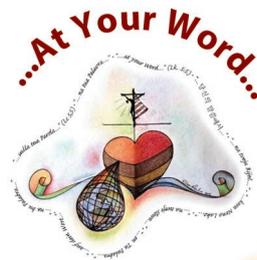


International Newsletter

Adorers of the Blood of Christ



Year XXIV – Issue 7, July 2022

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Timeless Visitations

Editorial

As we were preparing for our Canonical Visitation with the General Council, my thoughts drifted to another "Visitation," which feast is celebrated on May 31. Imagine the scene: kinswomen, Mary and Elizabeth, both experiencing miraculous pregnancies, greet one another in joy. Recognizing and celebrating the holy presences within them, moved them to sing in praise. They share about the wonders and the practicalities of becoming first time mothers. Mary prepares herself for her own child, as she assists Elizabeth with the birth of John. Elizabeth, caring for her infant son, shows Mary the skills she will need when Jesus is born. Their encounter carries them together into a future full of uncertainty and hope.

Our Canonical Visitation also brings us into exploring the future together with uncertainty and hope. Religious life worldwide is transforming, emerging into new ways of witnessing our charism to the world through ministry and mission. Our relationships are expanding with the ASC Family of Sisters, Associates, and Sojourners. We encounter our kinswomen, ASCs, from Italy, Croatia, Brazil,

Poland and India, who represent the ASCs in 23 countries where we are located. We greet one another in joy, providing hospitality worthy of Mary and Elizabeth. Looking deeply into one another's eyes and opening our hearts, helps us to recognize and celebrate the presence of Christ within all of creation. These encounters build our sense of communion as an ASC family. All of us learn from one another as we explore how our ASC mission is carried out in the reality and culture of the US Region. We are gleaning the wisdom of our elders, just as Mary learned at Elizabeth's side.

Not only do we experience "Visitation" during each term of our General Council, we have "Visitation Moments" along each step of our journey. When have you experienced a deeply meaningful encounter with another? Did the Spirit within you leap for joy? How did you celebrate? What melody of praise was stirred within you? What pieces of wisdom do you carry with you from that encounter in communion? How did this moment carry you into the future with hope?

Sr. Angela Laquet, ASC

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Prison Ministry



An online meeting was held by the International Spirituality Center on June 18, 2022 to encourage a shared reflection on the topic of prison ministry.

The initiative came about from hearing the experience of Sr. Emma Zordan (Region of Italy) who has been visiting and helping some of the inmates at the Roman prison of Rebibbia for years.

As a General Council we recognized the need to reflect on this ministry of assisting and caring for people that has been developing within the Congregation and to thus connect Adorers in the various parts of the world who do this ministry.

Together with Sr. Emma, Roberto Monteforte (a journalist), Carmine (an inmate on semi-freedom), and Antonella Pacifico (a lawyer) presented the round table. Many Adorers involved in prison ministry from the various parts of the Congregation participated in the endeavor. They, too, shared their experiences after having heard the touching testimony of the invited roundtable participants and broadened the reflection on the topic of caring for those living in prison who carry the indelible traces of their crimes inside themselves.

In presenting her new book "Not Everyone Knows", which gathers the testimonies of the inmates involved in creative writing workshops she offered them, Sr. Emma touched our hearts by encouraging us to a bolder and more impactful presence. Through the publication of this document she wanted to let us know about the prison reality to help us overcome

our many prejudices about the inmate's conditions and rediscover the humanity within each person whether behind bars or free.

Within these pages, the inmates honestly recount their stories, sharing their written reflections and rich testimony of memories and considerations that stem from a long and arduous process of awareness. It is an opportunity to give voice and heart to the inmates, disclosing their lives, desires, feelings and

their humanity mixed with the harshness of prison life. Their awareness of mistakes made and repentance and their seething for the harm done to others, but especially to their loved ones, stand out. These are pages that gather the bitter balance of an existence together with the fear of taking life back into their own hands to be reintegrated into society.

Sharing about the text prepared us for listening to Sr. Emma's experience and how incarceration is more or less useful for the social reintegration of offenders.

With his sharing, Carmine underlined that life in prison is suspended between fears and the possibility of rehabilitation, pain and a sense of guilt. He said with heartfelt words that each inmate is a person with his or her limitations, fears, frailties and strengths, regardless of the crimes committed and is in need of solidarity and understanding.

The spiritual and human assistance offered by many religious women is focused on supporting the prisoner, a person among the most in need of solidarity, on the path to rebuilding self-respect and consequently respect for others. In order for punishment to have a re-educational and resocialing, not purely compensatory, value, it is fundamental to restore to the inmate his or her dignity, self-respect and respect for the society to which he or she will go back to live at the end of the sentence.

As Adorers of the Blood of Christ, we can promote that real change that allows those living in prison to accomplish a process of growth. Through educational and training programs, places of listening and creative expression allow the mind to find alternative cognitive paths and overcome their “bad habits” that are often the first cause of crime. We must be aware of the responsibility to reinforce in these people their needed relational skills for rebuilding their social identity seriously compromised by judicial events and prison life.

I am personally convinced that there are not good or bad human beings, but people who are suffering. Crime is often an illegitimate response to pain. Inevitably, it is the life conditions, upbringing received, psychological and behavioral frailties that drive one to act.

One aspect I think is important is that prison is not an island. It represents that human reality that suffers due to evil, sin, and where one person suffers, the whole body suffers. We are called to look at this reality with different eyes from those who judge with a yardstick of justice, but with eyes of mercy: the merciful proclaiming of Christ cannot preclude any category of people. This in no way means softening evil or trying to justify it, but to go to its roots to discover where it originates, where the source of the disease is of which the imprisoned person only represents a symptom.

As community we are called to perform the delicate task of listening and accepting not only the needs of material poverty that arise with incarceration, but to draw near to combat social and religious exclusion, committing ourselves to social justice and fostering social change that knows how to take on these situations of extreme vulnerability. Jesus prioritizes the encounter with public sinners, he goes to visit their homes, he defends them from summary justice and communicates the Father’s merciful love to them.

Let us continue to give voice and room

to the stories and lives of these “discarded” brothers and sisters. By listening to them we will fight to reduce indifference and enrich our humanity.

Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC



Sr. Helena Augusta Walcott: Mother of the Homeless



The news of the death of Sister Helena Augusta Walcott reached us immediately thanks to Sr. Elsie Vinhote's presence. As general councilor from Brazil she let us know that the loss of Sr. Helena was a great loss for our sisters in Brazil. She was a special woman. My curiosity led me to the internet and with great marvel I noted that many news sources had spread the news of her death, expressing their sorrow, gratitude and tribute for her social involvement.

"Sister Helena, a sister who led land occupation movements for the poor of Manaus, died." (*Giornale 18 Oras*): ***"When a leader is born from the swamps: the path of militancy of Helena Augusta Walcott."*** (*Direito a Memoria*); ***"Sister Helena, dead at the age of 85, contributed to the creation of ten neighborhoods in Manaus, from Zumbi to Redenção."*** (*Blog do hiel Levy*)

These are only some of the headlines that communicated the people's gratitude for Sister Helena Augusta.

The newspapers say of her:

Sister Helena August Walcott, an Adorer of the Blood of Christ, the Sister known in Manaus for her social struggle and for the housing rights of the people with the occupation of the areas of griadas Union (land usurpers) died at the age of 87. Born in Brazil but a descendent of a family whose parents were from Guinea Bissau and Senegal, Helena was the youngest of seven children. The family was fully settled in the country, thanks to her father's work in construction of the Madeira Marore' road.

In Manaus, linked to the work of the Church since the 1970s, she began her activities in the Compensa neighborhood, in the Western zone, that arose following the occupation of the landless after the dismantling of the so-called "floating city." Her fight for land rights goes back to the 1990s, seeking to ensure minimum standards of human dignity. On the outskirts of Manaus there have been disputes with the grileiros for land in the neighborhoods of Compensa, Tera Nova, São José, João Paulo II, Zumbi dos Palmares I Armando Mendes and São Jorge. As well as in Redenção, in the central western area, and Japiim, in the southern area.

Sister Helena was always in the forefront of these occupation processes. Especially in the occupation processes, Helena sought to christen the areas with suggestive names, like the first, the Redemption neighborhood, to redesignate the place in a society accessed as racist that limited the rights of the very poor. In fact, the occupation area of the current Redemption neighborhood had been called "Planet of the Apes" alluding to the film, but mocking the presence of hundreds of poor families struggling for a piece of land. She was also concerned that lots were also demarcated with areas for the cultivation of fruit trees and other plants.

In 1987, in Armando Mendes, after a meeting with community members, Helena was attacked, masterminded by the grileiros, which led to the death of young Altenor Cavalcante.

Before her social action for housing, in the 1960s, Sr. Helena taught French in a school in Manacapuru. According to the testimony of journalist Elizabeth Vasconcelos Menezes, on Facebook "her name was often on the pages of newspapers." The other sisters at the convent feared for their lives, so much so that one day they convinced Sister Helena to spend some time in Africa. So much to tell! Sister Helena did not accept being called to lead a land invasion. One day she told me, "Alfredo Nascimento used to say, 'Sister Helena does not invade. She deals with occupation.' And that's exactly it: occupation."

Congressman José Ricardo also commented on her death in his social network:

Legacy "Sister Helena, the mother of the homeless, as she was known, was leader and coordinator of the Homeless Movement in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, providing decent housing for the poor of Manaus. In 2018, I had the privilege of honoring Sister Helena in the first edition of the book *Vidas que Falam* (Lives that Speak), which chronicles her life as a great fighter for human rights, justice and peace. To the family and friends of Helena and to the entire congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ of which she was a

member, she leaves a beautiful legacy as a living legend of the land occupations in the Amazon. Thanks to her, the Homeless Movement with the support of the Land Pastoral Commission won housing for almost a half a million people, creating at least 15 new neighborhoods in Manaus."

In fact, even before her death the people had asked the municipality of Manaus to dedicate a square to her.

Let us thank the Lord for her life witness and mission for the very poor, an expression of the liberating power of the of Christ's Blood.

Sr. Maria Grazia Boccamazzo, ASC



A Drop of Blood

The day of my vows,
I was captivated, Jesus, by the love
With which you called me to serve you.
I decided then to give myself completely to You.
And what sign could I give You? It could only be
Blood for the Blood of the One who gave all his Blood;
Therefore, I would be an Adorer of your Blood.
What a charism!
And with a needle – a thorn from the crown -
I pricked my finger and prayerfully, painfully put a drop of that blood
In a notebook.
What courage I had!
And with a strong impulse I wrote
Here is the sign of the blood
WITH WHICH I PROMISE
Never ever to separate myself from You.
A drop of blood
A universe, A LIFE
TO LOVE YOU
And to know how to give love to everyone
With your own love multiplied.
Multiplied. And so be it!



Sr. Marília Menezes

Canonical Visitation, June 2022

Like any visit, I found myself getting ready, cognizant of Covid...but excited. It was a Sacred time. The fruits of which I am relishing and savoring. To be challenged and empowered to go deeper into our Precious Blood Charism and to mine the nuggets of grace that come from ponderings and encounters is Grace. The Canonical Visitation was/is a rich experience to me... on one level, it was "Formal" but, in reality, it was as common as sitting with one's best friend. It was challenging and it was a true example of what Pope Francis would call "Synodality." The General Team reached out as Sisters to Sister; they listened, they dialogued and clarified. If something seemed not in sync with our Charism or Spirituality (there were moments) they sincerely "tried to understand and invited us to go deeper."

Yes, it was a gracious invitation, like Jesus to His followers, Come follow Me... not every whim or new idea that, may have the potential of derailing us from our true calling to drink deeply from the open side of Jesus, the Font of Love, Life and Hope. Each Sister on the team was truly interested in what my ministry, my life and spirituality and how I live the mission of an Adorer of the Blood of Christ. The invitation to bring a symbol and to share on that symbol, helped them to capture not just my experience as an Adorer but it gave a snapshot of the diversity of the region

and please God, the unity, the communion.

Finally, the Canonical Visitation was and is a Grace for me and the Region since it reminded us of our ongoing need to prayer, contemplate and ponder deeply our Spirituality. The Region was also invited to explore: what is your spirituality? Yes, a call by the General Superior to ponder, go deep into prayer so as to know, as I say, who am I and whose am I? An Encounter of Grace, love and Hope. I am grateful for what you brought to me and the Region and I can only hope, I too left a small deposit of grace with each of you.

Sr. Mary Shaw, ASC, D.Min.



My Reflections Following the Canonical Visitation:



It was so good to meet face-to-face with the members of the General Administration. Although it was during the turmoil of the transition from Ruma Convent to Benedictine Living Community, an emotional time for the sisters living in Ruma and the vicinity, I believe it was a time when the

community demonstrated a spirit of love and care for one another that warmed the heart of St. Maria De Mattias. This is a true sign of Gospel Love to the world.

The program prepared for the visit was well constructed to foster open communication. Perhaps some dialog on cultural lifestyles could have aided understandings. A written summary of the "findings" and perceptions will be welcome.

Our everywhere God is guiding us through this Christ soaked universe.

Sr M. Alan Wurth, ASC,

Time of Grace, Listening Experience

The canonical visitation of the US Region by the General Team ended on the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, June 19. They joined the extended faith community at the Wichita Center for Eucharist that morning. After Communion, Sr. Diana Rawlings, member of the Community Life Team recounted how the Sisters had welcomed the General Team four weeks earlier. At that time they expressed their desire to come closer in communion and knowledge of the ASCs, Associates and Sojourners. Then Fr. Tom Welk, CPPS, chaplain at the Wichita Center, reminded that one of the alternative dismissals at Eucharist gives the imperative to leave the assembly to go forth as a witness to the Gospel. The entire congregation extended their hands over the General Team singing a song of blessing for safe journeys home and continued guidance of the Spirit in their ministry of leadership.

Celebration extended through the noon meal and concluded with several short presentations. Sister Vicki Bergkamp, Regional Leader, thanked the General Team and presented each member with a small glass globe, a reminder of our unity around the world. Sister Sarah Harbaugh, our youngest professed member, reflected on her experience of the canonical visitation. Sister Nadia ended with words of appreciation and presentation of a gift to the Region.

For me, this canonical visitation was qualitatively different because of the General Team's focus on listening to the Sisters' experiences and understanding the realities of the US region. The small group sessions allowed the Sisters to share their hopes and visions with the General Team. Several times members of the General Team spoke of the deep listening needed to better understand the complex diversity reflected in such a pluralistic country. They named the pervasive individualism and experienced first-hand the geographic distances of the US. They learned more of our early history of ministry in many small, rural immigrant parishes. Today we are centered in culturally diverse urban areas, but still engaged in helping people grow in their faith and provide a better life for themselves and their children. I am grateful for their willingness to stay engaged in significant conversations, not an easy task across languages and from different

perspectives. I am grateful for their presence among us these weeks as Sisters and friends, even as they exercised their leadership role in the canonical visitation.

Sr. Janet Rowley, ASC





Legality Day

At Precious Blood Institute -- Bari

At 9:00 a.m. May 17, 2022, the fifth grade (sections A and B) at Precious Blood Institute led by their teacher Maria Attolico, celebrated Rule of Law and Legality Day on the thirtieth year since the massacres as indicated by the *Falcone Foundation*, established in Palermo on December 10, 1992, with the commitment to co-design with schools and educating communities.

During the event the students, dressed in special attire, (green shirts, the symbol of hope with sunflowers on their chests, the flower of legality) met with and dialogued with writer Luigi Garlando, author of *"This is why my name is Giovanni"*, and other distinguished guests such as authors Anna Bossi and Liliana Carone, the secretary of ISCEL (Group of Intervention and Study in the field of Linguistic Education), Ghety Valente and Constitutionalist Nicola Grasso, father of one of the students often in contact with the Foundation.

The speeches of the adults and children were very profound with many points for reflection and insights into the life of the great Magistrate Falcone.

President of the Foundation, Professor Maria Falcone, who wrote the interesting preface to Garlando's book, though unable to attend due to unavoidable commitments, sent an important letter of congratulation and thanks for the commitment to celebrating the memory of the victims of the Mafia and for acquainting the Precious Blood students with the story of her brother Giovanni with the reading of Garlando's book.

Legality Day, held last year as well with the speech by Dr. Salvatore Borsellino, brother of Paolo, concluded with the smiling picture of Falcone and the following message:



**"We must fulfill
Our duty to the end,
whatever the sacrifice
to be endured,
whatever the cost may
be,
for it is in that
that the essence of
human dignity lies!"**

Giovanni Falcone

Giovanni Falcone's sister wrote a letter to thank all those who perform their duty with dignity every day; the mafia is a far-reaching dictatorship we clash with every day. Retreating in the face of it means submitting to fear; we, instead, choose to give GOOD EXAMPLE.

In her letter, Professor Maria, sister of Giovanni, hopes that events like this one can be more and more present in everyone's agendas, in the schools, not just attentive and proactive ones like the Precious Blood Institute, but also in the public schools, especially in the most deprived realities, in the poorest neighborhoods, in every corner of the planet. Heartfelt thanks to everyone, especially to teacher Maria Attolico who could not end her wonderful professional career any better than this!



Our Dear Neighbor of Ukraine

In March we welcomed 7 refugees in our community of Czestochowa: three women, mothers with three children and one 26-year-old woman. The youngest, Arisa, is 4, Sasza is 10 and Alisa is 11, all from Charkow, a town in Ukraine known for the severe bombing it suffered.

Sr. Alina Bilecka is the contact person between the ASC community and our Ukrainian guests and is always ready to resolve their problems. We cooked dinner for our guests for three weeks and Sr. Alina sees that their refrigerator is never empty.

Until June 12, 2022, each Sunday and feast day all the Ukrainian guests were invited to dinner and also on Easter, their birthdays, and to listen to the concerts given by the girls. We shared their joys, pains and special days with them. For some time now, our guests have started to become independent.

After Easter, Sr. Agnieszka Łuźniak, ASC, began giving the mothers lessons in Polish.

On May 30, Alisa and Sasza participated in the Ukrainian Song Festival. It was the first competition of this kind in our city. Jan Matejko Elementary school number 41 invited all the Ukrainian children with musical talent living in Czestochowa and surrounding area to participate in the Ukrainian Song Festival. Alisa received first prize and Sasza second prize.... What a joy for us and especially for them and their mothers. Congratulations to them and we are happy for their success.

Sr. Gabriela Janikula, ASC



Adorers at the Border... Service and Accompaniment, Education and Advocacy



It has been three weeks since I began the journey of migrant accompaniment with Kino Border Initiative in Nogales AZ/MX. And each day here I am more settled, and more unsettled... as I get used to the rhythm of the days and the services and as I learn more of the hardships and the injustices of those caught in the migration, detention, deportation, broken system immigration web.

Each day hundreds of migrants come through the Kino Migrant Outreach Center in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. Each day hundreds of migrants come for food, seek shelter, need clothes, search for protection, require medical attention, ask for advice and yearn for a listening spirit and encouraging words. All of this and more is taken up by the Kino staff and the many volunteers who each day share their hearts, talents and love with those who come with heavy burdens but also with great hopes as they aspire for a better life for their families where basic needs can be met and their dignity as persons can be lived.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be more settled, and more unsettled...as I assist with the humanitarian services and listen firsthand to the sacred stories shared by migrants each day. I also have been able to participate in immersion educational experiences, which not only humanized the immigration issue but also helped me to understand even more the complexity of immigration and the accompaniment of migrants and refugees... and as I learn more, I continue to find myself more settled, and more unsettled.



Sister Tracey Horan, sp, leads us in an experience of migrant traveling through the desert



The learning process doesn't stop as I continue to develop knowledge and skills to carry out advocacy and promote policy changes, processes for the long haul.

Today I did covid testing and during the 15 minutes as we waited for the tests to register, I heard stories of several men being lost with hunger and thirst in the desert, of a young person having left home on his own to make the 3 day journey to the border hoping to cross as a minor, of a family running from gang violence to protect their two teenage children, heartbreaking stories. And then it was good to see the smiles when all the tests had negative results.



Another undertaking for today was helping with food preparation and distribution for the almost 300 people who come each day. For many this is their daily meal as they adjust to waiting in Nogales.

Next, I found myself doing initial interviews for those who were coming to the outreach center for the first time. Again, opening my ear and heart as stories were shared, stories that continued to stretched my sense of being more settled, and more unsettled...stories of escaping violence, hunger and fear, of walking with uncertainty for weeks, of rape, of lack of respect, stories of the dehumanization of each of these precious persons. And in the midst of so much pain, their relief for the rest, care and hope found at Kino.





As I move into my last week at Kino, I am also grateful for the moments of gentleness, compassion and bits of joy which gift these days...feeding a baby in the dining area, admiring the embroidery handwork being done by women from the shelter, finding just the right pair of shoes for the little girl, accompanying 3 young people as they present themselves to the Customs and Border Protection at the port of entry and request asylum...these too are moments of blessing.

As Adorer, with all of us Adorers, one by one, person by person, we are present and are presence with each of the persons at the border, at any border in our world. And as we are called to be more settled and more unsettled,

“we seek to be a presence that is inclusive, loving and liberating”...“so that all can move toward that beautiful order of things” and be one in our human family.



Pace
Sr. Dani Brought, ASC



The cross of migrants by local artist
Wences Kino
Border initiative
Nogales, Sonora

General Administration Calendar



July 2 – 7: Sr. Monica Rini , general treasurer, is involved the annual meeting of the Congregation Fund Committee, which will be held online.

July 9 - 24: Sr. Matija Pavic and Sr. Elsie Vinhote will be in Nemi (Italy) at the Ad Gentes Center to accompany the Seminar for middle-aged ASCs offered by CIS.

Birthdays: Let's celebrate life

40th birthday

Sr. Eva Tobias Mafumbi 07/31/1982 Tanzania

50th birthday

Sr. Bernadetha Marmo Lawala 07/07/1972 Tanzania

Sr. Kanthamani Abburi 07/08/1972 India

60th birthday

Sr. Wiesława Przybyło 07/23/1962 Wrocław

70th birthday

Sr. Slavica Turčić 07/27/1952 Zagreb

Sr. Aneta Anđelić 07/29/1952 Zagreb

80th birthday

Sr. Lucia Di Nucci 07/06/1942 Italy

Sr. Ljubica Kodžoman 07/17/1942 Zagreb

Sr. Anna Gesualdo 07/19/1942 Italy

Sr. Filomena Mannara 07/23/1942 Italy

Sr. Deborah Schovanec 07/25/1942 USA

Sr. Yung Ja Clara Lee 07/29/1942 USA

Sr. Celestina Stojanović 07/27/1942 Zagreb

Religious Profession

July 1, 2022 - Region Brazil

50th Anniversary of Religious Profession

Sr. Edna Pereira Braga

August 20, 2022 - Columbia Center

50th Anniversary of Religious Profession

Sr. Barbara Ann Kolonoski

60th Anniversary of Religious Profession

Sr. George Ann Biscan

65th Anniversary of Religious Profession

Sr. Leona Hunter

August 28, 2022 - Region of Wrocław

50th Anniversary of Religious Profession

Sr. Krystyna Kusak

Our best wishes and prayers



They have returned to their Heavenly Home

06/06/2022	Sr. Adelina Gesualdi	Italy
06/13/2022	Sr. Helena Augusta Walcott	Brazil
06/30/2022	Sr. Michaeline Ryan	USA



Monthly Communication

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