

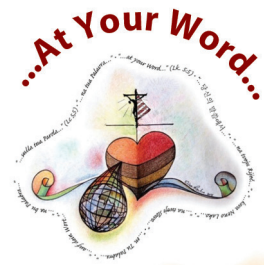
# International Newsletter

## Adorers of the Blood of Christ

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Editorial

### Encounter with History

The choice of this title was not to create a philosophical article on the topic of history, but just to gather it, observe it with the eyes of Faith, with the eyes of an Adorer of the Blood of Christ. In fact, human history changed directions, was clothed in eternity, when on Easter morning the women running to the sepulcher found the tomb empty. The mystery of Jesus' resurrection threw a new light on the historical interpretation of the events. History is the story of humanity, interwoven with disappointments, mistakes and sin, but it is mainly a mystery of salvation: an unfolding colored cloth flaunting all its beauty.

The resurrection shows us that God does not hold the reins of history in his hands like a puppeteer moving the strings, but with the Incarnation of Christ Jesus, He descended into history in order to become an essential part of it. Thus, the challenge for today's believer is that of searching for His presence, of getting a glimpse of it in the signs sown along our daily path.

In this issue, the lives of our ASC Sisters witness how that is made possible in our daily lives: in Vukovar, a Croatian town along the Danube destroyed during the 1991 war, in Rebibbia's prison, their presence in Liberia, just to cite a few.

For us Adorers, "our daily welcome of the Word in a spirit of adoration and discernment makes us capable of contemplating God's dynamic presence in our community and our ministry." (cfr. 2017 GA Acts) The courage to encounter the various stories in light of the resurrection transforms them into stories of salvation and redemption.

During his visit to Bulgaria, in referring to the future of the ancient continent, Pope Francis quoted a reflection of St. Benedetta of the Cross, a patroness of Europe, on the meaning of History. "Certainly the decisive events of the history of the world were influenced by the souls of those about whom nothing is told in history books." They are the lives of those countering power with tenderness, force with mercy and dominion with service. History has not yet been written once for all, but it is always open to the newness of the Spirit who renews everything and opens to hope.

**Sr. Maria Grazia Boccamazzo, ASC**

### Summary

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### *Sowers of prophetic hope*



“Sowers of Prophetic Hope” was the theme of the XXI Plenary Assembly of the UISG (International Union of General Superiors) held in Rome, May 6-10. The theme chosen by the Administration and expressed in the opening greeting by the president, Sister Carmen Sammut, encouraged us to reflect upon how we consecrated women can and must be signs of hope “in a world of divisions and wars” and “for the many women and children who suffer.” It was a privilege for me to have this important intercultural and inter-congregational experience. There were about 850 general superiors from 80 different countries participating. With simplicity and openness of heart, we tried to respond together to the various appeals that touch consecrated life today in a globalized and wounded world.

It was truly an enriching opportunity. The sharing of experiences was a blessing for my life and the service I am carrying out for the Congregation. Being at table to break open the Word, look at the global reality and dream together as Sisters, guardians of the seeds of hope and capable of looking to the future, renewed in me the joy to look for new answers to the many challenges that accompany each day.

The various reflections were a true richness and confirmed in me not only the beauty of consecrated life, but its fundamental task in the life of the Church and the world. We are to be signs of that prophetic hope that springs from a deep mystical life urging us to go out toward everyone, especially toward the poorest and marginated.

Interculturalism, the vision of the future of religious life, the integrity of creation through Pope Francis’ Encyclical *Laudato Si’* and inter-religious dialogue were the topics developed through group dynamics of listening, sharing and reflection. Hope was the red thread accompanying our research, letting us glimpse possible horizons in walking together by identifying possible processes of being synodal through active participation.

They were days in which hope in God’s vision for the future was sparked in each of us. We rejoiced in being aware that, in spite of the vulnerability

that touches life on all levels, we are called to follow Christ and be a sacrament of His presence in the world. Hope is the gift of communion that we want to continue to weave through gospel relationships and covenants established in the compassion and tenderness of a daily humanity transformed and renewed. Little seeds, small gestures, small possible steps: prophecy and hope dancing in the infinite cycle that compassion intertwines in the future promised by God. The small and simple actions of compassion offer this vision of creation for every single human being as prophecy because we believe! We are called to greater solidarity with those living at the peripheries. This is the place of the prophetic vocation of consecrated women, becoming agents of healing in the broken relationships of humanity and our vulnerable planet.

To be faithful to our prophetic vocation, we can be sowers of prophetic hope for the planet only if we are rooted and immersed in the Word of God by contemplating it as Jesus did. With the poor, chaste and obedient Jesus, our prophetic vocation calls us to be at the peripheries giving a counter-cultural witness to the pervasive culture of dominion that is taking our planet toward destruction. Many desires and concrete choices surfaced from our sharing, which we wanted to assume to make what we believe in credible.

At the conclusion of the work, we had the opportunity to meet Pope Francis in a private audience. It was a very important time when we let ourselves be stirred by his simple and spontaneous words that encouraged us to an ever more concrete commitment to the service of the Church and the world in faithfulness to our charismatic identity that sets us aflame!



**Sr. Nadia Coppa, ASC**



## ***Triduum and Easter in Liberia***

Alleluia and Easter wishes from Liberia! The celebration in Liberia was culturally different but the essence of Lent, Holy Week and Easter is the same.

During Lent, we prayed the Stations of the Cross every Friday as a parish community. We gathered on Palm Sunday at a table near the beach where palms were blessed and distributed for the procession to church. The temporary church was duly decorated, the singing was very enthusiastic and the church was filled with people for the celebration.

An ASC generator provided power for Holy Thursday services that were well attended and sung. Father washed the feet of 12 men. Adoration of the Eucharist continued until 11:30 p.m.

On Good Friday, we prayed the Stations of the Cross in procession, again beginning at the beach and concluding in church. The art pieces of the stations were strategically tied to trees along the route. At Good Friday services, I was moved by the elderly women and men who managed to bend their crippled knees and legs sufficiently to touch the cross during veneration.

The Easter Vigil began at 9 p.m. with a super fire that grew to 6 feet high for the lighting of the Easter candle. We processed with our lighted candles from the front of the school into the church. More than 20 people, including a two-week-old baby, were baptized. The Offertory procession was a wonderful mix of vegetables, fruit, bags of rice, bread, a chicken and other gifts.

Sister Zita and I hosted the Easter Sunday meal for Father Dennis, Carla, the Peace Corps volunteer in Grand Cess, and another guest. We served spaghetti, chicken, peas and cucumber strips, and a white cake and fruit salad that Sister Zita had prepared.

It continues to be dry here, and the water tables have fallen. Pray for rain!

***Sr. Therese Wetta, ASC***



### Let us serve our dear neighbor



The ASC community of Dar es Salaam was opened in 1994. The first community members were Sr. Teresa Sorrentino, superior, Sr. Angelina Palmigiani, and Sr. Scolastica George. These sisters provided the ministry

of teaching religion, catechism, family visits and other services. When they came to this area, the Christians were few. Sisters provided services in three sub-parishes which were under the supervision of the Tegeta parish served by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, C.P.P.S. They dedicated themselves with their whole heart to ensure that the charism of our foundress Maria De Mattias was implemented. They made an effort in their mission to ensure that the souls of the people are saved.

parishes. They continue to serve by teaching religion, catechism to children, young people, catechumens, Mass preparation services, and even listening to people with various problems to help them. The number of Christians is increasing, thanks to God. This community also provides pre-primary education in our John Merlini School which has 109 students. Let us continue to offer ourselves to God and collaborate with Christ in his work of redemption so that the souls of our dear neighbor may be saved.

*Sr. Venosa Joseph, ASC*



Continental Area: the Americas  
USA Region

### Podcast Recordings Begin

Sister Ursula Schones, ASC tells her story to Communications Associate Molly Kaye McKinstry for a podcast series on the Adorers set to launch in June.

Molly Kaye interviewed 23 Sisters over two-and-half days in Wichita late last month. The podcast is titled Habits: The Good, The Bad and The Holy.



*Cheryl Wittenauer*



## **International Mother Earth Day**

*“Care for the environment is always a social concern as well.  
Let us hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”*

*Pope Francis*

On April 22nd, International Mother Earth Day, we Adorers of the Blood of Christ gathered together in the garden of Generalate community in Rome to celebrate this day in a significant way. Sr. Rani Padayattil the coordinator of JPIC/VIVAT, guided us into prayer, Sr. Nadia Coppa, Superior General planted a tree, and Sr. Dani Brought, General Councilor, gave a memorable speech to the sisters gathered.

We reflected together that we have only one Earth, one Home, one Planet and nobody can escape the Earth even if it becomes unlivable. World Earth Day was a good day to bring to our awareness the healthy world we want and the extent of abuse that has been done to it. There has been much research in this regard since the late '90s, with indications of the effect of humans' ignorance and lack of protecting our beautiful world. We hear often about ozone layer depletion and greenhouse gases etc., which are the main causes of Global Warming, while we ignore in many ways the means to protect for future generations the world in which we live.

Many of us have heard from our grandparents and parents about the weather, temperature, forest, plants, trees, rivers, and pure water which are the beautiful resources of this wonderful earth. And to some extent, we have personally experienced these same gifts of God. But now we are facing a huge scarcity of very many basic needs. Instead we find a shortage of pure water, floods, landslides, pollution, contamination, temperatures rising, weather changes and very many unknown diseases.

We can ask ourselves these questions: Why is our beautiful earth, which was much cooler a century ago, not so now? Why are the ultraviolet rays from the sun affecting the earth so much more now than before? Why are

man-made gases destroying the protective layers of our earth?

What accountability we have as citizens of this world! We can walk away from our responsibility, saying we are not directly accountable. But every person living in this world is equally responsible and accountable for bringing this beautiful world to its former glory.

Celebrating Earth Day reminded us of the need to solve climate change, to end plastic pollution, to protect endangered species, to educate, activate and broaden the environmental movement across the globe. As we planted the tree in our garden, we were reminded to join hands with others to protect our forests. We are called to remember Pope Francis' words: "All creatures are connected; each must be cherished with love and respect, for all of us as living creatures are dependent on one another." (Laudato Si' #42.) Let us, then, protect the integrity of creation, raise awareness in society, stand against each and every abuse done to our earth, and maintain a supportive and sustaining voice as we work toward creating a better tomorrow for those who come after us.

**Sr. Rani Padayattil, ASC**



## 90 years of ASC presence in San Giovanni Rotondo

In long-ago 1928 by the express desire of Padre Pio, a request to begin a religious community in San Giovanni Rotondo was sent to our General Superior. On August 29 of the same year, the first Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood arrived in San Giovanni Rotondo and were joyously welcomed by the people and stayed in the Borgo Antico building of the town, called "Lu Ilariè dè lè monnache," currently St. Maria De Mattias Square.

The various witnesses attest that the Sisters dedicated special care for the elderly and sick of the new, small St. Francis Hospital, which Padre Pio had already wanted in 1925. In addition, the Sisters lovingly and skillfully did all they could for the education of little children in the pre-school and the youth in the girls' embroidery workshop and spiritual preparation of children for their First Communion. The people immediately appreciated the work of the Sisters and quickly began referring to them as "Our Sisters." They were a human and spiritual point of reference for all the population.

Ninety years have passed since that day of grace, during which many young people of San Giovanni Rotondo were helped to discern the Lord's voice calling and followed in St. Maria De Mattias' footsteps by consecrating themselves as Adorers of the Blood of Christ. In 2013 on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of St. Maria De Mattias' canonization and the 85th anniversary of the arrival of the Adorers, a marble stone was placed on the



front facade of St. Francis Hospital, as a perpetual remembrance of the arrival of the first ASCs. On that occasion Archbishop Michele Castoro, Sr. Silvana Crolla (Regional Superior at the time), Sr. Milena Marangoni (Regional Councilor), and the town administration of Mayor Luigi Pompilio attended the ceremony.

In 1984, the Sisters were forced to leave their first residence because of a terrible earthquake. After various ups and downs, on September 13, 1989, an agreement was drawn up by Sr. Giuseppina Fragasso (Provincial Superior at the time) and Father Domenico D'Ambrosio (pastor of the Mother Church

at the time and Archbishop-elect of Manfredonia, Vieste, San Giovanni) for ministerial collaboration of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ at Abbot St. Leonard Parish. We give thanks to the Lord for the many blessings granted to us Adorers through the goodness of this welcoming and generous people.

Currently, thanks to the fatherly concern of the pastor, Father Giovanni d'Arienzo, we venerate in the above-mentioned Parish the relic of St. Maria De Mattias and her image, which as revelation and presence fosters an encounter with the mystery in a contemplative glance, since the substance of the image consists in being a "place of presence." On April 30 we gave thanks to the Lord together for the 90 years of the presence of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in San Giovanni Rotondo with a solemn concelebration of the Eucharist with Father Franco Moscone, Archbishop of Manfredonia, Vieste, San Giovanni Rotondo presiding.

In attendance were: Father Giovanni d'Arienzo (Pastor), Father Pasquale Pio Di Fiore (Assistant Pastor), Father Carlos Maria Laborde (Guardian of the Convent of San Pio from Pietrelcina), Father Matteo Merla, CPPS, Father Michele Cocomazzi, Sr. Nicla Spezzati (Regional Superior), and Sr. Milena Maragnoni (Regional Councilor), along with Dr. Antonio Incollingo (Prefectorial Commissioner), some ASCs from the area, religious women from various congregations and a large number of the faithful of the Parish of Abbot St. Leonard. The Parish choir and various youth ministers embellished the celebration by involving everyone in a festive tone of prayer.

At the end of the celebration, Sr. Nicla Spezzati gave a gift of the reliquary of St. Maria De Mattias to the Archbishop so that devotion to her could spread among the faithful and there be an increase in prayer for vocations to religious life. The numerous and beautiful experiences in the Parish community enriched us ASCs humanly and spiritually and made us greatly feel the presence of our Foundress, St. Maria De Mattias and St. Pio from Pietrelcina, who 90 years ago wanted us to be in this beloved land.

**The two saints** urge us toward a single desire, **"That the cross of Christ be planted in the heart of each person and that His precious Blood be praised and glorified forever."** May they intercede for an increase of vocations to consecrated life for the glory of God and the good of our "Dear Neighbor."

*Sr. Rosalba and ASC Community*

## *Vukovar's experience during the canonical visitation*



Sr. Dani, Sr. Manuela and Sr. Wiesława came with me to Vukovar to visit the ASC community of Sisters Danijela Borscak, Bernardica Kesak and Ljiljana Maric. Vukovar is one of the towns completely destroyed during the struggle for independence of Croatia during the 1991-1995 war. After the war, when the people began returning to Vukovar, the ASCs opened a community to accompany this shattered people in need of the hope of the Blood of Christ. But I want to recount some of the experience of our visitation in Vukovar.

We arrived on Saturday evening so that we would have time to visit the various significant and moving places of history and memory in Vukovar on Sunday. We first visited the hospital where the people took refuge during the 87-day siege in Vukovar and where the wounded citizens were cared for. In spite of the fact that there was a red cross on the roof, the hospital was bombarded daily. Today the ground floor is preserved as a remembrance of those difficult days and the courage of those who cared for the sick and suffering.

From there we went to visit the central memorial and the site of the mass grave in Ovčara of the 261 people who had been taken from the hospital, tortured and massacred. While we silently read the names of those victims, with hearts filled with sorrow, we invoked the power of the Blood of Jesus, asking for the gift of healing. Our last stop was at the commemorative cemetery of Vukovar with its white crosses for the almost one thousand people killed during the war.

That evening we met the group of ASC Associates that Sr. Ljilja Maric takes care of. After introductions, they asked us to share our experience of the day in Vukovar. This was the most emotional moment of the day. During the day we tried to hide our tears. The history of Croatia is a story filled with the paschal mystery: the war of 25 years ago, the destroyed town, the mistreated, raped and murdered people.

Sr. Wiesława commented that the red thread unites us and is shared everywhere we are: in Africa, India or in Croatia. It is the Blood of Christ and the experience of the paschal mystery that makes us one.

Sr. Dani connected her experiences in Guatemala and those of Vukovar. She spoke of having lived for 23 years in Guatemala where she accompanied people who endured the suffering of a 36-year war and that she left a piece of her heart there. But today after having heard the story of Vukovar, one day is enough to have her leave another piece of her heart. The spirituality of the Blood of Christ is what unites the community of ASCs and the life they share with the people.

Sr. Manuela then shared her experience using three images connected by one word. The first image was represented by a gesture: she stood up and then kissed the ground because it is holy ground. The second image is the word she heard re-echoed throughout her time in visiting the various places in Vukovar, those words that St. Maria De Mattias repeated before dying: no more blood. The third image was the wounded cross but tied to a dove because without this dove the cross would crumble and this is peace, reconciliation. All these images are connected by the word "fraternity."

During this sharing, the people and we ASCs as well, broke down in tears with hearts filled with emotion. At the end of the meeting, the people came up to greet and bless each of us because they felt so very close to us. The message was that while the town, nature and everything around has already renewed itself the hearts and souls of the people are renewed slowly through forgiveness and fraternity. Today's experience deeply touched our lives and we continue to journey by living and sharing our charism as Adorers with the people.

**Sr. Danijela Anić, ASC**

## ***No one must stay behind***

Amelia, a place that took us back in time, is a place rich in history and art where the spirit is freed and finds itself again.

Saturday, March 30 at the Municipal Library in the beautiful Umbrian town of Amelia (Tr.), the first meeting of a project was held. We wanted to export the testimony of the Italian prisoners to the outside world, the testimony gathered in the various books published each year to make the citizens more aware of the unfortunately still outdated dynamics of the Italian prison system. This includes the meaning of prison today, the way of termination of a sentence, and is especially about the frame of mind of this part of humanity that is hardly listened to.

This project was begun by the common feeling of two people, who though dressed quite differently, were speaking the same language. One was a Sister and the other a laywoman. Sister Emma Zordan, an Adorer of the Blood of Christ, and the other, yours truly, with almost thirty years of experience as a teacher in the prison system and volunteer. Sister Emma never asked me if I was Catholic. She just observed my work without asking me anything. We found ourselves united in understanding, not judging but supporting. And so, we automatically understood that we could join forces to help our imprisoned brothers to get off the brink, to find a little self-esteem, and at times, to prevent suicide.

Most people judge the facts as they are represented by the various mass media who write the most cruel and vindictive things about those who have committed some more-or-less serious crime, or by those who have no way to defend themselves. This happened to Sesto Roscio of Ameria (now called Amelia) who was unjustly accused of parricide in 79 AD. Cicerone defended him, and won the case, proving that the news reports are not always correct.

Recent events confirm for us that our only concern is for our physical safety and safeguarding of our property. But in that context, are we truly free? And who is the real culprit when the victim becomes the executor? Are we truly free to choose our destiny? Is there an absolute truth? Is the one judging absolutely impartial or sinless? There are many questions and just as many answers, but absolute truth does not

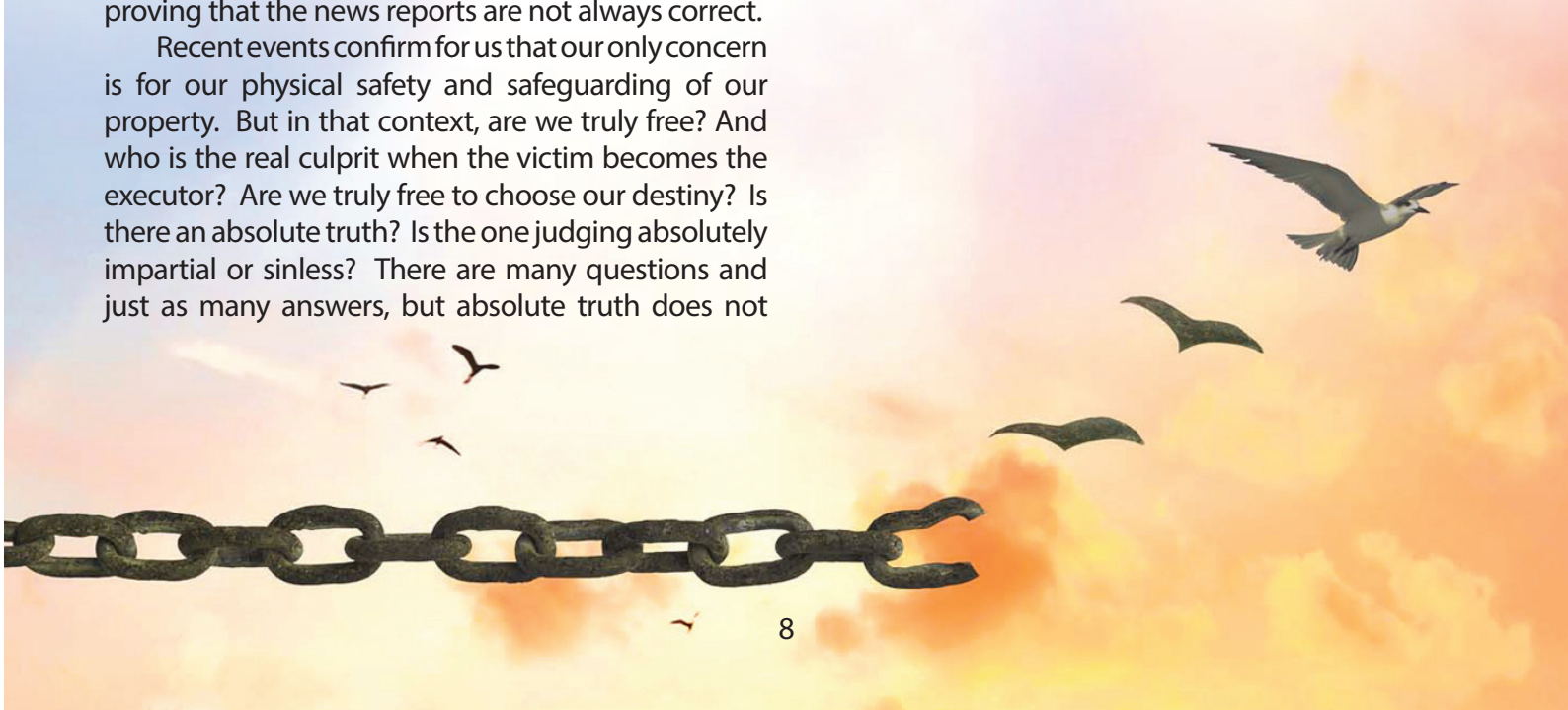
exist and that is why we must push beyond patterns, judgments and prejudices.

Talking about prison is not easy, but uncomfortable and hard, because people think that it is a reality that the State needs to be concerned about with hard and repressive rules because there are monsters in prison, people who have no rights. However, prison is a reality that belongs to everyone because we are all imperfect and punishable, especially the most fragile and misfortunate people, people whom we must take care of, like you do for a son or parent or friend.

Next to the good there is also evil and through the least we are able to become the first, as we were already wisely reminded by Cardinal Petrocchi in the last meeting in Rebibbia on the occasion of the presentation of the book, *Fear of Freedom*. The parable of the prodigal son teaches us that. It is easy to celebrate for the good, but it is for those returning, who are redeemed and have admitted their guilt, that we must exult. A teacher must be concerned for the weakest, those with less ability, not for the more intelligent ones.

In Italy, there are about 60,000 detainees, 70% of who could be employed in various kinds of work of public usefulness, caring for public buildings, garden work, social services, works through which there could be a true social involvement and the possibility of redemption. Unfortunately, that is all very difficult because there are many hurdles to be jumped, especially bureaucratic ones and those of mindset.

***Maria Teresa Caccavale***





**General Administration Calendar**



**June 15** – The Council returns to Rome after the canonical visitation to the Region of Poland and the Region’s missions: Belarus, Siberia and Germany

**June 17** – Sr. Nadia Coppa and Sr. Matija Pavić leave for the canonical visitation to the ASC Mission in Australia

**June 29** – Sr. Manuela Nocco leaves for the United States to attend the MDMHH Fund meeting

**Birthdays:  
Let’s celebrate life**



<u>30</u>	<b>Sr. Silvia Guthala</b>	06/17/1989	India
<u>60</u>	<b>Sr. Young Ae Eugenia Lee</b>	06/19/1959	Korea
<u>70</u>	<b>Sr. Rosaria Sacchetti</b>	06/22/1949	Italy
<u>80</u>	<b>Sr. Antonietta Tozzi</b>	06/20/1939	Italy



**Religious Profession**

**June 2, 2019**

**65th anniversary of religious profession  
Wichita Center (USA)**

*Sr. Jeannine Bahr  
Sr. Laurentia Koehler*

**80th anniversary of religious profession and beyond  
Wichita Center (USA)**

*Sr. Florentina Riebel (85th anniversary)  
Sr. Leona Riebel (84th anniversary)  
Sr. Carmelita Blick (81st anniversary)*

**June 23, 2019**

**60th anniversary of religious profession  
Wichita Center (USA)**

*Sr. Bernadine Wessel  
Sr. Nancy Hanes  
Sr. JoAnn Mark  
Sr. Teresa Bahr*



**They have returned to  
their Heavenly Home**

05/08/2019	<b>Sr. Maria Dina Cupido</b>	Italy
05/12/2019	<b>Sr. Irene Rossi</b>	Italy
05/13/2019	<b>Sr. Elisabeth Schiedermayr</b>	Schaan

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