

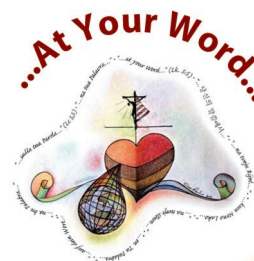
# International Newsletter

## Adorers of the Blood of Christ

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## SEMINAR SPECIAL

### Leaven in the Dough (Mt 13:33)

Seminar for Middle-Age ASCs  
Nemi, July 9-24, 2022



### Editorial

### **Middle Age is the New Center of Gravity**

*Sr. Nadia's Greeting to the International Seminar for Middle-Age ASCs*

In my name and that of the members of the General Administration I welcome you to this in-person seminar with the theme **Leaven in the Dough**. As ASCs, disciples of the Teacher,

we are called to be the leaven that transforms the multitude. We are leaven in the dough of an ever-changing global reality that asks us for the prophetic courage of a life deeply rooted in love.

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SEMINAR SPECIAL

Thank you for having accepted the invitation to this international experience: a seminar for sisters in the fruitful and generative age of mid-life, a very special time, full of big changes, but also of great vitality and renewed energy.

In preparing this short greeting I asked myself what does “middle age” mean? We often talk about middle age as a time of transition linked to transformations and revolutions that call life into question. The call is that of finding a new center of gravity, a “new interior center of gravity” to live the “second half” of life to the fullest with renewed passion.

What you are experiencing, in fact, is a very intense phase of life which, in the Congregation’s formation plan is called the time of maturity, of inner unification, of synthesis of one’s past, of openness to the fruitfulness of the future and the consolidation of one’s vocational identity. It is a blest and fruitful season amid challenges and newness.

I like to use a well-known phrase of a great writer and poet of Italian classical literature, Dante Alighieri, which, beyond its historical and theological meanings, beautifully describes in the Divine Comedy an important thought I would like to convey today:

*“In the midst of the journey of our life  
I found myself going through a dark forest,  
for the straight way was lost.”*

In these few verses, Dante describes the bewilderment of one who has lost the usual cultural, political, social, religious, as well as inner bearings. A profound change was needed *in the midst of his life’s journey*.

The dark forest represents the uncertainty of change, of that condition in which many of us find ourselves at some point: the loss of certainty, disorientation and fear about an unknown phase ahead.

Dante’s journey, both as poet and pilgrim, is thus a journey undertaken to encounter the many aspects of his life story (the lights and shadows, achievements and failures), that need to be integrated into a new self-concept that will allow him to “return to see the stars,” that is, to live in a more serene and conscious way, bolstered by a new maturity.

As ASCs, each of you is on the front lines involved in important ministries, called to bring

light into the darkness of other people’s journeys. We need to “count our days to come to wisdom of the heart.”

With inner readiness we encourage you to embrace this process that the International Spirituality Center is offering you: a time freely received as a sacred space of encounter with yourselves, each other and with the God of life who never ceases to amaze us. It is a time for being able to return “to the heart” and listen to what is happening in your lives, so that you can return to your daily realities with renewed drive and enthusiasm.

We know that this seminar will be a priceless opportunity for experiencing the interculturality of our Congregation, which is called to be in the world a visible sign of a *new, beautiful order which Jesus established with his Blood*. It will certainly help you to recognize yourselves a part of a broader journey of women consecrated to the Blood of Christ who love their vocation and are promoters of life, responsibly taking on significant ministries in order to respond to the cry of the blood.

Therefore, we encourage you to open your hearts to the action of grace, allowing yourselves to be transformed by the Spirit who wants to renew your lives, reaching out to you “here” and “now,” offering the best of yourselves to be a sign of faithfulness to our charism and to the world.

**Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC**



### ***Life is a Journey, Travel with a Deep Consciousness of God***

July 9<sup>th</sup> was a remarkable day in my life as I had dreamed of going in Rome. We 26 young and dynamic sisters headed towards Nemi along with the CIS team accompanied by two of the general councilors. Nemi, known for its natural beauty, lies beside a blue and silent lake surrounded by its thick, tall, lush green trees singing the glory of God, which absolutely captured all our hearts and left us speechless with eyes opened and glorifying the Lord.

The Seminar for Sisters in Mid-Life began on July 10 with the Eucharistic celebration where all of us gathered in one heart, one soul and one mind, under the banner of Adorers of the Blood of Christ. I was overwhelmed with joy amidst the other Adorers as I first met them. What an exciting and thrilling experience we had.

Sr. Nadia welcomed us and introduced to us a beautiful theme of "Leaven and the Dough". She said that as disciples of the master, we are to be leaven, transforming the dough, fostering change in oneself, society and the world.

A symbol of each culture was exhibited by all the sisters from different regions in a creative way, which spoke of its culture, country, and their national flag which was simply amazing and broadened my knowledge.

Moments of prayer and group sharing brought us close to one another. Reflection on one's own life and mission helped us to see how we can be leaven in the dough and make our life more meaningful. We also put together all our talents of singing, dancing, and acting that cheered and enthused us.

A day was allotted to us to showcase the mission and ministry of each region. Each of us presented vividly to give a clear picture of the reality in which each Adorer lives. We are in many parts of the world but all of us proclaim the glory of the Divine Blood through varied ministries with a single purpose and goal as Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

Visit to Vallecorsa and Acuto gave me joy and I could realize the trouble that our

Foundress underwent. She walked on the paths and climbed the mountains, during scorching sun and cold. At the age of 29 established the first community in Acuto; as I stood in wonder and admiration I wished and prayed that the spirit that worked in Maria could work on every Adorer. In the visit to St. Gaspar's church in Giano, I was filled with gratitude for all the help that he had contributed to our congregation.

Some of our sisters served us as translators during prayer sessions, classes and a picnic so that we could understand and participate as traveling in the seminar.

A day was arranged as a cultural festival. Everyone danced with their cultural costume, which was an enrichment experience for all of us.

The days quickly passed and soon came 24<sup>th</sup> July where we had to say goodbye to Nemi and our friends. The intercultural gathering came to an end with the meaningful and creative Eucharistic celebration, organized by the CIS team.

Sr. Nadia gave us a beautiful talk, words full of wisdom, a guide to life and to live as a leaven in dough. She also blessed all of us with holy oil on our forehead and on our palms that reminded me of Jesus' sending the disciples for Mission and this words: Christ has no head but yours. Christ has no feet but yours, Christ has no hands but yours, Christ has no body but yours.

Congratulation and gratitude to Sr. Nadia and team, the CIS team and all the leaders of our congregation who made this intercultural gathering successful.

***Sr. Jaisy Karukuttikaran, ASC***

### Spiritual Experience

The seminar with the theme *Leaven in the Dough* was prepared by the team of the International Center of Spirituality (CIS) in collaboration with the General Administration as part of a congregational ongoing formation program. The intended group was the ASCs, particularly those aged between the ages of 40-60. The seminar was attended by twenty-five participants from different global realities.

The seminar was a special moment of personal encounter with God and with others through staying together, daily sharing of the word of God and Eucharistic celebration, personal reflections, and through group pilgrimages to various historical places of our Congregation.

From the very first day, the participants were invited and emphasized to make use of such a golden chance as sacred space of encounter with God, oneself and others journeying together towards holiness by their consecration to the Blood of Christ. During the two weeks of seminar, the sisters visited Giano on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2022, the Monastery of St. Felix, where the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood was founded by St. Gaspar Del Bufalo. The visit to Vallecorsa - the birthplace of Maria De Mattias and Acuto - the place where she founded the congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ. The participants also visited Albano, the place of Saint Gaspar on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July, the day back in Rome after the seminar, the participants had an opportunity also to visit various key areas like the Sanctuary where there is a body of St. Gaspar and the tomb of Venerable John Merlin, the house where St. Maria De Mattias died and the church in which her funeral was celebrated. In all these areas, the sisters had a chance to hear short stories about those places as the CIS team planned it.

The two weeks' time was a special moment for reflections and prayers, which eventually led to spiritual growth for the participants. For example, the visit to Vallecorsa and Acuto - just to mention a few, had become an inward journey on Maria's footsteps from which, in my opinion, all five senses were used to comprehend and believe the real history of the Foundress and the foundation of the ASCs. It was also a personal spiritual renewal

of the vocation history and journey of the participants from their childhood to the present. At the small church (chapel) in Acuto, there was a moment of group prayer through which each participant had an opportunity to praise God for the gift of her vocation in the Church by sharing the Charism and spirituality of the Congregation. Through the intercessions of St. Maria De Mattias, all the congregation realities were presented in God's Hands.

At the end of the seminar, by all the inputs from facilitators and from the General Superior's speech; the participants experienced a strong call of being **Good Leaven** for bringing transformation as instruments of fraternal love, unity, hope and reconciliation. To concretize their desire and responsibility, the participants were blessed and anointed to remain strongly rooted and united with Jesus to bear fruits wherever they will be in returning to their realities. Sincere appreciations for the congregational General Administration team, CIS team, translators and guides, the A.S.C members and CPPS Fathers in all places visited by the participants for their warmly welcome and collaboration.

Sr. Florida Malenda, ASC



## **Experience of God on the Tabor of St. Felix of Giano**

Each time I come to this place I have a wonderful experience. What greatly impressed me today was what the missionary priest briefly shared about the history of the beginnings of St. Felix of Giano through the pictures and paintings on the convent walls, which St. Gaspar had wisely and intelligently chosen for the future foundation of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood of Christ and the Sisters Adorers of the Blood of Christ, of course.

With the theme covered in these seminar days *“Yeast in the Dough”*, the experience at St. Felix of Giano revived in me a new vigor of strong inner transformation, especially during the Eucharistic adoration in the crypt. In my heart I felt a strong invitation to hope and trust in God.

We were also surprised in the crypt by the icon of the cross painted by Sister Nadia Coppa, as many of us were not aware of her talent in painting icons. It was a powerful experience of revelation of something mystical.

In our prayers we intensified our dedication and consecration of our Congregations: the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood and the Sisters Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

During this day we feel great power and courage to continue to “collaborate with Christ in his work of redemption.”

We are aware we need to strengthen our lives

by listening assiduously to the Word of God each day in order to be new leaven in the dough of our Congregation and of the world, by helping each person discover the preciousness of the Blood of Christ for the redemption of the world. We need to witness simplicity of life and a heart for the people of God.



**Sr. Helena M. Antonio dos Santos, ASC**

### Mission of Perù – Region of Brazil

## **A Heart that is Leaven in the Dough**

I thank God for having given me the opportunity of this wonderful experience of Congregation. I am grateful to Sr. Nadia and to the General Council for this great opportunity to grow as consecrated ASC women.

The seminar helped me and strengthened me in my choice of ASC consecrated life, a perspective that in light of the allegorical image of leaven and dough, integrated and invigorated me.

It moved me to be a woman as life-giving leaven, surrendering my heart to the service of my sisters and my dear neighbor. I needed a time like this, which like good energy renewed me, making sure that the fire of my love for Jesus will not go out.

In walking the streets of Acuto and Vallecorsa,

my heart felt great joy and emotion. As I was walking, I thought about Maria De Mattias and the trust she had in Jesus Crucified and about her courage and boldness in founding our Congregation.

I am grateful for everything I received.

**Sr. Ana Isabel, ASC**



### ASC Spirituality Meeting

*"God's grace encounters us where we are,  
but never leaves us where it found us."  
Anne Lamatt*

I begin my sharing and my experience during the days of the holistic formation Seminar in Nemi from July 9 to 12 with this sentence that has marked my life in these days.

The proposed theme, "Leaven in the Dough" (Mt. 13:33) was introduced to us by Biblical scholar Rosanna Virgili. She invited us to look at and contemplate the leaven and the dough from the point of view of the time the dough needs to rise. In order to be transformed, the dough must rest and remain in the dark. These two factors: resting and remaining in the dark made me reflect on the need we have as people to take time to rest in God's presence, to recharge ourselves spiritually. This is what we have been doing in these Seminar days.

Having a moment of darkness is necessary. The dough goes through this dynamic of "solitude." In life, on a journey, we go through this darkness in order to enable the gifts of God we have been given to ferment in our lives. Going down deep within ourselves makes us grow, makes us be the new bread, the new Christ for our brothers and sisters. "Leavened dough is a surrender of love." Do I have the courage to lose myself in this dough? To become a new leaven? For me, her questions were like a stirring and tilling of the soil, which is our heart, to welcome the new seed .... a new sowing.

With warm hearts, and the help of Don Ezio Risatti, Salesian priest, (Edi.S.I.) we were led to work on our feelings. He introduced us to delving into, becoming aware of our feelings, our wounds, working on our interpersonal relationships in community. He pointed out the importance of: discovering our gifts, recognizing the gifts God has given us in a unique reality and working on fear, anxiety and emotions: Being aware of our emotions is a daily challenge: What do I feel when I handle my emotions? Why do I feel fear, anger ....? The soil continues to be tilled and into this soil are added the elements of community, challenge and gift.

Being in community means encountering the other, weaving relationships. The other and I are an encounter to be discovered. The encounter is always new and makes us feel we are always learning. In the image used by Dr. Lidia Curcio, St. Thomas is putting his finger in Jesus' wounds, which speaks to us of an encounter, letting his wounds be touched. What are my wounds? Do I have the courage to let my wounds be touched? It is important to work on our own wounds and also to understand those of the other. It is the dynamic of embracing, listening and reconciliation. In this way, each encounter will generate new life in our communities.

It is important to find the leaven that makes our lives grow and helps us understand God's will. And let us always ask ourselves: what is my mission and vocation? Father Prem, a Jesuit, helped us in this theme of discernment in order to listen to God's will in our lives. Discernment is a gift; it is God's plan for us. The person listens, looks carefully and enters into the dynamic with God through prayer. The skill of discerning is to welcome God's word, to be able to listen to the signs of the times. How can we listen to these signs from our spirituality of the blood?



## Personal Experiences

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This and other questions led us to meditate further on personal and communal discernment and its dimensions: physical, intellectual and spiritual. It made us reflect on the difficult, "dark," painful moments of our journey. Again I remind people who have to go through this dark time, that for us it is to find God's will. It is to place ourselves in his presence and say, "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will!"

*Here I am* is the answer we gave in the rite of consecration in the ASC Congregation. With the help of Sister Maria Hughes, ASC, reflection on the vows led us to look at our personal ASC history, how we are living the distinctiveness of the vows since our life is charism and mission. We grow according to our charism. Each person, each face, has a call and each call comes from God. The response to the call transforms us. As a multicultural congregation, we are challenged to work with and embrace the wonders of our personal and cultural diversity as God's gift to us.

The diversity revealed in the faces of each sister during these seminar days confirms the

dream of God manifested in St. Maria De Mattias who, through her yes, opened the way for us to live the beautiful experience of the Spirituality of the Blood of Christ -- Blood that unites us in one body, one soul, one heart. This led me to reflect: how has each of us been drawn to this charism? Am I making this Precious Blood of Jesus known and loved?

Visiting the sacred places of our congregation sparked several other questions and reflections in me. Being in Vallecorsa and Acuto for the first time is a unique experience. It is not just a visit, but a reflection, a contemplation of the manifestation of God in the person of Maria De Mattias and one which has spread to various cultures. The Hymn to the Blood of Christ that we sing or pray helps us remember the great wonder of God manifesting Himself in all races, languages and nations. Remembering Sister Maria's phrase "when we consecrate ourselves on the day of our vows, we consecrate ourselves for the future. We consecrate ourselves for those who will come after us." I believe that was the case for Maria De Mattias; her consecration to God consecrated us as well.

I think we all leave this meeting with the feeling that we are on our way with a heart full of desire to broaden our horizons, to encounter the other's culture better, to learn the language so that we can communicate better. If we want to grow in unity and experience diversity, we must know how to love and respect each culture. It is this diversity that makes it good to be an ASC.

I conclude my sharing by thanking God for these days spent together with my sisters, sharing life, mission and every moment. I thank CIS and the General Council in the person of Sr. Nadia Coppa for offering us this time of *kairos*. God's grace encountered us there, in the reality of each, but did not leave us in the same place. Our hearts are inflamed with hope and renewed in His love.

**Sr. Francisca de Carvalho, ASC**



## Challenges and Opportunities of Our Age

I am excited to scribble a few lines about my experience in the Seminar organized by the CIS team on July 9-24. The main theme was the *Leaven in the Dough*. We had various resource persons and had wonderful experiences too. Among these experiences, I am very happy to share the challenges and opportunities of our age that we come across. The presenter was Sr. Sheila Kinsey. She gave her reflection based on the Gospel Mt. (13:33), reflections on ASCs' spirituality, mission, and advocacy based on *Laudato si*.

She stimulated us with reflections on the purpose of these days in Rome. It was an eye opener for me that the purpose of this seminar for us was to:

Recognize the **transitions** in our lives; look to the **future** with hope, courage, and fullness of life; balance our **lives**; live with **confidence**; renew **consecrated** life as an Adorer of the Blood of Christ; welcome the **newness** of God manifested in passages of life.

The articles she caught from our Constitution were:

- Charism—To be Adorers of the Blood of Christ means to be **wholly consecrated** to the adoring and **redeeming love of Jesus Christ**, who shed his blood to free us from sin and reconcile us in love. ... become that image (Ch. 1)

- Mission—We accomplish this mission by **witnessing to God's love and ministering that love to others**, especially the poor, the oppressed, and the deprived. (Ch. 1)

- Advocacy **Through living and announcing the gospel of love, justice, and peace**, we share in the transformation of the world. (Ch. VI)

St. Maria De Mattias had a deep experience and intimacy with God. She was an Adorer of the Blood of Christ. Here, Sr. Sheila put a question to us, "When we think of our image of God, what comes to mind? Why do you have this image? What meaning does it continue to have for you? After a few minutes of silent reflection,

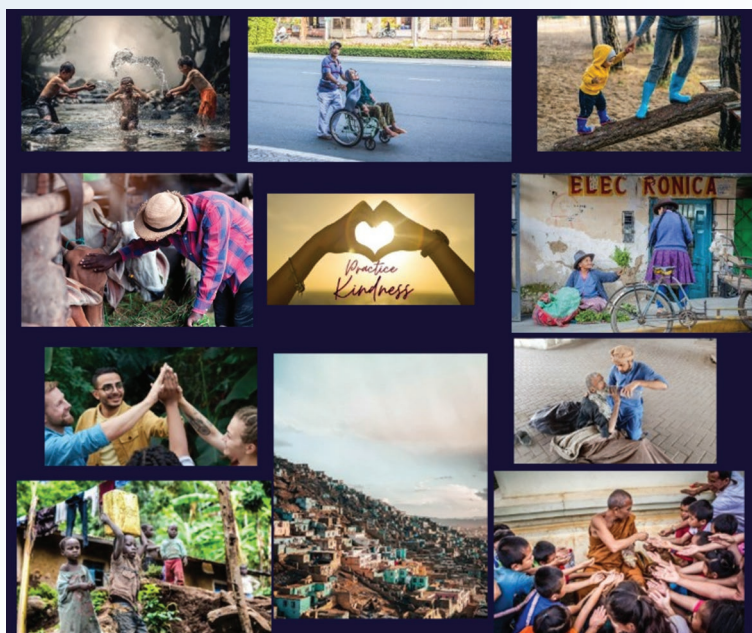
we were asked to share this relationship with another, a person nearby. Later, she also explored the Spirituality of *Laudato Si*, Chapter by chapter.

- **What is happening to our common Home?**

- **The Gospel of Creation**

Every now and then she was provoking us with questions for our personal reflection. What challenges me? What affirms what I am already doing? What influence does my experience of God have on the way I want to live in response to this message? This session was very meaningful and challenging for each one of us. We developed a sensitive heart to realize that nothing in this world is indifferent to us. We need to allow the leaven to ferment in our life and be useful to others. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9)

Sr. Rani Padayattil ASC





### *From Sr. Nadia's Closing Greetings to the ASCs*

Dear sisters, for this final farewell, I thought I would go back to where we started:

an ounce of yeast,  
a bit of dough,  
a woman.

I believe that at the end of this seminar this parable about the Kingdom has reached an untold understanding and depth.

One woman: the Adorer today.

In this time of profound transformation, we are called to be first and foremost **women in love** with the Gospel, rejoicing in the proclamation and primacy of Christ in our lives. We must be radical women, enthusiastic in living our consecration with tenderness and a deep passion for this world **as it is**, full of contradictions, but abounding with the Mystery of God.

We are:

**Compassionate presences**, ready to care for the other without looking at personal expense or gain.

**Promoters of solidarity and reconciliation.**

Women fully aware of the richness and limitations of who we are in the unfolding of time and years.

**A Prophetic Presence** announcing with our donated lives, the inexpressible joy of handing over, of losing ourselves, of letting ourselves be transformed into the leaven of life, in the night of the world, of history and of the heart.

**Women with a clear vocational, spiritual and charismatic identity** who collaborate every day to be a presence deeply rooted in the soil, but turned unconditionally into an inner dimension oriented toward the God of life.

**Women with an affectivity** called to include everyone in love.

**Women with a strong will** forged by a boundless love for the crucified and risen Christ.

**Women with a freedom surrendered** for the Kingdom, ready to give our lives so that Love may be known, loved and followed.

**Women, ready to walk with everyone because we deeply belong** to ourselves, to God, to the Congregation and to the world.

**The dough ... is delicate.**

The Dough of the World --

A changing world, scarred by pandemic, by wars.

A globalized world, torn apart by injustices and abuses.

A dough experiencing the challenge of

individualism, relativism, selfishness.

The dough of our congregation: dwindling numbers, increasing age of sisters.

The dough of our local reality: imperfect, limited, often disillusioning.

The dough of our personal reality often marked by brokenness and weakness.

**The Leaven** that we are called to conceal in the mass, in the dough, can have many symbolic meanings for us. **It is the leaven of the Gospel** that, for us, has the color of the Blood, of the power of Christ's Paschal Mystery that permeates everything, transforms everything, heals and renews.

**Putting this good leaven of our personal journey of conversion and embracing the mystery of God in our lives means having the audacity to stand against the current, to be a sign of contradiction telling the world about the joy of the Gospel.**

**The courage to be in Advocacy, in defense of life**, in every form (from conception to death...) for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

**Leaven is the tireless boldness** to proclaim that "Christ is alive" and "we are mission."

The **leaven of the spirit of the origins, of Maria, of Gaspar**, which calls us to live fraternity in simplicity as a credible witness to the universal covenant we are called to weave every day, is a clear sign of the new life in Christ. It is the presence of Jesus that makes the community a sacred place of dialogue and communion.

All it takes is a **little leaven, the right amount**, discernment as a habit for seeking God's will, and being ready to carry it out by paying with one's life and with the gift of self.

Leaven is simple and ordinary, but fruitful and generative by its dynamic nature.



## Closing Greetings

As ASCs, disciples of the Crucified and Risen Master, we are called to be leaven, to hand over our lives so that they may be transformed and transforming – to be leaven that transforms the dough.

Dear Sisters,

You are leaven – women in transformation, evolving and called to foster change in society and the world, called to be promoters of transformation where each of you lives, in the concrete realities of everyday life, respecting your own cultures and in creative faithfulness to the charism. You are women aware of being collaborators in Christ's saving work.

You are leaven.

A prophetic presence in this world!

- Women with hearts pulsing with life who collaborate in the transformation of the world.
- Be yeast in the dough of an ever-changing global reality that requires the courage of loving.
- Be a prophetic presence proclaiming the inexpressible joy of self-giving with the gift of your lives.

Be a sign of contradiction, however arduous, showing the contradiction of our way of being and doing, because if we live and think like the world we lose our prophecy. Our exercise of listening, caring about and loving the least is the aspect of Jesus' life that we embody and that makes HIM ever contemporary.

Be ready to build communion in our communities through:

- a simpler lifestyle
- an honest and sincere dialogue
- an attentiveness to relationships
- a closeness to people

• a concrete and proactive charity that, in a world of selfishness, injustice and hatred, proclaims God's presence and action.

- an embracing of diversity
- an openness to interculturality

We hope you will carry in your hearts:

- ***the powerful experience of a cross-cultural congregation;***
- ***the content that rekindled the passion of the vocational origins of each of you;***
- ***an awareness that every age of life is a vital, dynamic process necessary to be pro-active agents of your own personal transformations;***
- ***the opportunity to expand the knowledge of the richness of our Congregation in the world;***
- ***the grace of being able to walk in the places that saw the holy origins of our congregation;***
- ***the warmth that made your heart vibrate and rekindled your passion for life consecrated to the Blood of Christ.***

May the Holy Spirit, who inflamed the heart of Maria De Mattias and so many of our dear and holy sisters who have gone before us, keep the fire alive in you and may His power be enduring for you, making you promoters of transformation.

I conclude with a quote from Marcel Raymond, (*Three Rebel Friars*):

*"Go ahead and burn! But don't be a flash in the pan. Burn vigorously, intensely, like the stars, like the sun. Keep burning until you are consumed! Either you give everything to God, or you give nothing."*

**Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC**



## **Sharing about the Online Formation Meeting for ASC Junior Sisters**

Bissau, August 1, 2022



At noon on July 24, 2022, we participated from Guinea Bissau in the online formation meeting with all the ASC junior sisters of the Congregation organized by our International Spirituality Center (CIS). The theme of "Transformation" gave us a passage of St. John's Gospel (20:11-18) for our reflection, presented by Sister Nadia Coppa, General Superior.

In her explanation she compared the life of Mary Magdalene with that of St. Maria De Mattias. The strongest points for us were these: after their encounter with Jesus both women felt transformed; they went out and announced to everyone what they had experienced; Mary Magdalene was the apostle to the apostles because in her persevering search, through her tears, she made them encounter Jesus; similarly, Maria De Mattias expressed her love for Jesus through her tears. Through her letters, she enabled us to encounter Jesus.

We too, as ASCs, feel that in order to be transformed, we must go toward Jesus in an ongoing search, because He is the goal of our life through discipleship. Sr. Nadia also said that Maria De Mattias was always in a hurry, but that her haste was to establish her relationship with others, especially the poor and marginalized, etc.

The other important aspects were the various questions asked by Sister Nadia:

- Who is Jesus for us?
- Are our actions moved by the Lord?
- Do we have the desire to encounter Jesus?

All these questions helped each of us

personally reflect on our lives as ASC consecrated women and put Jesus at the center of our lives. If our lives are not totally the life of Jesus in the service of the poor, our consecration would be in vain.

Our sharing in language groups also helped each of us to share what we were feeling and thinking about the highlights of the meeting and to enter into a close relationship with others. In the large group, the sharing was interesting, brief and meaningful.

Finally, Sister Nadia asked each person to choose a word that expressed our charism and those expressed were: charity, love, service, communion, compassion, and mercy, among others.

We thank Sister Nadia and her council for promoting and animating this international meeting that offered us a significant moment of formation and allowed us to establish a relationship with the other Junior Sisters of the Congregation. We look forward to other opportunities in the future. With esteem and affection,

**Sr. Bighada Tambá**  
**Sr. Victória Marcel Mancal**  
**Sr. Tânia Bilimbo Mendes**  
**Sr. Ludimila António Danfa**  
**Sr. Diana António Ialá**

## **Our New Home**

### **BLC at the Shrine**

Benedictine Living Community at the Shrine in Belleville, Illinois, is the name of the new home for 37 of us Adorers. This large complex includes three health facilities, all accessible and connected by walking.

Wide spacious windows of the rooms of the High-Rise open to a vast display of green tree tops. Others share the rising sun, the shimmering moon, and rain drops hastening to water the raised vegetable gardens below.

Those with a Patio apartment on the ground floor have access to outdoor visiting with other residents or with squirrels, birds, flowers, and an occasional deer or raccoon.

The long halls give opportunity for daily exercise and cheerful greetings. Moving scooters, rollators, and walkers remind us of the journey we all share. Our devoted staff, co-workers and other

residents never tire of showing us the way to our room or directing us to other places when we get lost or disorientated.

The Universal Christ Icon overlooking the altar in our chapel presides over the Cosmic Celebration of Love at our daily Eucharist. This hallowed place envelops all of us - sisters and residents - for daily prayer.

As we Adorers live Mission in this new environment, we go forth together into a future of opportunity. We embrace the process of transformation as we birth a new Creation into fullness in our new Home.

**Sr. Anne Irose, ASC  
Apt. 50 of the High-Rise**

## **Wisdom from a Turtle**

Now and then I like to just open my Bible and see what word(s) catch my eye. A few days ago, I flipped it open and read:

"When you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and go wherever you wished. Now that you are older, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go."

At the moment, it seemed to describe our journey to Benedictine Living Community. In the past two months I have talked to a number of folks who have recounted a similar story giving credence to the passage from John 21:18.

I know that I am "older" and a bit needy, but it still takes a lot of humility and a deep "yes" for my mind to agree! However, rather than yielding to feeling sorry or miserable, I glance at my desk and see a little turtle which brings me to the following story.

Two young girls were walking along when one spied a turtle sitting on top of a fence post. The first girl said to the other, "How did that turtle get up there? Turtles can't climb posts." To which the second girl said "Someone had to put it there."

When I first read the story years ago, I thought what a unique way of reminding me "God put me here"! Now I look at my little turtle and know that God put me here at Benedictine Living Community!

**Sr. Rose Anthony, ASC**



**“Blessed is the Lord, God of Israel: He Alone Works Wonders.”**

(Psalm 72)

How can we not bless the Lord for the online meeting held this past July 24 that united 35 ASC juniors from all over the world?

The initial moment of getting to know each other highlighted the great excitement from all of us, to be able to see each other “face to face.”

In simplicity and joy we shared a little about ourselves, and then we immersed ourselves in meditation on the Gospel passage from John 20:1-2,12-18, preceded by a moment of prayer. “Meeting Jesus: comparing lives”: this was the theme of the group work done in the second part of the day. The comparison between the two Marys, Magdalene and our Maria De Mattias, raised questions to which we are called to give an answer:

Does the passionate desire to meet Jesus grow in us?

Do we hear within us the Teacher’s voice calling us by name?

Do we recognize the transforming passage of the Beloved in our lives?

In the final sharing it emerged that we are all animated by the desire to serve the Lord with the same passion and determination as St. Maria De Mattias herself.

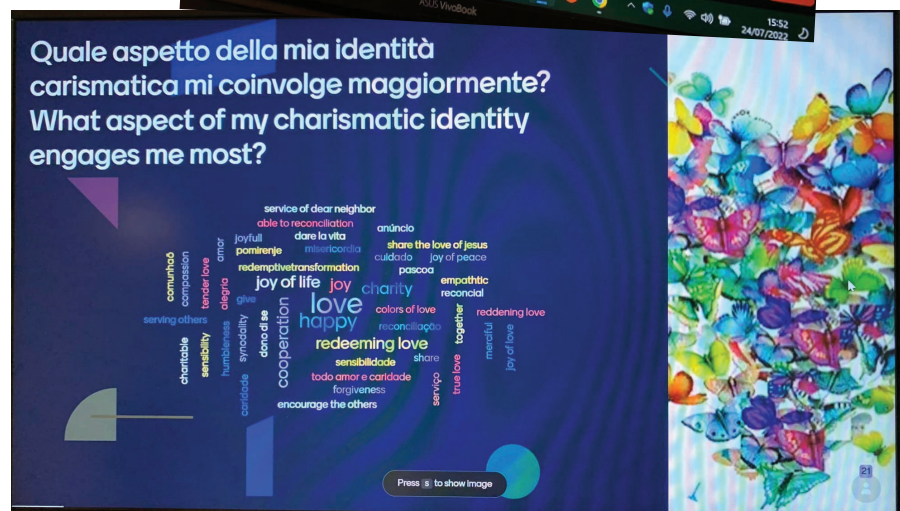
Aware of our limitations, difficulties and the many challenges that await us in the future let us stake everything on the One who has called us to be joyful witnesses of His love, asking our beloved Foundress to “communicate to us a spark of that fire of charity that devoured her heart and zeal for the salvation of souls.”

In conclusion, and on behalf of all, I would like to thank our Superior General, Sr. Nadia Coppa and Council, for giving us the opportunity to meet and get to know each

other.

It was a moment of grace that sparked in us the desire to grow in communion and share the beauty, joys and labors of the journey of following Jesus, hoping that this will be the first of other meetings that will thus enable us to “walk together into the future with hearts filled with hope.”

**Sr. Romina**



**Giacconi, ASC**

## **Activities for the Integration of Refugees**

There are 20,000 refugees from Ukraine in Croatia, and the country still continues to keep its borders open. It guarantees them legal rights to work, health insurance and more. The integration of refugees from Ukraine and other countries of the world is made possible by the extraordinary solidarity and multifaceted help of the local population and many associations.

In June 2022 during World Refugee Week, the "Maria De Mattias" Foundation organized a "Humanitarian Evening of Music and Poetry" for friends and with friends from Ukraine and Iran. The families enthusiastically embraced the event by happily preparing and organizing the activities.

In the musical part of the program, famous musicians from the Croatian Sacred Trio performed a series of sacred compositions. Poems by Croatian poets were read with emphasis and emotion by young actresses Lucija Dujmović and Lucija Alfier. Selected poems by Ukrainian authors were read in Ukrainian by Mateja Mirković. Contemporary Iranian poetry was interpreted in Croatian and one of them, in Persian by Iranian Yazdan Fayyaz.

"Yes, we understood the message of these cultures because we love them, because we stand in solidarity with those who bring their culture, even if they are far from their origins," announced program host Tanja Maleš, in opening the conversation with Ukrainian representatives and Iranian families. It was a particularly emotional moment. They expressed the difficulty of being refugee, as well as their great gratitude for the sincere help from the government structures, even more so from the local population and many individuals and associations, including the Maria De Mattias Foundation. All have helped make the process of integration into a new culture easier. The Iranian family has integrated well during their three years in Croatia. Those present

were pleased with the Croatian language skills of young Yazdan, a medical student, who exhibited a perfect Croatian accent.

The very young Ukrainian, Solomia Yermak, created a special atmosphere by answering short questions in Croatian and then reciting short lines of poetry in her language.

Thanking everyone, the director of the Maria De Mattias Foundation, Sr. Cecilija Milković, ASC said, "I am glad that together we were able to make this beautiful evening with good music and words. Certainly, the best is experienced with a friendly

encounter where we felt the warmth of human closeness, solidarity, understanding and openness, overcoming all our national, religious and cultural differences. This is truly an evening created together. I am happy that once again the Maria De Mattias Foundation has allowed us to bring together so many individual and group

gifts, showing that it is only by putting ourselves together that we can offer our small contribution to improve the world."

The "multicultural catering" consisted of Ukrainian and Iranian culinary specialties. So much abundance, variety, artistic beauty, inviting taste! Everyone was pleasantly surprised and the creative housewives smiled in satisfaction. Becoming gifts for each other truly fills the spirit. The free-will offerings of those in attendance will be given to the two families, one Iranian and the other Ukrainian. All present were satiated, not only with food but even more so by the beauty of fellowship in diversity and the feeling of friendship that satisfies and encourages in all of life's challenges.

**Sr. Cecilija Milković, ASC**



## General Administration Calendar



**August 4-7:** Sr. Nadia and Sr. Matija attend the election session of the Italian Regional Assembly.

**August 13-23:** Sr. Nadia and Sr. Bridget visit the Region of Tanzania for the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the foundation of the Village of Hope on August 17 and will do the canonical visitation with the sisters in Mozambique.

**September 5-13:** The "... To receive mercy and find grace"(Heb. 4:16) retreat will be held in Rome at the EUR Villa for the ASC and CPPS Leadership Groups promoted by the two General Administrations.

**September 16-22:** The Extended General Council **"We have a treasure in earthenware vessels" (2 Cor. 4)** will be held at the Generalate. The Regional Superiors and Coordinators of the Foundations of Guinea Bissau and Korea will participate.

## Birthdays: Let's celebrate life

### AUGUST

#### 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday

<b>Sr. Beth Simone Almeida Andrade</b>	08/03/1972	Brazil
<b>Sr. Ewa Pruszczyńska</b>	08/05/1972	Wrocław

#### 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday

<b>Sr. Marcijana Krišić</b>	08/22/1952	Zagreb
<b>Sr. Diana Rawlings</b>	08/29/1952	USA

#### 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday

<b>Sr. Linda Fischer</b>	08/10/1942	USA
<b>Sr. Lorenzina Fornuto</b>	08/10/1942	Italy
<b>Sr. Carmina Marsano</b>	08/10/1942	Italy
<b>Sr. Maria Saveria Donnicola</b>	08/11/1942	Italy
<b>Sr. Imelda Sygut</b>	08/25/1942	Wrocław
<b>Sr. Giovina Petracca</b>	08/30/1942	Italy

#### 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday

<b>Sr. Francesca Girardi</b>	08/01/1932	Italy
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**Birthdays: Let's celebrate life**



**SEPTEMBER**

40<sup>th</sup> Birthday

**Sr. Gilda Alanoca Quispe** 09/01/1982 Bolivia

50<sup>th</sup> Birthday

**Sr. Magdalena Adriano** 09/09/1972 Tanzania

**Sr. Fortunata Shabani** 09/29/1972 Tanzania

**Sr. Joji Chirakandathil** 09/29/1972 India

60<sup>th</sup> Birthday

**Sr. Lila Akkanath** 09/01/1962 India

**Sr. Mary Malieckal** 09/03/1962 India

**Sr. Rita Grassotti** 09/07/1962 Italy

70<sup>th</sup> Birthday

**Sr. Jacinta Šokić** 09/11/1952 Zagreb

**Sr. Carmelina Gallo** 09/28/1952 Italy

80<sup>th</sup> Birthday

**Sr. Anna Maria Doddi** 09/13/1942 Italy

**Sr. Lucia Albino** 09/23/1942 Italy



**They have returned  
to their Heavenly  
Home**

07/01/2022	<b>Sr. Adornina Maria Novelli</b>	Italy
07/05/2022	<b>Sr. Giuseppina Merluzzi</b>	Italy
07/07/2022	<b>Sr. Maria Dolores Rodriguez</b>	Spain
07/11/2022	<b>Sr. Florinda Cosimi</b>	Italy
07/13/2022	<b>Sr. Helen Kiefer</b>	USA
07/14/2022	<b>Sr. Leonarda Bardella</b>	Italy
07/18/2022	<b>Sr. Velimira Delfa Bosankić</b>	Zagreb
08/04/2022	<b>Sr. Finka Dolibašić</b>	Zagreb
08/18/2022	<b>Sr. Iracy Alves da Cruz</b>	Brazil

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