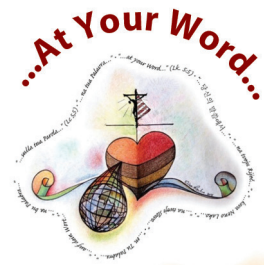


International Newsletter

Adorers of the Blood of Christ



ASC International Communications – General Administration - Via Maria De Mattias, 10 - 00183 Rome

www.adoratrici-asc.org

redazioneasc@adoratrici-asc.org

Lima, Peru
3-28 Luglio 2017

Compassion for Souls

Editorial

This year we celebrate the feast of St. Maria De Mattias in a very particular and completely different historic context from the past. The pandemic has changed and is changing many things. The cry of the Blood rising up from every part of the world with deaths and sickness, with its poor and immigrants leads us to emphasize a very important aspect of our spirituality: our compassion for people redeemed by the Blood of Christ.

Let us pray for the needs of the world, for our brothers and sisters we know are having problems or who explicitly ask us to pray to God for them. Intercessory prayer, makes us a means of hope and bridge overcoming the troubles of life which puts us in communication for a common purpose, feeling loved because we are God's children.

Interceding means *taking* our brothers and sisters *upon ourselves* to carry them to Jesus. It means bringing together the same fears and the same hopes. It means not letting the light coming from the Beloved Son go out in the darkness but feeding that light. Interceding is dialoging for and with others. Intercessory prayer is medicine for those asking for it and renewal for those who intercede. It is an act of extreme charity in which all our faith converges so that it is able to mold even the hardest, most suspicious and sad hearts into joyful purity. An exemplary image is that of the paralytic's friends in the Gospel of Mark or that of Moses as he intercedes for the health of the people in the desert, or Abraham, and Jesus himself in the Gospel of St. John when he says, "I not pray for these but also for those who will believe because of their word." And we could list many other examples.

But what does interceding mean for an Adorer? *"Let us be animated by zeal and our hearts filled with charity for God's honor. Let us bring souls to the side of Jesus. Jesus' blood is all our hope and all our good. It is blood shed with much love for our eternal salvation."* (MDM, Letter 529)

Interceding is responding to Love who has already given everything on the cross. *"I rely on his Word, which does not stop helping those who turn to Him. Finding myself at His feet by His grace, fills my heart with trust, hoping for great things from his bounty not just for myself but for my dear neighbor."* (MDM L. 150)

Thus, Maria De Mattias teaches us how prayer is the most powerful tool there is to alleviate the sufferings of others and lift up down-trodden hearts. It makes us participants in the sharing of pain, in the experience of transformation of that neighbor who is too often ignored and neglected. Christ is in that neighbor and we thank Him for making us a filter of life for eternal redemption. *"I could not hold back my tears out of a feeling of compassion for condemned souls and it seemed to me that Jesus was asking help because they cost him his blood."* (MDM, L. 884)

Therefore, intercession is wanting to welcome others and taking on the needs of others to make life flourish. It is not frustration or a free outpouring of complaints. It is an act of love that brings others to Christ, that brings them closer to Him. During this time of pandemic, therefore, let us continue the work of intercession so that not one drop of Jesus' Blood, the price of our salvation, is wasted.

S. Maria Grazia Boccamazzo, ASC

Editorial

◆ Compassion for Souls

General Administration Space

◆ "Fraternity: Place of Fidelity to our Charism and Mission" 2

From the ASC World

◆ New Book on the Quilting Goeckner Sisters 4

◆ Guadalupe Dancers 4

◆ The World of the Sisters – an Instrument of Charity 5

◆ Live Broadcast Rome – The Philippine Islands 6

Summary

1 ◆ Earthquake in Petrinja and Surrounding Areas 7

JPIC/VIVAT Space

◆ Pope Francis – Fratelli Tutti: PASSION for Christ Crucified and for our "Dear Neighbor" 8

In the Congregation

◆ General Administration Calendar 9

◆ Birthdays: Let's Celebrate Life 9

◆ They Have Returned to their Heavenly Home 9

“Fraternity: Place of Fidelity to Charism and Mission”



“Fraternity: place of fidelity to charism and mission” was the theme of the Annual Assembly of the UISG Constellation of Rome, held on-line, due to Covid-19 restrictions, from January 12 to 14. The theme chosen by the planning group saw the participants involved in a very current topic: the recent encyclical Fratelli Tutti which Pope Francis gave to every person of good will with the invitation to the people of God to “move from the ‘I’ to the ‘we.’

If fraternity is a call for every Christian, how much more so for us religious women called in community to be a sign of unity and prophecy for the world.

They were very interesting days when we were enriched not only by the presentations of the speakers (Professora Rosanna Virgili and Sr. Nicla Spezzati), but by the sharing of experiences and the common desire to live fraternity according to the gratuity of love as a generative response in a world marked by conflict and division.

Professor Rosanna Virgili called us to

brotherly/sisterly prophecy reminding us that the first mission of religious life is witnessing life together. Fraternal life lived in common comes from Jesus’ command “everyone will know by this, that you are my disciples if you love one another.” (Jn. 13:35) Credible fraternal life visibly lived in common is already an apostolate. It is doing what our Master wanted of us. Therefore, even if it is hard, this is the first mission we are called to do each day anew. All the fruitfulness of religious life depends on the quality of our fraternal life in common.

Even more so, the current renewal in the Church and in religious life is characterized by a searching for communion and community. Thus, religious life will be more meaningful the more it succeeds in building fraternal communities in which God is being sought and God is loved above everything else. It will lose its reason for existence each time this dimension of Christian love is forgotten, which is the building up of a small “family of God” with those who received the same call.



In fraternal life 'the goodness of God, our Savior, and God's love for humanity must be reflected' (Titus 3:4) as manifested in Jesus Christ. These words express well the central place of common life in religious life. Because it is there that community can become a school of love, where the word 'school' indicates that the religious themselves do not so much teach the world, but learn the art of loving, exercise mutual mercy, gradually enter into empathy and learn compassion.

Sr. Nicola Spezzati, ASC, helped us to read fraternity as a workshop of the Spirit, the art of living the critical contemporaneity of faith, a place of thought and living discipleship in an authentic way. It is necessary to go back to the mysticism of following Christ. Fraternity grows, lives, is revitalized while exploring and inventing.

Pope Francis often speaks of an outgoing Church, of peripheries to be known, of other places where we should be with our consecrated life for new fruitfulness. He frequently urges us to a new exodus from ourselves, from our little worlds, from rigid schemes or theoretical illusions in order to conquer the globalization of indifference and make ourselves concrete neighbors of all the troubled and marginalized.

We cannot reduce ourselves to a self-referential Church that maintains distances and multiplies distinctions (cfr. EG 95), but we are a pilgrim people in synodal style, all together on the same road, with the same passion, in dialogue and trust among us consecrated in our various forms and lifestyles and with other vocations in the Church.

The call to courageous conversion and to put Christ as the principle and foundation of fraternity rang out again. The invitation rang out again to find the "pure and everlasting source of spiritual life" (DV 21) in our daily prayerful and contemplative listening to the Word. Thus, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the experience of meditation and silence, of contemplation and sharing, the Word will become the source of grace, prayerful dialogue, a call to conversion, a prophetic proposal and a horizon of hope.

Pope Francis wrote, "The note characterizing consecrated life is prophecy." (Apostolic Letter II.2) It is upon this prerogative that he insisted in the closing of the meeting, by inviting us to paths of new prophecy, closeness and hope. We are aware that it is not a matter of personal improvisation, but it is the fruit of the Word listened to with an obedient heart and is achieved in true ecclesial communion. That requires passionate searching that will make us capable of a "mysticism with wide-open eyes" to offer solicitous hands in solidarity to travel paths of freedom with the lightness of the disciples. (cfr. Mt. 10:9-10)

To be on guard, one must accept living expropriated from certainties and learning to intuit with a loving heart and penetrating eyes, God's designs that are accomplished in newness.

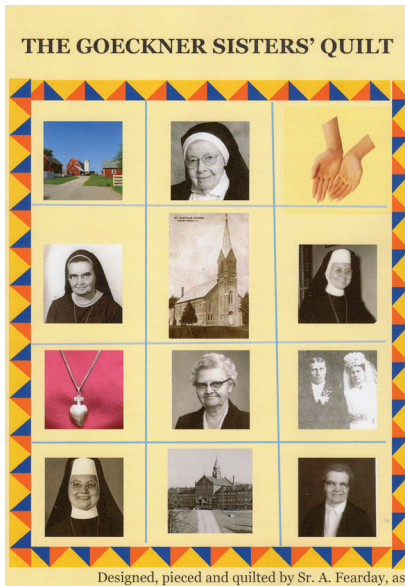
The need to revisit the forms, structures, formation processes, governance styles and ecclesial sense was often emphasized. We are convinced that we have to live conversion as an attitude of the heart, and this also passes through the "mysticism of approaching others with the intent of looking for their good" (EG 272) and promoting resources that are still available to the soul, following the path of the Beatitudes.

They were very rich days filled with listening and desiring ... a very wide breadth to dream together. (Fratelli Tutti, n. 9)

S. Nadia Coppa, ASC



New Book on the Quilting Goeckner Sisters



“The Goeckner Sisters’ Quilt” is a biography of our six Goeckner sisters who were blood sisters.

The book is set within the context of a quilt since together these sisters made more than 1,300 quilts in their lifetime.

The backing of the quilt is the first two chapters, the first on Bishop Creek, Illinois, their rural community of origin,

and the second on their ancestors, ties that are biological as well as to the religious congregation to which they each belonged.

The batting of the quilt, that which holds the book together, is a profile of the life of each sister. And finally, the top of the quilt is a composite of the quilt blocks with the pictures of each of the six sisters, along with quilt blocks of symbols that characterize them.

As readers, you are invited to contribute to this quilt as you respond to the questions at the end of each chapter. May this quilt be a source of comfort, beauty and inspiration to each of you as you quilt.

S. Ann “Anitawa” Fearday, ASC

Guadalupe Dancers

Sisters at the Wichita Center shared in a beautiful prayer and dance ritual with a local parish in Wichita to mark the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12. They observed the dance of the matachines (dance troupe) in honor of the patroness of the Americas, who has a special place in the hearts of Mexican people.

An employee of St. Ann’s Parish, Teresa P., taught the traditional dance to a group of young parishioners. She also created their naguillas – the clothes worn in this performance and others scheduled throughout the day. Each costume had distinctive beads, embroidery, feathers and embellishments.

The centuries-old dance tradition dates back to Spanish colonialism in Mexico and honors La Virgen de Guadalupe.

Although the weather was around 30 degrees that Saturday, sisters and co-workers joined the dancers outside on the east side of the Center.

Many sisters, especially those in Caritas, watched from their windows or gathered in the solarium.

Dancers held a picture of Our Lady throughout the dancing. The constant drumming indicated the heartbeat of Jesus in Mary’s womb. At the conclusion, each of the dancers knelt before Mary’s image to honor her. Before leaving, the young people gathered for the sisters’ traditional blessing.

The tradition of the matachines goes back many centuries. It is believed that the Spaniards brought the dance to the New World during the colonial times as part of their worship. In 1531, according to Catholic teachings, the Virgin Mary appeared as a dark-skinned Indian to a poor Aztec Indian named Juan Diego, a Catholic convert in Mexico.

When authorities demanded proof, Juan Diego showed his cloak that the Virgin had miraculously imprinted with her image.

S. Diana Rawlings, ASC



The World of the Sisters – an Instrument of Charity

Working with sisters Moly Parayil, Valsa Mamoottil and Shiny is a life-changing experience and I feel blessed and honored to have spent different years with them in the field of education which brought about lots of positive transformation in the life students, staff and parents. The energetic and lively presence of the sisters brings a sense of peace, simplicity and God's grace among us. Somehow no matter how difficult the task, it all gets done in a manner that is amazing.

I am indeed glad to share a few concrete actions which are the initiatives of the sisters, and which actually keep us spellbound.

At the beginning of last scholastic year a dozen poor students (drivers, watchmen's, supportive staff's kids) were brought seeking admission to our Institution, but were not able to pay due to huge admission fee. So the sisters took much pain to motivate other staff members and parents, as well as sacrificing their pocket money and managed to pay and admit them into the school. Fearing that these kids would fail the entrance exam, sisters used to call them well in advance and gave them sufficient coaching, so they would not fail. I am happy to say that I myself was one among them who did coaching.

Our school is situated in a rural area and for that very reason we do not have students coming from affluent families. So tuition, which is a must for every child, could only be a dream. The sisters decided that slow learners as well as students who need assistance in study must receive help from the school. So with the support of the staff, we created a one hour Zero period daily after the actual school hours for study and the subject experts and sisters themselves paid tuition for them. In order to support students not able to pay, the sisters have approached the person who sells books and motivated them to give them free of charge. They did it willingly saying when you sisters do many things, we are happy to take part by doing a bit that is possible from our end.

Sisters used to visit the families, especially of classes IX and X to encourage and give them confidence to fare well in the board exam. This was well appreciated by the parents and since the sisters were new to this place, students themselves used to come to take them to their house which was very noble and we feel proud of our students and their good manners.

Special deeds of kindness during flood and Corona

I often used to interact with the sisters, so they share with me the way of life that sisters lead and the activities that they are involved in. One day it so happened that one of the sisters told me that, as a Region, they have the practice of abstaining from one meal every Friday and during Advent and Lenten seasons they abstain from meat, fish (at times even both), fruits, and eggs. The money saved is used for helping the needy. I was shocked to know this and at once I told sisters that, from today on I too will abstain from one meal and contribute that sum throughout my life. It was an eye opener for me as to how in different ways we can lend a supporting hand to the needy.

The other day the sisters told us that in our city (Mathura) jail, there are large numbers of prisoners who have been released but still remain in jail due to non-payment of their penalty. So this year for Christmas the parish priest requested that whoever wants to contribute towards this cause give whatever is possible. When the sisters shared this with us they added that they would not take any Christmas gifts this time and so add some more funds from the convent, to release the prisoners. So joining with the sisters a few staff including myself have contributed some money, for this dignified and noble cause.

Sisters involve themselves actively in counselling those students who are naughty, slow learners, unwilling or who make excuses not to attend school, not doing homework, etc. They have changed or shown positive and better attitudes after counselling.

Sisters make it a point to visit especially those families where there is division or broken family relationships and miracles have happened and their disputes have been resolved.

Sisters involve themselves fully and actively in every matter possible and support not just with money but above all with prayers, time, energy, talents and more with their esteemed and edifying presence. It turns out to be very valuable and precious to those who receive. Sisters speak to us about the God and all that He did and continues doing for our well-being, in spite of caste, religion and it is being manifested through their lives.

Every sister is acting as an instrument, contributing a drop to the ocean of humanity and it is certainly true that the ocean would be less without these drops. May the sisters live long.

Mr. Sukhdev Singh
Staff of St. Francis School – Mathura

Live Broadcast, Rome – the Philippine Islands

On November 29, Sr. Nicla Spezzati, Regional Superior, connected with the three ASC communities living in Tandang Sor, Marikina and Maasin by Teams platform. It was a time of formation (the first of three) for the Adorers in discernment for the simplification of their Governance Structure. Sr. Nicla called everyone to reflect and share about: What kind of ASC evangelical sisterhood do we want to create as we are proceeding toward the future? In three meetings they will try to create a identity of an ASC community called to journey toward the future.

This first meeting was held around the first core reflection theme, Mark's passage focusing on Jesus' Word (Mk. 10:35-45): "But it is not this way among you. Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all." Following the

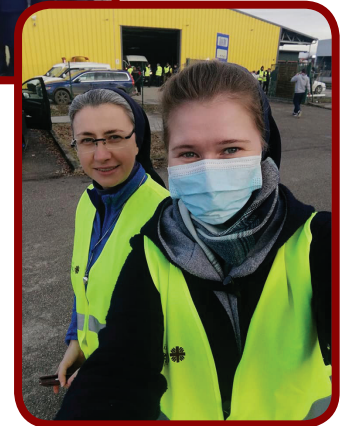
presentation of the theme were the Sisters' comments which were focused on and deepened the Word of Jesus who asks every authority to act in the sign of simplicity and service. And then, while remaining in reflection about what was shared, the group headed toward the second meeting, held December 13.

Best wishes to the ASCs in the Philippines for a calm process as we set out to change structures, if those we have do not let the Spirit's voice be heard.

From the Italian Region's Focus Newsletter



Earthquake in Petrinja and Surrounding Areas



A magnitude 6.3 earthquake hit central Croatia on Tuesday, December 29, 2020, shortly after 12:15 p.m. According to the EMSC, the epicenter was 47 km southeast of Zagreb, a few kilometers from the city of Petrinja. This was followed by a series of even weaker earthquakes. The ground in the area is still shaking. At the moment we are writing, it is a week since the devastating earthquake, which we have experienced again. The first was in March and it hit the Zagreb area, only this one was much stronger and with many more casualties. Fear, uncertainty, sleepless nights, the daily shaking of the ground keeps us in suspense and ready to run away if one can escape from this at all.

But we didn't stop there. The Sisters Adorers of the Blood of Christ, as sisters from Kutina and Nova Gradiška, immediately tried to get involved in helping and caring for the victims. We joined Caritas of the Sisak diocese, with volunteers from all over Croatia and all the good people who joined us in order to help those affected by the earthquake. Goodness and care were immediately activated and showing the sincere heart. Our Communities of the Blood of Christ also joined, both from Kutina and from Zagreb and other places. At the scene, it was touching to witness the human spirit, which, despite the suffering and fear, carries something positive and unbreakable.

People told us about their experience of the

earthquake, where they were and what they were doing at the time, how they felt immense anxiety and concern for the lives of their family members, shock and sadness when they realized how everything they had gained in their lives disappeared in one moment but also their enormous gratitude to God for being alive. In their material need they did not forget to think of each other. They used to tell us that it was someone else or another family with more children who needed more than the ones we came to help.

In the midst of this suffering one of the man here said: "God is with us and he will provide what we need. Thank you God!" Fear and uncertainty are really overcome by getting out of yourself and helping a dear neighbor whoever it might be. Being with people in those moments meant more than giving them bread. They knew we were there, that we were compassionate, that we were close to them and that they were not alone in their trouble.

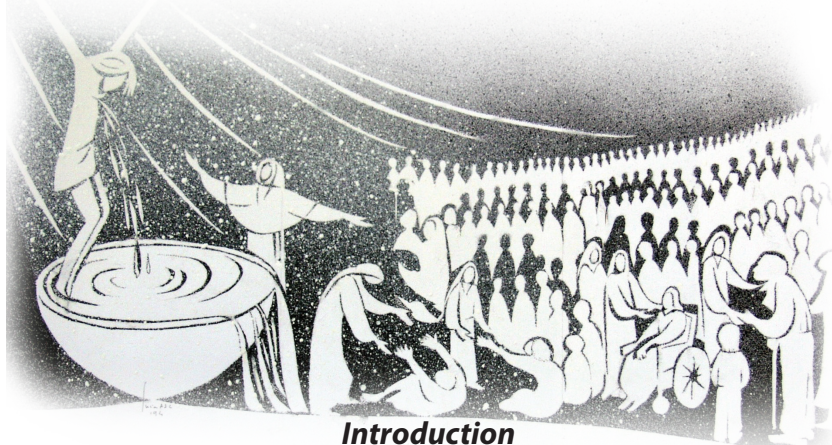
A hug and tears are a sign that we feel for each other in suffering; that is Heaven on earth. And this is exactly what the Adorers, along with many other people of good will, show: that the Blood of Christ is the source, power and renewal of life.

S. Danijela Anić, ASC and S. Lucija Bijelić, ASC

Pope Francis' Fratelli Tutti : PASSION for Christ Crucified and for the "Dear Neighbor"

Pope Francis through his Encyclical "Fratelli Tutti", explores building a culture of peace and dialogue in order to work together to care for each other. He offers a remedy against self-destruction and despair, which includes an openness to love, charity, and kindness, and a rejection of war, nuclear weapons and the death penalty.

I express my gratitude to Sr. Sara Dwyer who forwarded to me a study guide on Fraternity and Social Friendship prepared by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns. I recognize that this is a great and very useful material for each one of us and invite all of us to make a journey with the encyclical "Fratelli Tutti" chapter by chapter. It enables individuals to learn Pope Francis' teachings and use them to build peace and solidarity in our relationships, community, and the world.



Introduction

"It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women." (Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti #8)

From the very first words, Pope Francis teaches us the way of St. Francis of Assisi, who called all people his brothers and sisters "Fratelli Tutti", and was a "saint of fraternal love, simplicity and joy" who inspired this encyclical, as he did in *Laudato Si'*.

Because of a call to a love that "transcends the barriers of geography and distance" on March 1, 1834 St. Maria De Mattias left her beloved father and brothers and began her first journey towards Acuto, Frosinone. She demonstrated her openness of heart and commitment to peace at that time. A charismatic woman, characterized by a profound passion for Christ Crucified and for the "dear neighbor" and by an apostolic dynamism amazing for her time, Maria inspired her sisters to live well these words of their Constitution: "through our prayer, and sharing in the cross of Christ, we participate day by day in the building up of the body of Christ, so that all creation can move toward that beautiful order of things which the great Son of God came to establish in His blood." LC#3

Just as St. Francis and St. Maria De Mattias sought to live in harmony with all, Pope Francis calls us to value fraternity and friendship across all boundaries and division, as he and the Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb demonstrated when they signed the "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together" in Abu Dhabi in 2019.

While Pope Francis started writing this encyclical before the pandemic, the urgency of his teaching on fraternity became even more clear given the inability of countries to work together to resolve yet another problem that affects us all. Anyone who thinks the only lesson to learn from this time is to improve or reform current systems "is denying reality," the Pope says. We need a rebirth of "universal aspiration to fraternity."

Reflection Question:

How did St. Maria De Mattias address the challenges of her time?

S. Rani Padayattil, ASC

General Administration Calendar



Continuation of the on-line Canonical Visitation to the Region of India

February 1-3: Triduum in honor of St. Maria De Mattias

February 4: Feast of St. Maria De Mattias

February 8: Meeting of the Commission for the Study of the Long-Term Use of the Generalate Building

February 15-19: Research Workshop... To be Formed in the Economic Dimension - S. Monica Rini General Treasurer and Council

February 28: Meeting of the Commission for the Preparation of the Economic Directory

Birthdays: Let's Celebrate Life

30

S. Fathima Madduru 02/02/1991 India

40

S. Grace Innocent Mwenda 02/27/1981 Tanzania

50

S. Marija Pujić 02/09/1971 Zagreb

S. Anna Grazia Di Liddo 02/26/1971 Italy

70

S. Branka Gabrić 02/07/1951 Zagreb

S. Mara Matijević 02/25/1951 Zagreb

S. Grazia Cafaro 02/27/1951 Italy

80

S. Loreta Cirella 02/02/1941 Italy

S. Maria Palamà 02/02/1941 Italy

S. Vittoria Tomarelli 02/05/1941 Italy

S. Margarita Bravo Sánchez 02/19/1941 ...

S. Fernanda Annibale 02/21/1941 Italy

S. Maria Letizia Nardone 02/28/1941 Italy

90

S. Maria Serena Martins do Vale (Raimunda) 02/01/1931 Manaus



Monthly Communication

edited by the

Adorers of the Blood of Christ

International Communications – General Administration

Via Maria De Mattias, 10 - 00183 ROME

Year XXIII, Issue 2 - February 2021

Editorial Committee

**Maria Grazia Boccamazzo, ASC
Debora Brunetti**

Translations by

S. Ljubica Radovac - Croatian

S. Betty Adams - English

S. Anastazia Floriani - Swahili

S. Bozena Hulisz - Polish

S. Clara Albuquerque - Portuguese

S. Miriam Ortiz - Spanish

S. Johanna Rubin - German



**They have returned
to their Heavenly
Home**

01/03/2021 **S. Kornelia Schmid** Schaan

01/07/2021 **S. Maria Carpenito** Italy

01/07/2021 **S. Stephanie Mertens** USA

01/25/2021 **S. Rosaria Salvemini** Italy