compassion alone for her Son's sufferings sufficed to make her a martyr of patience. St. Bonaventure says that "A crucified Mother conceived a crucified Son." In speaking of her sorrows, we consider how much she suffered, starting with her journey to Egypt, and during her residence there, and also during the time she lived with her Son in the house in Nazareth.

In St. Bonaventure's words, "What Mary endured when present at the death of Jesus on Calvary is alone sufficient to show us how constant and sublime was her patience: 'There stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother'." It was that time precisely by the example of her patience, that she portrayed her patient love.

As a true disciple, she endured the suffering of Jesus from his birth to his crucifixion. She suffered deeply her whole life for the love of her Son.

Upon hearing the prophesy of Simeon - "A sword will pierce your own soul," she was troubled. She treasured all these things in her heart; her trust in Divine Providence leads her to deep contemplation, meditation and reflection. She waited patiently for the revelation of the accomplishment of the divine mystery of God's salvific plan in her life.

Her patient love helped her endure all the suffering with Christ to the fulfillment of God's plan. She is the model of faith, patient love and hope.

After the Resurrection there is no mention of Jesus meeting his mother. This painting by a South American artist, depicts the meeting of Jesus and his Mother.



In the painting the Risen Jesus is holding the hand of his Mother reflecting the divine power/energy being imparted to his mother. Mary's open hand represents the receiving

gesture of that divine power/energy in her heart. Mary is considered the power house as we implore her for help.

The upper part of the painting is illumined with the glory of God representing the ray of hope amidst chaos, violence, war, misery of poverty, suffering, discrimination, inequality, injustice, natural calamities, etc.. Can we become a ray of hope in our daily living in our broken world, inspired by Mary's patient love and trust?

The lower part of the painting represents the suffering world. The suffering is not the end of life but there is a ray of hope in the Risen Christ.

- Sr. Nirmala Kujur, osu



Sr. Juliette Robidoux, Sr. Mary De Pape, Sr. Joice Richards

Global Sisterhood

The term "global sisterhood" evokes in me an image that portrays a deep significance of solidarity and connectedness across borders. As an Ursuline I sensed this global sisterhood in July when I visited our Sisters in Winnipeg and realized what is happening in that part of the Congregation affects us all. Each Sister counts and is an important part of the whole wherever she lives.

I travelled to Winnipeg in the Province of Manitoba, Canada to carry the greetings of the Leadership team, to visit our Sisters and to accompany them. From start to finish I sensed Ursuline hospitality. I was embraced warmly at the airport by Sr. Mary De Pape and Sr. Yvette Bouchard of the

Sisters of Charity of Montreal (Grey Nuns). During my visit I felt completely at home as I listened to Sr. Mary and the other residents in the beautiful Despins Residence. Every day Mary and I walked a short distance to visit Sisters Juliette Robidoux, Joice Richards and Joan Adams who are in the Tache Care Facility.

Sr. Joan passed away peacefully on July 29 at the age of 77 after a crippling and all pervasive illness. A few lines from her obituary express her love and devotion to all she served. *Teaching was the love of Joan's life and she was very effective in the classroom and gifted as a principal and she too was loved. As a dedicated member of her religious community and as Provincial Leader Joan was a witness of the words "Ut unum sint" 'That all may be one'. Joan's unifying spirit emulated "the mission and prayers of Jesus who throughout his life-had but one desire to draw all people into oneness with the Father and one another."*

In an amazing and gracious manner Joan was able to accept unbelievable hardships. Throughout this time, she maintained her gracious manner with all those who attended her many needs. In an unknown but peaceful spirit Joan was able to impart her love and generosity to all who attended her throughout her trial.

Whether in North or South America, Europe or India, every Province/ community reflects some aspect of the Paschal Mystery. In Winnipeg I was touched by the reality of the Sisters' situation of having only a few Sisters,

yet their spirit of hope is evident as they face an uncertain future. A few lines from **Crossing Over** by Presentation Sister Raphael Consedine poetically state:

The pilgrims paused on the ancient
stones in the mountain gap.
Behind them stretched the roadway
they had travelled,
Ahead, mist hid the track.

As I concluded my time in Winnipeg, I asked myself, What is my own call to 'cross over' or move beyond familiar shores at this point of my life?

*This article was published in **Global Sisters Report**. Congratulations to Sr. Espérance Kanyere from the Vice Province of RDC Congo. Many people will come to know about our ministry in Kalima. **Global Sisters Report** is a recommended website we list on our own www.osutildonk website.*

Afterschool teaching helped students soar

In 2005, two years after my first religious profession, I was on mission in Kalima, province of Maniema, in one of the landlocked places of the Democratic Republic of Congo. I was there to mentor and supervise teachers in Lycee Chemchem in St. Peter's Parish.

The very first time I met with the sixth level students of this high school, I cried for some of them, because of their inability to read and write. The situation overwhelmed me and I felt pity for them. These poor young people! Their only hope of escaping their misery was their education, which their parents paid for with difficulty.

Without education, their intellectual development would be hindered, and they would not be able to obtain a diploma. Even if they got their diploma, they would not be prepared for what was expected in a job corresponding to the diploma they held.

I felt called to do something, but did not know what to do. In my perplexity, I shared my internal turmoil with my community, and my sisters explained to me that lack of education was a widespread problem in this area. The problem was almost impossible to solve because of a lack of well-trained teachers in the vicinity.

This made me think of our founders, St. Angela Merici and Fr. John Lambertz, who had a particular concern for the education of young people. Faced with this situation that demanded my action, I took the time to pray with our founders for inspiration. While continuing to pray, I began to talk over my concerns with the principal and the director about what I had learned about the students' level of education. Our conversations shed light on the situation, and as a result, they gave me space to instruct the children outside class hours.

I was happy, but was afraid of not being up to the task. It would not be easy, because besides teaching, I had to prepare for the next lessons for my students in class 3 to 6. In the Congo, secondary school goes up to class 6.

It was tiring for me to teach all day, and then use my nights for class preparation, correcting papers and writing lesson plans. But thanks to the Lord giving me grace, I did not neglect

any of my religious or academic duties, and I stayed in good health.

After just two months we saw a great transformation among my students, who actually began to correct some of their teachers' spelling mistakes and oral expressions! Therefore we felt the need for giving support and guidance to teachers, because the teachers asked the prefect if they could follow my lessons, too.

Little by little, the level of success rose in our school: more students passed the state exam and they were more successful in their job searches. The longer they worked at their jobs, the more they were appreciated; then, our school became overpopulated because other parents were looking for the quality training provided in our school. Increased enrollment has allowed the prefect to pay teachers well, has awakened the professionalism of our teachers, and given us all the satisfaction of a job well done.

They say the Lord writes straight with curved lines. My presence for two years at that school was God's way of improving the lives of the poor in that place by using me. By freeing a group of young people from ignorance, we improved the lives of all the people in the locality. As a result, our institute became a pilot school for the Kalima area, and contributed to the development of this isolated region. Even beyond the secular curriculum, I also found the opportunity to speak of God to these young people, and some of

them expressed their desire to receive the sacraments. This training has had a positive impact on the whole area. Thanks to the different responsibilities that these young people have assumed, and the services they have rendered and continue to make in society as doctors, magistrates, nurses, and teachers, they have improved their own living conditions, as well as those of society. From this group came two missionary priests: one Xaverian, currently on mission in Manila (the Philippines), and the other a White Father in Mali (West Africa), as well as married couples who are very active in their church. The couples involved in the parish as well as the newly ordained priests all feel an attachment to the Ursuline community.

This experience of my apostolic mission in Kalima remains a source of inspiration for me. Through this I have felt more and more enthusiasm and joy in giving myself completely to others for the love of Christ. And I have seen proof that God works with us in all our ministries.

Sr. Espérance Kanyere , OSU

*Sr. Philomina George, Provincial of the Ambikapur Province accepted our invitation to write about her interest in planting trees and flowers. These tangible actions are directly connected to the Ursuline Campaign **Sowing Hope for the Planet based on Laudate si'. Care for our Common Home***

As a child I already had a great interest in flowers. My brothers were also very fond of flowers and fruits trees. My sisters and I used to help them to water the plants and flower plants. The first fruits and the flowers were always given to the church. My brothers did this very faithfully, surely under the guidance of my mother. My father enjoyed seeing the flowers and fruit on the trees.



suitable for a vegetable garden. We were very successful in our effort. We planted all kinds of vegetables in the garden and some fruit trees as well. I also helped my companions in the flower garden.

When I was a Postulant in Purnea, which was a very new mission at the time, I noticed that they lacked many things, including a flower and vegetable garden and trees. The sisters were working very hard in the garden but they did not have any manure for their plants. I used to go with a bucket outside the convent where the cows were grazing, and was very happy to collect the cow dung for our garden. At the same time I gladly helped them in the garden and learnt a lot from them. I learnt a lot about vegetables from the late Sr. Godelive who was the Assistant Novice Mistress. While with her in the garden, she would tell me when and where each kind of vegetable had to be planted, and what kind of soil was best. I paid great attention and was eager to learn all that she told me.

During my Juniorate time in the study house in Ranchi we were given a plot of land which had never been cultivated. Some of us took a great interest in cleaning, digging and making the land

After coming to Ambikapur I had plenty of chances to plant fruit trees, trees for making furniture, trees for firewood and flower plants. We bought some land from the Rosarian Brothers and the whole Province was invited to bring plants to transplant in this newly acquired land. This land was to become the Novitiate later on. The whole Province showed such an interest and as a result, the sisters from every community brought many kinds of fruit trees, vegetables and flowers to plant. Personally I also brought many fruit trees, flowers and trees from different places I visited.

Today the Novitiate garden is full of fruit trees: mangoes, lichis, jack fruit, goose berries, grapefruit, avocado, custard apple (bull's heart), lemon, star apple, peaches, nectarine, sweet oranges, passion fruit, guavas, pears, black berries, different kinds of sour fruit for pickles, tamarind, bananas of various kinds, sapota, coffee plants, papaya and so many other fruit trees which have local Indian names. We also planted different kinds of tapioca for

our food. I even brought a walnut seedling from the Netherlands and it is growing. I have now planted the seeds of cherries and am waiting for its seedling. I still collect plants from different places to plant in our small garden. In summer we have lots of sweet fruit.

Wherever I go I always try to bring back various plants which are not in our garden. I plant them in our field. Some flower plants have been brought from Belgium and The Netherlands. They are all growing well and are flowering. I like greenery and want to keep our surroundings green.

In planting flowers, I see that in every season we have some flowers for the Lord and for us, too. Many of our sisters are interested in planting flowers, and they also bring new plants from here and there to plant

I invite you to come for a visit to our fruit and flower garden. I have shown some photos of the trees, fruits and flowers. Have a nice trip to our garden.

- Sr. Philomina George, OSU

Meet me where I am, Lord, with your kind and gentle mercy, helping me encounter others with the blessings I've received.



Happy Feast of St. Ursula!